Integrating Technical Communication Course to FYC: Invoking Conceptualized Thinking

Through historical and literary review this annotated bibliography attempted to determine the necessity of integrating technical communication courses to first year curriculums in higher education institutions. Due to this ever changing technological world, students having a core foundation of how to articulate technical information in simple terms is becoming an utter necessity for practitioners of all disciplines.


Brady examines what occurs when writers move from the classroom to the workplace, and if the models that are taught in the classroom are used when writers become professionals (37). Brady accumulates her research through peer review of “Novice Writers Moving from School to Work”, and a six-year longitudinal study, utilizing eight writers who were her subjects. The subjects were giving assignment while they were obtaining their bachelor degree, and after they completed their degree program, and became professionals they were surveyed to determine if their acquired skills transferred to the workplace. The research concluded that writes take what they learn in the classroom, and apply it to their performance as professionals while carrying out their daily duties (38). Moreover, Brady explains that these academically acquired skills are heightened when writers utilize these skills on a recurring basis.

This article is important because it grants an understanding that skills learned in the classroom are utilized in the workplace. The understanding leads future researches to ask the questions, should disciplined writing curriculums be integrated to meet professional standards to create a maximum utility of students acquired academic skills? Will integrating curriculum to meet professional needs in the workplace give students a head start with developing a discourse community in their profession?


Fraizer examines the question, when and where do genre analysis and reflection help students see the bigger picture? Frazier conducted an exploratory study in which he obtained data regarding the faculty and students’ understanding of first year composition courses. He also monitored post-FYC sophomores to determine how their FYC course played a role in their higher level writing classes. Frazier work indicated that, “teaching about writing’ in FYC may enhance the status of Composition as a discipline, and may help students see how writers work, but may not be as important for some students as developing their own writing process and then adapting that process to the actual, evolving requirements of new forms of academic writing” (53). Frazier concludes by
explaining that FYC does not elicit bridging and expanded conceptual thinking, which can be
developed through nontraditional FYC courses.

This article is important because it evaluates an issue that has not yet been clearly defined and is
critical to the success of the higher education system. The article introduces the concept of creating
discipline focused FYC courses. The discipline courses will engage the students outside of
contemporary literary analysis, and allow them to horn in on writing techniques that will be
relevant to their core discipline. Doing so will not only help students successfully complete a
freshman English course, but add in their overall development academically.

interdisciplinary partnerships”. Retrieved from,
http://search.proquest.com.mtrproxy.mnpals.net/docview/215436290?pq-
origsite=summon&accountid=12415

Grimm examines the relationship between writing across the curriculum programs and writing
centers by conducting peer literary reviews. The review seeks to understand writing in institutional
and professional environments verse curriculum writing for departments. Grimm analyzes the
correlation between writing intensive course and writing centers, and gives examples of
reformatory action that she hopes will occur. Furthermore, for additional work that can be done to
help build relationships between interdisciplinary academic departments, Grimm states: “I would
like to see longitudinal research that follows students to determine what more we can do as
program administrators to prepare them for the diverse audiences, the complicated contexts, and
the rapid changes in communication technology that will be part of their working lives” (478).

This article is important because it raises the question, what more can be done to help students
understand complex text in this ever changing technological world? This question also provokes
other follow-up question such as, what can we do to prepare students who will be future employees
that will work to accomplish a more user friendly way of delivering complicated contexts to
consumer audiences? An example answer to the latter question could be adding technical
communication course that will allow students, amongst all disciplines, the opportunity to develop
communication traits relevant to any specified discourse community.

communication: a case for enlarging the definition of technical communicator”, Journal
of Technical Writing and Communication. Retrieved from,
http://jtw.sagepub.com.mtrproxy.mnpals.net/content/46/3/311

Henning and Bemer examine what a technical communicator role is by reviewing the Bureau of
Labor Statistics and Occupational Outlook Handbook definition of technical communicators, and
making revisions (311). Henning reviews how defining the technical communicator will bring forth
legitimacy to the profession, and explains to employers what the technical communicator does. By
defining the technical communicator, Henning hoped to bring legitimacy to what the technical
communicator could bring to the workplace. Henning states, “defining technical communicator is
an act inherently tied to empowering and legitimizing the work that practitioners and academics
do” (332). Henning mentions that one of the difficulties that arise with defining technical
communication is the indistinguishable relationship of the technical communicator as designer versus author. Henning concludes, “there is power in taking control over [the] definition and recasting it in light of our three criteria” (336).

This article is important because it is necessary to have the technical communicator defined by practitioners and educators in the field of technical communication to empower and accredit the profession. Through legitimacy obtained from defining the technical communicator, higher education institution will give more thought, and realize the necessity of integrating technical communication into the first year curriculum.


Khosts examines the individualized transfer of writing skills developed in freshmen composition courses to that of high division writing courses from students at Stony Brook University. The author uses peer literary reviews, but in particular, the study of the author’s invented online resource, Writer’s Individualized Transfer Tool (WITT). WITT was invented by the author to determine writing transfer skills students received from FYC course and how they transferred to higher level writing course. Due to the nature of the study, the authors results conveyed initiatives on how to improve the WITT program verses determining any coalition to maximize writing transfer skills from FYC to higher level writing courses. The author concludes that data collected is indecisive, and encourages assistants and recommendation for improving WITT.

This article is important because it offers a candid solution to distinguish the necessary means determine what instruction students need to gain transferable writing skills and knowledge from first year composition to more rigorous writing course. Moreover, the WITT could potentially lead to greater developments such as determining transferable writing skills that could be discipline focused and or play a role in future graduates careers.


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Kimball examines historical prospective, and compares the prospective to technical communication as an academic discipline. By examining historical prospective, Kimball demonstrates that technical communication skills are valuable not only to technical communication students, but are necessary for everyone in this ever changing technological world. Kimball analysis the benefits of adopting technical communication courses to first year curriculums at higher education institutions. After explaining the emergence of tactical technical communication, Kimball concludes that it is necessary to give students of all disciplines the necessary skills to communicate in a user friendly manner, which will adapt with this new user based form of tactical technical communication.

This article is important because Kimball expresses the necessity of giving students a competitive advantage by equipping them with technical communication skills earlier on in the academic careers. Kimball urges technical communication instructors and compositionist to give real thought to including components of technical communication to first year composition.


Leydens examines how drivers, opportunities, and challenges have shaped recent developments in the engineering program at major universities that emphasis science and engineering. The “multi-case study investigates how composition programs have responded to such drivers, opportunities, and challenges” (255). The study is conducted using historical, observational, documentation, and in particular, interview data from six universities that emphasis science and engineering. The literary data that was collected was obtained from humanity, and social science composition-related themes in engineering education (256). The observational data was observed at the Writing Across the Engineering Curriculum Special Interest Group Meeting in 2006. Document for the research were obtained from publicity websites, and the six institutions that were used during the
case study. The interviewees for this study were conducted with the six directors of the six programs used for the study. The constant comparative method was used to analyze the data (257). The finding of the research was split into two sections. The first section contained historical data, which indicated “Humanity and Social Science at STEM institutions provides historical context for answering our research question about how such debates shape the current realities and futures of composition programs. The second, our interview, observation, and document data suggest contemporary answers to our question about these programs and the opportunities for and barriers to their success” (258). Leydens concludes that composition and engineering faculty should see FYC initiatives as an opportunity to collaborate.

This article is important because it gives an in depth research analysis that promote the collaboration of technical faculty, in particular, engineer faculty, and first year composition faculty. The issue of implementing multi-model communication courses into FYC curriculum have long been debated, and the article address the historical, and academic necessity for such an initiative. Further, this study indicates the harmony of the engineering discourse community, and the opportunity composition course presents for this community.


Long examines the question, how people learn as we craft our communications, and how people adapt to new learning environments. The research was conducted using literary reviews of Aristotle’s rhetoric, and correlating it to the rhetoric of contemporary technology. Long concludes, we have learned a great deal about how to translate Aristotle’s rhetoric into documents that help people get work done. It is time to make a shift. If we change our language to consider students instead of users-and embrace the metaphors associated with digital communication-we can investigate how the communication principles and strategies, we have used in workplaces can translate into digital educational environments (16).

This article is important because it address the issue of adaptive learning, and not communicating with the users as a user, but a student. This article explains a way of adapting workplace communication strategies into digital education. Further, this theory of adaption prompts further investigators to consider the concept of adopting technical communication courses into first year curriculum, in as much that it will present a foundation for instituting the proposed adaption from viewing the user as user to view them as students.


Matsuda examines how and to what extent global perspectives are incorporated into writing by reviewing 8 technical communication textbooks, and analyzing the representation of technical communication and communicators as well as multiculturalism and multilingualism in textbooks
The research consisted of two phases: How global or international (G/I) are introductory technical communication textbooks, and how do introductory technical communication textbooks represent G/I Issues. The study lasted 3 years. Matsuda concludes that introductory textbooks that include a globalized perspective present a good representation of internationalizing the U.S. composition curriculum. Further, Matsuda claims that composition in general has a lot to learn from the efforts that have been taken to internationalize technical communication textbooks. Matsuda explains that the internationalization of technical communication textbooks addresses the issue; in order to educate the students who are increasingly multicultural, multilingual, and multinational, it is no longer enough to acknowledge their presence and celebrate the diversity. Our own rhetoric and instruction must also change so that textbooks and classroom instruction represent the actual student population.

This article is important because it encourages publishers and textbook authors to reexamine the overall context in which communication textbooks are written, and implement a globalized way of conveying the information within the textbooks. This will allow the diversity of the student population to receive the proper conceptualization of the course material, and veer from a centralized western perspective of communication. By doing so the quality of the textbook and course instruction should greatly increase. Further, it would encourage WAC, WID, and FYC to take into consideration the necessity of adopting technical communication course to FYC.

Meloncon examines the lack of attention that is given to Technical Professional Communication course amongst 60 universities that offer TPC courses. Meloncon collects data from the aforementioned universities to “bring TPC into the larger conversations of contingent labor within English studies, open up a broader conversation about the nuances of the use of contingent labor in higher education, and encourage other TPC scholars to critically examine the issue of contingent faculty” (407). The data was obtained from researchers observing publicity websites, and calling administrative faculty at the universities. The results of the research concluded that all university types relied on contingent faulty with little or no training in teaching to teach TPC courses. Meloncon explains that some question that should be raised in future studies are: “What kinds of professional development (if any) are made available to contingent faculty? How are these faculties supported in their efforts to stay current with pedagogical trends? What are the credentials of those teaching the service courses” (406)?

This article is significant because it demonstrates the divide between native English speakers and nonnative English speakers in accounting course, and their evaluation of the necessity for adopting composition and communication course to the curriculum for their degree program. The research conducted will allow future researchers a bases to frame further analysis of the necessity for adding essential writing and communication course to applied disciplines.

Park examines the essential need for communication skills for accountants, and solicits the opinion of accounting graduates, moreover; the research was based on surveys conducted at California State University in Los Angeles. Park’s survey participants consisted of students enrolled in principle of accounting classes and intermediate accounting classes. In the survey results, student’s responses were divided into four categories. The first two categorical groups consisted of students in the principle accounting courses who spoke English as their first language, and students in the principle courses whose first language was not English. The last two groups were composed of students from the intermediate accounting courses whose first language was English, and students in the intermediate courses whose first language was not English. The results concluded that students in the accounting program whose first language is not English determined a need for adding communication course to develop essential communication skills, as were the students whose first language is English did not believe taking extra communication classes were necessary. Additional findings indicated that all four groups believed it is necessary to improve on their writing skills more than their verbal communication skills.

This article is important because it raises the concern regarding setting standards for instructors and professors of higher education, whether they are tenure track, full time non tenure track, or graduate assistants, the article explains that the faculty should have a thorough understanding of the pedagogical of the discipline. Further, the article is important because it addresses the issue of TCP not being as recognized by English studies and other departments as it should be, which will open up opportunities for further studies to be conducted.

Russell examines how business technical communication courses can be more efficiently and effectively articulated with the disciplines. Russell conducts literature reviews in the process of creating his article. He surveys articles that covered Engineering Communication, and how EC created a new curriculum to contour Engineer curriculums to meet the necessary professional needs of the industry. Russell argues that attending to Writing Across the Disciplines is an objective of intellectual interest that allows courses to give students an understanding, and know-how skills of the discipline and profession, and could potentially improve the way students develop an understand the course material. Russell concludes that this know-how ability will give graduates the knowledge to include these skills in their professional careers.

This article is important because it stresses the necessity for implementing compositional communication components, and know-how skills within business technical communication courses. However, this concept is not just limited to that of business courses, it ought to be taken into consideration throughout Writing Across the Disciplines in all disciplines offered by
universities. By adding efficiency and effectiveness to the articulation of WID for all disciplines will allow all technical programs offered by higher education institution the opportunity to give their students the much needed know-how skills.


Stromberg explains how including writing components in his statistic course makes the writing process simple, and increases productivity for students and faculty. Stromberg conducts research in his statistic course at the University of Kentucky, which entailed analyzing the pedagogical benefits of incorporating such efforts into a statistics course. Most of the research consisted of conducting surveys of his students that participate in his statistics course, and analyzing their preparedness before and after the writing technics were taught. Further, these efforts were theorized that students who take statistic course and are taught writing technics therewith, would have less difficulties fulfilling the writing requirements of the statistic projects. Stromberg research concluded that the efforts made by the author to include techniques made the writing process painless and productive for both students and faculty (159).

This article is important because it depicts the benefits of students having the necessary writing skills to effectively and productively carry out their assignments within their discipline. Furthermore, the article opens up further discussion for addressing the need for technical writing course to be adapted as part of first year curriculum so that students can develop writing skills necessary to properly articulate technical information in a painless and productive way.


Warnock and Kahn examine expressive exploratory technical writing (XTW), a form of writing that is problem-solving and self-directed, and examine how engineering students resist writing task despite years of research that outline the importance writing is to their careers (37). Warnock explains that students lack the understanding between writing and thinking. Warnock uses two XTW software programs to conduct their experiment. Despite pedagogical obstacles to teaching XTW Warnock concludes that implementing XTW could change the technical writing curriculum, inspiring the curriculum with writing and critical thinking, helping students learn problem-solve skills using natural language (53).
This article is important because being able to properly articulate oneself professionally using simple language is a difficult task to those who are part of a discourse community. Using XTW to help students learn how to identify problem-solving issues, and interpret it to nonprofessional in simple language is a necessary trait to empower practitioners. Further, developing standard classes such as technical writing course would assist in the integration of XTW across the curriculum.


Yu examines the possibility of integrating technical communication course into China’s English major curriculum (68). Examining China’s English curriculum, Yu focuses his research on two Chinese universities to gain insight of students and faculty perspectives of integrating technical communication into China’s English curriculum. Yu offers three models for integrating technical communication course into China’s English curriculum: “The first model adds selected technical communication contents to existing ESP course . . . The second model offers technical communication as an independent advanced ESP course . . . And the third model learns from China’s EGP education, which starts with reading, listening, and speaking courses followed by writing and translation courses” (86,87). China’s economic growth raised the issue of providing their students with the opportunity to gain fundamental skills relevant to international technical communication, and Chinese scholars unanimously agreed that integrating technical communication course into China’s English curriculum was the appropriate course of action to combat this integral issue with China’s new economic growth. Yu concludes that teaching Chinese English majors technical communication skills is a logical way to develop China’s technical communication workforce (90).

This article is important because it details the necessity of nontechnical communication majors needing to develop skills that are taught in technical communication courses. The article also creates a gap for other scholars to analyze the need for technical communication courses to be integrated into first year curriculums in other countries besides China by extrapolating the role that technical communication skills play in this ever changing technological world.