

**Composition, Rhetoric, and Disciplinarity**, edited by Rita Malenczyk, Susan Miller-Cochran, Elizabeth Wardle, and Kathleen Blake Yancey. Utah State University Press, 2018. 355 pp.

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Writing studies' status as a discipline has been a driving question for decades, resulting in the production of a significant amount of scholarship pursuing several strands of argument about the benefits and ill effects of disciplinarity. *Composition, Rhetoric, and Disciplinarity* contributes to and extends several of those strands. The contributors ask questions such as whether writing studies is a discipline, what it means to be a discipline in an increasingly corporatized university, and how writing studies' historically prominent emphasis on pedagogy and fyw affects our disciplinary status. As a whole, the collection does not seek to resolve differences regarding these questions; indeed, Malenczyk, Miller-Cochran, Wardle, and Yancey selected contributions that often challenge one another. In this way, the collection fosters conversations about what has defined writing studies as a discipline and what kinds of issues we should consider as we move forward.

The book's fifteen chapters are divided into four sections. Section one starts with a historical overview from Yancey, in which she suggests that composition has taken a disciplinary turn, much in the same vein as previous turns (e.g., the social turn, the public turn). Yancey's analysis concludes by asking what kind of a discipline we would like to be, an ethos-based question that resounds throughout the collection. The section includes Barry Maid's chapter tracing his own personal history in the discipline, from his early interactions with Lee Odell and Maxine Hairston to his experience with independent writing departments. Maid's chapter is especially powerful following Yancey's because together they show how interactions with the discipline are shaped by experiences with individuals and institutions as well as broad intellectual moments, such as the disciplinary turn. Rochelle Rodrigo and Susan Miller-Cochran's chapter calls on scholars at four-year institutions not only to acknowledge the scholarly contributions of community college scholars but also to find and engage with those contributions. The section concludes with an exploration of Kenneth Bruffee's work and legacy by Rita Malenczyk, Neal Learner, and Elizabeth H. Boquet, a powerful call to see students as collaborative members of our discipline and to apportion equal value to teaching and research.

The chapters in the second section offer compelling arguments to reconsider how we view disciplinarity, starting with Gwendolynne Reid and Carolyn R. Miller's assertion that much of our disciplinary anxiety can be traced to tensions between open and closed approaches to classifying the field. They sug-

gest that we view disciplines as “open, networked, and continually emergent” (96), an approach that emphasizes how numerous methods and inquiries have contributed to the broad body of knowledge that we recognize as a discipline. Elizabeth Wardle and Doug Downs encourage readers to consider what we have always valued and to see those values— “inclusion, access, respecting difference, facilitating interaction, emphasizing localism, valuing diverse voices, and empowering writers to engage in textual production” (130)—as the basis for a strong discipline that can serve as an example for others. Kristine Hansen analyzes the difference between a discipline and a profession, arguing that we need to consider how to construct a profession that provides training for scholar-teachers from the undergraduate level forward and that supports better labor conditions for writing instructors.

The third section explores complications and tensions surrounding disciplinaryity. Jennifer Helene Maher uses Aristotle’s concept of virtue to counter arguments that disciplines inherently reinforce hegemony and a neoliberal trajectory for higher education. Drawing on her institutional experience, which required her to deny her expertise in writing studies, Maher asserts that we lose more than we gain by rejecting disciplinaryity, and that we can in fact do good by demonstrating how a discipline can resist neoliberal logic. Liane Robertson and Kara Taczak argue that the content of our introductory course should be a primary concern for the discipline, a claim that rebuffs previous arguments for moving away from fyw and pedagogy in favor of a more pronounced emphasis on research. Their argument echoes Hansen’s position that writing studies needs more teachers who have disciplinary knowledge, and they also claim that the discipline needs a clearer explanation of what fyw is and does for people outside the discipline. Christiane Donahue’s chapter uses translanguaging to show how the discipline can and should evolve in the future, moving away from English as its basis toward language, design, and rhetorical flexibility. While Donahue acknowledges that translanguaging is evolving, she asserts that it can help to shape the values of the discipline productively. Whitney Douglas, Heidi Estrem, Kelly Myers, and Dawn Shepherd use their experience revising the MA program at Boise State University to demonstrate how disciplinaryity is always a compromise between local needs and disciplinary values. They describe a process of mapping their individual values and making them explicit as threshold concepts as the basis for curriculum revision. I believe many departments could benefit from emulating this approach.

The fourth section begins with Sandra Jamieson’s exploration of the evolution of the undergraduate writing major over the past two decades. Jamieson argues that we need to continue studying the major to determine what local social and economic needs writing majors are meeting while also seeing how the writing major can become a site for using disciplinary knowledge effectively.

Like Douglas et al., Jamieson turns to threshold concepts as a theoretical frame to help “clarify the relationship between the discipline and the major that should represent it” (262). Jaime Armin Mejia’s chapter challenges the narrative of writing studies as a welcoming discipline, particularly for Latinx scholars and students, asserting that disciplines can function as sources of assimilation that is damaging to different cultural perspectives. Mejia echoes Wardle and Downs’ call for inclusivity, stating that writing studies should recognize and celebrate the “tremendous willpower it takes” to sustain an ethnic identity (283). Doug Hesse’s chapter argues that unless writing studies can “reembrace the teaching of writing as a central—even as the most central—core” of disciplinary identity, that disciplinarity will not prove as beneficial in the changing environment of higher education (295). Like Hansen, Hesse suggests that we evaluate new models for faculty labor that do not dwell in nostalgia for lost institutional models of disciplinarity. Linda Adler-Kassner’s chapter compliments Hesse’s by looking outward and suggesting that we embrace our knowledge to forge new relationships beyond our discipline and strengthen writing studies’ ability to participate in important policy debates about writing.

Across the volume, readers can trace threads that ultimately provide a sense of where the discipline is going and why it is important to think of writing studies as a discipline. Readers can see how work like writing about writing, writing transfer, and threshold concepts has impacted many of the contributors. But I will conclude this review by highlighting the collection’s definition of writing studies as an open, networked discipline that has inward and outward facing obligations, outlined most explicitly in Adler-Kassner’s chapter. In their conclusion, Malenczyk, Miller-Cochran, Wardle, and Yancey frame disciplinarity, whether it is inward or outward facing, as a form of responsibility. They note that we can no longer blame problems of expertise, labor, and inclusion—inward facing responsibilities—on others. Additionally, we are obliged to engage in efforts to change how writing is understood and taught outside the discipline—outward facing responsibilities. As a whole, the collection offers a vision of writing studies as an open, networked, and evolving discipline that should harness its longstanding emphasis on student learning to thrive in a shifting educational landscape that has come to see student learning as central to higher education.

The collection may leave unresolved many questions about writing studies’ disciplinarity, but the emphasis on our responsibilities as a discipline provides a chance to permanently shift the conversation from whether we are a discipline to what the discipline values and what we can do based on those values. Seldom does scholarship feel so hopeful.

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