

Teaching with Technology: Remediating the Teaching Philosophy Statement

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Abstract

Teaching philosophy statements are ubiquitous at a particular moment in our intellectual and professional lives (i.e., the job search); we might, however, resituate them as living documents to multimediate, remediate, and use as a reflective space in our teaching careers. Although this particular genre is commonplace across disciplines in the Humanities, teaching philosophy statements are undertheorized, perhaps because they are typically situated in a particular moment. Because of the ubiquity of these documents, and also because of the lack of historicizing how they are prepared, how they are produced, and how they function—professionally and intellectually—in this manuscript we first provide a bit of background and context of teaching philosophy statements. We review the limited existing work on this important genre before we argue for why and how they might be attended to and rethought, especially in light of today’s digital tools and multimediated ways of representing our work—and especially in the context of larger discussions about media work and professionalization. In the second section of this manuscript, we present examples from and reflect on our processes of remediating a specific type of teaching philosophy statement; we created teaching *with technology* philosophy statements, then remixed and remediated these traditionally prepared statements into slideshow presentations, Web sites, digital–visual collages, and digital movies. We describe the reflective and transformative work that can occur through such an activity by addressing four “emergencies” that occurred as we engaged this work. We conclude with comments about both the value of remediation and about the future of teaching philosophy statements in a multimediated world.

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Keywords: Critical technological literacy; Multimedia writing; New media; Remediation; Remix; Teaching philosophy

... we redeploy the lore and paradigms that we have inherited—the advice, warnings, or ways of knowing that the authorities of print culture have given us—whether or not these are entirely appropriate for and ultimately beneficial to writing students of the twenty-first century (Westbrook, 2006, p. 459).

1. Introduction: Undertheorized, Underscrutinized, and Underutilized

Teaching philosophy statements are ubiquitous at a particular moment in our intellectual and professional lives—typically during the job-search process, as we complete our “terminal” degrees and seek full-time, ideally tenure-track, appointments. We would argue that although this particular genre is commonplace across disciplines in the Humanities, teaching philosophy statements are undertheorized. Very little attention has been paid to the teaching philosophy statement in terms of when they emerged, what they are, what they do, or even as a marker of a moment in

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our professional lives. Almost all of us were encouraged (if not required), as part of our professionalization, to prepare a teaching philosophy statement. Very few of us, however, have delved deeply into the emergence of the teaching philosophy statement; analyzed the ways in which we might see these documents as living, ongoing reflections of our praxis; or situated the ways in which remediation of these documents can provide space for reflection.

The majority of job ads for fixed-term or assistant professor positions in rhetoric and composition posted in fall of 2010 (those posted online on the MLA job information list, available through the *Council Chronicle*, and distributed via our professional e-mail lists) required a statement of teaching philosophy be included with initial application materials. Because so few documents are invited at this earliest part of the job search—typically a cover letter, curriculum vitae (CV), and the statement—these documents carry a good deal of professional weight. They are also a genre, and thus bring with them particular moves, conventions, and expectations. Typically, a teaching philosophy statement is a clear, concise account of the author’s approaches to teaching, providing a sense of who the person is as a teacher and what s/he values. The statement discusses courses taught (typically in a narrative, reflective format rather than in the bullet-item style in the curriculum vitae), methods and/or approaches used in the classroom, and assessment practices integrated into teaching. A teaching philosophy statement typically does a bit of work in anchoring the author to a particular field and that field’s practices, beliefs, and values. Teaching philosophy statements are not formal research documents *per se*, but they typically do include nods and shout-outs (often in parentheticals) to key theorists, researchers, and other teachers who have shaped the author’s teacherly beliefs and values.

Because of the ubiquity of these documents, and also because of the lack of analysis about how they are prepared, how they are produced, and how they function—professionally and intellectually—in this manuscript we first provide a bit of background and context of teaching philosophy statements. We review the limited existing work on these documents before we argue for why and how they might be attended to and rethought, especially in light of today’s digital tools and multimediated ways of representing our work. We then present examples from and reflect on our processes of remediating a specific type of teaching philosophy statement; we created teaching *with technology* philosophy statements, then remixed and remediating these traditionally prepared statements into slideshow presentations, Web sites, digital–visual collages, and digital movies. We conclude by reflecting on our experiences and providing some summary comments about both the value of remediation and about the future of teaching philosophy statements in a multimediated world.

1.1. Issues and complexities

In a 2003 article published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Gabriela Montell (2003a,b) interviewed individuals serving on hiring committees, and noted a range of complexities that orbit around teaching philosophy statements. One issue is that many job candidates feel lost while drafting a teaching philosophy statement; one reason for this is that most Ph.D.-earning individuals do their work at and graduate from research-focused institutions where teaching is one role among many, and cultivating an explicit philosophy of teaching may not have been included in their academic or professional preparation. This may seem odd to rhetoric and composition scholars, but a situation like this is fairly typical in the sciences, especially at research-extensive institutions. Another complexity is how the teaching philosophy statement is viewed. One of Montell’s interviewees noted that hiring committees do not consider teaching philosophy statements “a deciding, or even serious, factor in the hiring process.” Another interviewee, however, contradicted this statement to argue about the importance of philosophy statements in situating applicants’ teaching practices. Another layer of complexity has to do with the actual evaluation of a teaching philosophy statement, a genre for which little evaluative criteria exists. What constitutes a good teaching statement? What constitutes good teaching? Is a new Ph.D. well-situated to reflect upon and provide evidence of good teaching practices?¹

Important to our manuscript, audience, and context are also orbiting issues in regard to teaching philosophy statements. Traditionally and historically, philosophy statements emerged and lived in ways similar to our classes: often, we find ourselves alone in a classroom, the door shut, in a somewhat isolated domain. Traditionally, teaching

¹ In fact, one of the early reviews we received regarding this manuscript stated that it was “premature” for graduate students with limited or little teaching experience to reflect on that limited experience. However, we situate teaching philosophy statements as process documents, and thus they require the negotiation of core values and evolving perspectives. We think that those new to teaching actually have a good deal to say about what they believe about teaching.

philosophy statements were only shared with hiring committees at particular institutions to which an applicant was applying. Today, however, more and more Ph.D. candidates, especially those with research and teaching interests related to digital writing practices and networked composing spaces, maintain an online presence—for instance, blogs, Web sites, and social-networking profiles—which may contain links to the author’s course Web sites, curriculum vitae, links to sites like Flickr <<http://www.flickr.com/>>, LibraryThing <<http://www.librarything.com/>>, Facebook <<http://www.facebook.com/>>, LinkedIn <<http://www.linkedin.com/>>, and more. Thus, the audience for one’s teaching materials explode beyond the traditional audience of just a hiring committee. Linked to changed notions of context and the spaces in which our teaching materials are viewed and assessed are the audiences for which we prepare reflective work like a teaching philosophy statement. Unless one’s blog or Web site is password-protected, once a teaching philosophy statement is published online, it is infinitely accessible, and also copyable and downloadable. The audience magnifies beyond a certain addressee to potentially anyone with a Web browser.

An accessory issue linked to context and audience is purpose. Of course, when requested within a job application, teaching philosophy statements serve to help a hiring committee screen potential hires—to assess, for instance, whether a candidate can fulfill a certain need in a department for teaching one class or another. These statements also, however, serve as an introductory glimpse for new colleagues and, if made available online, for students. If the teaching philosophy statement is prepared during a professional development moment during the author’s Ph.D. program, the statement may serve to both situate and differentiate its author among peers.² And, of course, we are the audience for our statements: Many of the advice-offering essays and sites online highlight the fact that the preparation and revision of the teaching philosophy statement is a fruitful moment for growth and change, as we evolve as educators, try new methods, adopt new approaches, engage in other practices that extend our teacherly selves, and reflect upon our practice.

1.2. *The emergence of the teaching philosophy statement*

To situate the teaching philosophy statement, we want to point toward a few crucial moments from the past 60 years. First, the workshop reports from the first ten or so meetings of the Conference on College Composition and Composition (the first in 1950). Each year, teacher–scholars met to develop a set of value statements on a range of issues, including the function of the composition course, grammar in the freshman English course, reading and grading themes, the organization and use of a writing laboratory, etc. In 1953, the working group assigned to discuss the “Preparation of the Composition or Communication Teacher” argued that:

the development of a practical philosophy of communication is desirable; that although there are several valid modes of approach, the teacher of composition ought to be aware of which one he is using so that he can avoid the sort of chaotic sequence so frequently found in college composition courses. (p. 81; for a personal account that provided apt evidence of such chaos, see [Creek, 1955](#); for an interesting method of addressing chaos, see [Schwartz, 1955](#))

Certainly, prior suggestions existed, as did, we would argue, teaching philosophy statements. But this is the first instance that we could find of a specific mention of such an individual reflection piece in which an instructor situates her or his philosophy of communication and the teaching of composition (for related pieces, see, for example, [Allen, 1952](#); [Barnard, 1955](#); [CCCC, 1954](#); [CCC, 1958, 1959](#); [Cook, 1965](#); [Eble, 1960](#); [Hunting, 1951](#)). As for the prior, existing work, for instance, Theodore Morrison (1941) eloquently argued in a way that reminds us of many contemporary philosophies of teaching, that

we must first of all demand that he have something to say; we must teach him how to put himself in possession of content. We must help him find content in his own experience. . . We must teach him that the written word is an outgrowth of the spoken word and what he says on paper is an extension of his voice. (p. 791)

P. G. Perrin (1948) urged composition teachers to interrogate their own beliefs and emphases of attention, arguing that these differences among us characterize our everyday work and our teaching practices. Peter Elbow’s work (especially

² Admittedly, some sort of teaching philosophy is typically required during the tenure and promotion process, often as part of a larger teaching portfolio, which may include student reviews, form-generated student feedback, sample student work, and more. Here, however, we focus on the teaching philosophy statement typically required of new Ph.D.s during the process of applying for first full-time teaching positions.

his 1971 essay) has provided perhaps the most consistent call for reflectivity articulated: “the main thing I’ve come to believe through the exploration described here—and the main thing I wish to stress—is that better teaching behavior comes primarily from exploring one’s *own* teaching from an experiential and phenomenological point of view” (p. 743).

And, certainly, scholars in computers and writing, over the past 25 years, have both articulated philosophies of teaching with technology and suggestions for best practices in cultivating new technorhetorician teachers. *Computers and Composition* scholars have questioned the integration of computers in the writing classroom, and developed guidelines to share among colleagues (see Dinan, Gagnon, & Taylor, 1986). We have explored invention, revision, and other variables with computers in our classrooms (see, for instance, Duin, 1987; Strickland, 1987). We have adopted critical literacy approaches for thinking about computer-based writing and digital spaces (e.g., Eldred, 1991; Joyce, 1992; LeCourt, 1998; Schwartz, 1990). We’ve studied specific technologies for their impact on our teaching and students in our classrooms (e.g., Alexander, 2002; Blair & Monske, 2003; Colby & Colby, 2008; Douglass, 1994; Etchison, 1989; Lundin, 2008; Maranto & Barton, 2010; Rodrigues & Rodrigues, 1990; Sorapure, 2010). Although we admit this is an incredibly brief, necessarily partial—and, frankly, unfair in its exclusions—meandering across pedagogical talk in computers and writing, this brief discussion, and our survey of the past 25 years of computers and writing scholarship overall, have led us to argue that although we talk about pedagogy a great deal, in incredibly robust ways, and in ways that influence our scholarship, research, and teaching, we don’t often enough talk directly about the philosophies that inform our teaching and how we articulate those philosophies. They exist, often, as an undercurrent across the rich and diverse pedagogical work being done in computers and writing. Here, we wish to push these undercurrents to the surface. Before doing so, we want to spend a bit more time situating philosophy statements and prefacing the work we reflect on later in the manuscript.

1.3. The contemporary work of the teaching philosophy statement

... our realities and systems of knowing are not reflections or givens that are discovered ready made but rather are themselves composed (or constructed, to use the term of choice), that it is only by actively composing our worlds that we can know them (Lunsford, 1991, pp. 8–9).

In *On the Market*, Sandra Barnes (2007) provided a very brief history of the teaching portfolio, situating its emergence in the early 1970s by the Canadian Association of University Teachers. Speaking not of teaching philosophy statements specifically, but rather the larger teaching portfolio, Barnes noted the ways in which teaching portfolios can potentially benefit a job candidate:

- getting a job
- documenting teaching effectiveness
- enhancing teaching in anticipation of a new position (e.g., rethinking established approaches; showing that you are flexible and able to move into a new teaching role)
- helping departments/programs identify “fit”
- showing time-management skills (pp. 85–86)

Barnes continued by addressing the philosophy statement as the most difficult component to write, but, as do most of the other authors we reviewed, argued that the teaching philosophy statement is perhaps the most important piece, because it both situates and guides the rest of the portfolio. (We do not attend to the larger teaching portfolio here, but recommend Anderson, 1993; Centra, 1993; Edgerton, Hutchings, & Quinlan, 1991; Pytlik & Liggett, 2002; Seldin, 1991, 1993; Yancey, 2009; Yancey & Weiser, 1997.)

John Murray (1995), in an article published in *Innovative Higher Education*, noted the current climate in which teaching philosophy statements reside—one of assessment and surveillance. Murray pointed to the constant pressure higher education is under, and the clamor for “accountability.” He admitted that assessing teaching effectiveness is phenomenally complex, but argued that it is critical for departments to be active in improving teaching quality. Murray championed improvement across a bandwidth that spans from graduate education and extends through expectations of tenure-stream faculty. Although the cultural climate and the finger-pointing that exists in higher education can perhaps feel paralyzing, Peter Seldin (1991) and his colleagues analyzed more than ten thousand studies on teaching

effectiveness, and argued that several threads can be drawn from across these studies: “effective teachers are masters of their subject, can organize and emphasize, can clarify ideas and point out relationships, can motivate students, and are reasonable, open, concerned and imaginative human beings” (p. 1). Thus an ability to reflect upon, and, importantly, display those abilities, serves as a crucial tool in the face of scrutiny and punitive practices of assessment.³

Gail Goodyear and Douglas Allchin (1998), in one of the few articles that directly addresses teaching philosophy statements, noted the personal and public functions of these documents: to chart beliefs and values, and to make those public in order to solicit feedback, be evaluated, or provide fuel for administrative decision-making. The authors described the teaching philosophy statement in the ways in which it supports the work of professors (e.g., self-assessment; clarification of the “why” of teaching); for administrators (e.g., to help guide connections to a university’s mission statement, and situate a faculty member’s role within the institution); and for students (e.g., to communicate expectations and provide tools for success in the professor’s courses). Goodyear and Allchin primarily situated their discussion toward tenure-stream faculty preparing materials for tenure and promotion, but their discussion is nonetheless helpful for thinking about the larger life of teaching philosophy statements beyond the job-search or tenure-and-promotion process. We agree with Goodyear and Allchin (1998) when they noted that—barring one 1997 piece by N. V. Chism—there is a multitude of brief and perfunctory how-to essays available, but a lack of “commentary on statements of teaching philosophy, their role, how to compose them, or how to evaluate them as personal statements” (p. 104). And, further, there is a significant lack of commentary on the ways in which multimodal composing tools and venues—along with practices of remediation—provide space for crafting, reflecting on, and refining teaching philosophy statements.

Over and over, the authors of work we reviewed in preparing this manuscript argued something along the lines of “if you’ve taught, you have a teaching philosophy, you might just not know it yet!” This isn’t necessarily the case, though, especially if we understand a philosophy to be a set of beliefs with a core—with a well-defined, illustratable structure or skeleton. Essentially, an overall system or identifiable method that guides approaches. Instructors might have a set of beliefs and practices, certainly, but without a guiding anchor, those might just remain a haphazard collection of beliefs and practices. In *On the Market*, for instance, Barnes (2007) made the “you might not know it, but you have one” claim, then suggested to job candidates that they craft a statement perhaps not longer than a paragraph. The author’s default position seems to be that most job candidates won’t have interrogated their role as teachers, or ever articulated their pedagogical beliefs. And, dangerously we think, she seems to imply that it’s not terribly important to do so until the job-search process, and that such reflection can occur within one paragraph.

We looked to rhetoric and composition to offer more sophisticated, nuanced discussions of teaching philosophy statements, as reflection on pedagogy is absolutely crucial to our field (see, for instance, Bishop & Teague, 2004; Bridges, 1986; Clark, 2003; Corbett, Myers, & Tate, 1999; Glenn & Goldthwaite, 2007; Good & Warshauer, 1999; Harris, 1996; Haswell & Lu, 2007; Lindemann, 1999; Morahan & Johnson, 2002; Pytlík & Liggett, 2002; Roen, Pantoja, Yena, Miller, & Waggoner, 2002; Villanueva, 2003; Wilhoit, 2002). Writing of how new teachers of composition, especially graduate students, acclimate to the classroom and negotiate how they can apply what they know about the teaching of writing to the actual teaching of writing, Lisa Ede (1991) noted that for “writing teachers the often-asked question ‘What do we *know* about the teaching of writing?’ may not be as crucial as another question: ‘What can and should teachers *do* with what we know about the teaching of writing?’” (p. 120). Supporting our argument before in relation to the emaciated notion of “you might just not know it!,” Ede articulated the complex space in which teaching happens, and the even more complex reflection required to identify and assess the “cultural, political, and ideological forces” (p. 126) influencing both teachers and students.

Speaking of the ways in which composition studies has both accumulated a significant body of knowledge and also resides on the cusp of the research–practice connection, Ede (1991) noted: “We are also just beginning to recognize the extraordinary complexity of these activities that we call writing and teaching, to consider what it means to us *as teachers* when we recognize that all language use, including our own, is embedded in ideology, culture, and politics” (p. 130). For us, a significant part of the ideological, cultural, and political matrix in which we research, write, and teach is the current technological landscape. The following discussion articulates how we can, within this landscape, rethink

³ Certainly, assessment can be a healthy and necessary tool for analyzing our practices and evaluating our work. Many studies, surveys, and much research addresses the benefits of cultivating a culture of assessment (e.g., Brown, Enos, & Chaput, 2002; CCC Committee on Assessment, 1995; Council of Writing Program Administrators, 1998; Haswell, 2001; Huot, 2002; White, Lutz, & Kamusikiri, 1996; Yancey & Hout, 1997).

a particular genre—that is, the teaching philosophy statement—and the work it does; and resituate these documents so that they meet the multifaceted demands of a digital world and allow scholars a space to reflect across media on their teacherly beliefs and practices.

2. The context: Teaching with technology

The space in which we crafted the teaching with technology philosophy statements we reflect on later in this manuscript was a graduate seminar offered in Fall 2007 at Michigan State University. The course, Teaching with Technology, typically attracts graduate students from the departments of Education, English, History, Education, and Rhetoric & Writing; these departments span three separate colleges at the university, and students in the Fall 2007 course represented five different graduate programs.

The course focuses on the ways in which technologies can and do impact teaching practices. In the course, we did attend, to some extent, to technologies such as the pen and paper and the chalkboard. We focused more attentively and specifically, however, on digital technologies and networked spaces. The goals of the course were to:

- introduce intellectual, technological, and institutional issues related to teaching with technology;
- create a space to explore a range of information and communication technologies and the ways in which they do or can intersect with teaching, learning, and writing practices;
- focus on relevant research and scholarship—primarily by computers and writing scholars—to situate us to the intellectual history and dynamics of teaching with technology; and
- introduce and negotiate different physical, blended, and online spaces for teaching with technology, including traditional classrooms, technology classrooms, computer labs, and wireless spaces.

Course topics included the history of the Internet; searching and evaluating the Web (including tools like Google, Flickr, LibraryThing, and more); digital literacies; digital identity; hypertext theory; digital–visual rhetoric; blogs and wikis; new media; social networking; access and digital divide issues; video games and learning; intellectual property in digital spaces; hybrid and online courses; technology activism; and the futures of teaching with technology.

A major set of course activities focused on the experimentation with and implementation of different information and communication technologies. One of our major activities was to write a teaching with technology philosophy statement early on in the course. The first version of this “teachnology statement” was a 2–3 page, traditionally prepared (i.e., about 12 pt font, double-spaced, 1” margins) document. Dànienne offered an initial prompt to launch the drafting of these statements:

A technology philosophy statement is a statement that focuses on your stance toward and values related to technology in the classroom. It might address the tools you use to teach, why you use these tools, how you situate yourself *vis-a-vis* these tools, and how you reflect upon and assess your teaching with technology methods.

In addition, we consulted with essays and articles that address practices and philosophies of technology use, specifically teaching with technology. The course readings provided a helpful starting point, and Dànienne also suggested pieces from the “praxis” section of *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy* and provided questions designed to help us reflect upon and explore our experiences learning technologies, including (and, in part, inspired by Bridgeford, Kitalong, & Selfe, 2004):

- What were your earliest experiences with a writing technology? With a digital writing technology? What do you remember about them? How did you use them? What did you write/create?
- What’s the most difficult challenge you can remember related to learning a new tool or technology?
- What’s the best moment you can remember related to using a new tool or technology?
- How has your writing changed with or in relationship to digital writing technologies?
- What does your current digital writing environment look like? The physical environment—computer, desk, surrounding area; the virtual environment—the desktop, screens, and interfaces you write within? How does this environment reflect your digital writing practices?
- What digital tools do you currently use to write, compose, and/or create? What sorts of “texts” do you produce? How are the texts you produce different because they were created digitally?

These questions were followed by others that asked for reflection upon experiences in both being a student and a teacher, such as:

- What are the least effective ways I've seen teachers use technology in the classroom?
- What are the most effective ways I've seen teachers use technology in the classroom?
- What are some of the best possible outcomes of teaching with technology?
- What are my teaching with technology goals?
- What skills and abilities do I want students to enhance or gain in my classroom?
- What can XYZ tool or technology allow that more traditional means not allow, do, or facilitate?
- How can I illustrate the claims I want to make about teaching with technology? How can I not only tell but also show my readers about my beliefs and values?

Once we composed this initial, traditional statement, we quickly moved into remixing and remediating our statements. The second course activity—linked to readings that provided theoretical and research-based discussion of each technology and the ways in which they impact reading and writing practices—asked us to translate our statements into slideshow presentations, with bulleted text, appropriate animations, and well-constructed design schemes. The third activity asked us to transition our statements into Web sites and asked us to work to design spaces that were hypertextual, potentially nonlinear, and that require navigation and linking structures. The fourth activity required us to rethink our statement as a digital–visual collage, in which the primary mode of explanation was through images. For our fifth course activity, we crafted digital movies out of our statements. Each of these activities were designed to help us connect the theoretical, technical, and the practical—to get us thinking about how information changes shape across genres and media, and to get us experimenting with the different tools available to write, craft, and compose digital work. And each of these activities was designed to situate teaching philosophy statements as living documents attentive to different means of composing.

In what follows, we draw upon our experiences in the Teaching with Technology class because the class required us to do what often isn't done—that is, to deeply and theoretically situate our beliefs about teaching with technology, and to richly, vocally state those beliefs across a range of media projects. That is, to put into practice our already existing and growing beliefs about the roles digital information and communication technologies have in our work as teachers. What follows is a discussion of four emergences that occurred as we engaged in this work. We do not attempt, in sharing these experiences, any sort of final, fixed statement or any sense of closure regarding teaching with technology. Certainly, those of us who teach with technology recognize the velocity at which technology changes, and the pace at which we must work to keep up. Most of us who teach with technology, however, also recognize that core pedagogical values transcend technologies—they exceed versions. They explode iterations. They span digital generations. Thus we share these emergences as moments reflective of a particular time, experience, and technological setting; we share these emergences because, taken together, they offer a justification for rethinking and remediating the teaching philosophy statement.

3. Four emergencies

Four key threads that emerged as we worked included:

- wrestling with what most of us had read extensively about, but only experienced abstractly and momentarily and not necessarily in a context where we could theorize—that is, the difficulties and potentialities of selecting among tools and critically approaching technology-rich work;
- understanding remediation as we were engaged in acts of moving ideas and content from one media space to another;
- recognizing the multiple and layered transformations that occurred as we moved our teaching with technology philosophy statements across media and across time; and
- addressing the complexities related to representations of professional identity across digital media and remediations.

This is clearly not a complete list of the experiences we had as we revised and remediated our statements, but these emergences were those that we each felt most profoundly. In the section that follows, we talk briefly about each, then move into conclusions that articulate the value of this particular process of crafting, refining, and remediating the teaching philosophy statement.

3.1. Tools and critical technology work

One of the key difficulties in teaching with technology in our current technological landscape is selecting among tools, and facing questions like: Is this the tool for the context? Is this the appropriate tool for the task? Is this a robust enough tool to facilitate the type of composition I wish to create? Is this a sustainable tool—that is, will the software still be around and accessible in the future? These are incredibly important questions we don't often enough allow students to address in shaping their own work—but questions that are crucial for both us and our students to wrestle with. Software, for instance, is not a one-size-fits-all solution to communication tasks; this is something we recently experienced large-scale at our institution (in Fall 2010), as we finally moved from Microsoft Office 2003 to Microsoft Office 2007 on our campus PC network, and to Office 2008 on the handful of Macs that were still maintained in our computer labs. Currently students with new computers are running Microsoft Office 2010; those that can't afford the suite or who did not select to have it manufacturer-installed are trying to do their work in Microsoft Works. More and more students are part of a new Apple generation, indoctrinated through iPods then iPhones; they're bringing Macintosh computers to campus in numbers we haven't seen in over 15 years. Thus, in our class, although we were asked to perform specific remediations of our teaching with technology philosophy statements and we received initial introductions to different types of software, we chose the spaces in which we wanted to compose, and had to navigate issues of access, sustainability, and more—and had to determine how best to represent this sophistication in making technological choices in our teaching philosophy statements.

When selecting a tool to create her digital–visual collage, Karissa adopted a collage approach for her Web site and decided to use Apple Pages to construct her collage because the program allowed the flexibility to move and manipulate images without too many restraints. Knowing how to negotiate the affordances of the particular tool allowed her to push at the overall metaphor for her collage. The circles were meant to represent dialogue, text bursts, and thought bubbles. In this particular remediation of Karissa's philosophy statement, the circles served as windows, providing a visually compelling way to glimpse into her teaching beliefs and research interests (see Fig. 1).

Each of us connected our approaches to Dickie Selfe's (2003) plea for writing teachers not to allow technology to drive their pedagogies. Here, we carefully avoided allowing technology to drive the way we situated, thought about, reflected on, and presented our pedagogical beliefs. We were explicitly careful not to fall into the traps perpetuated by advertisements and often by the lore of early adopters, which tell a tale of smooth transformation, seamless integration, and emphasize the “newness” of a particular tool (and not necessarily the rhetorical dimensions of and composition facilitated by the tool). In visually representing this belief, Donnie chose to place a brain in the center of his image (see Fig. 2); he noted that it would have been too easy to produce an image where the technology powers the brain or becomes the locus of action, but placing the brain at the center emphasizes that specific technologies are tools that can be *chosen*, adopted, modified, and, if need be, abandoned; the technology itself it is not the sole constituent of pedagogy.

3.2. Enhanced understandings of remediation

One of the pieces that we read for the class and that guided our work was Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's (2000) influential *Remediation*. In the text, the authors define remediation, and provide examples of the process of migrating media across platforms and spaces. Remediation works both as *re-media-tion*, or the act of drawing upon other media sources in a range of ways, and *remedying*, or the act of addressing lacks or gaps in earlier media. What we found as we worked across drafts and media is that remediation is, as Bolter, Grusin, and others have documented, a complex process. We also discovered that remediation is *not* remix. This was an important distinction for us to consider as we approached our composing and remediating work. *Remix* is an act that calls upon composers to mash, mix, and merge separate pieces, often to create new meaning. *Remediation*, however, is an act that calls upon composers to reflect, resituate, and reshape a piece while moving it to another medium, and often to enhance or expand upon its

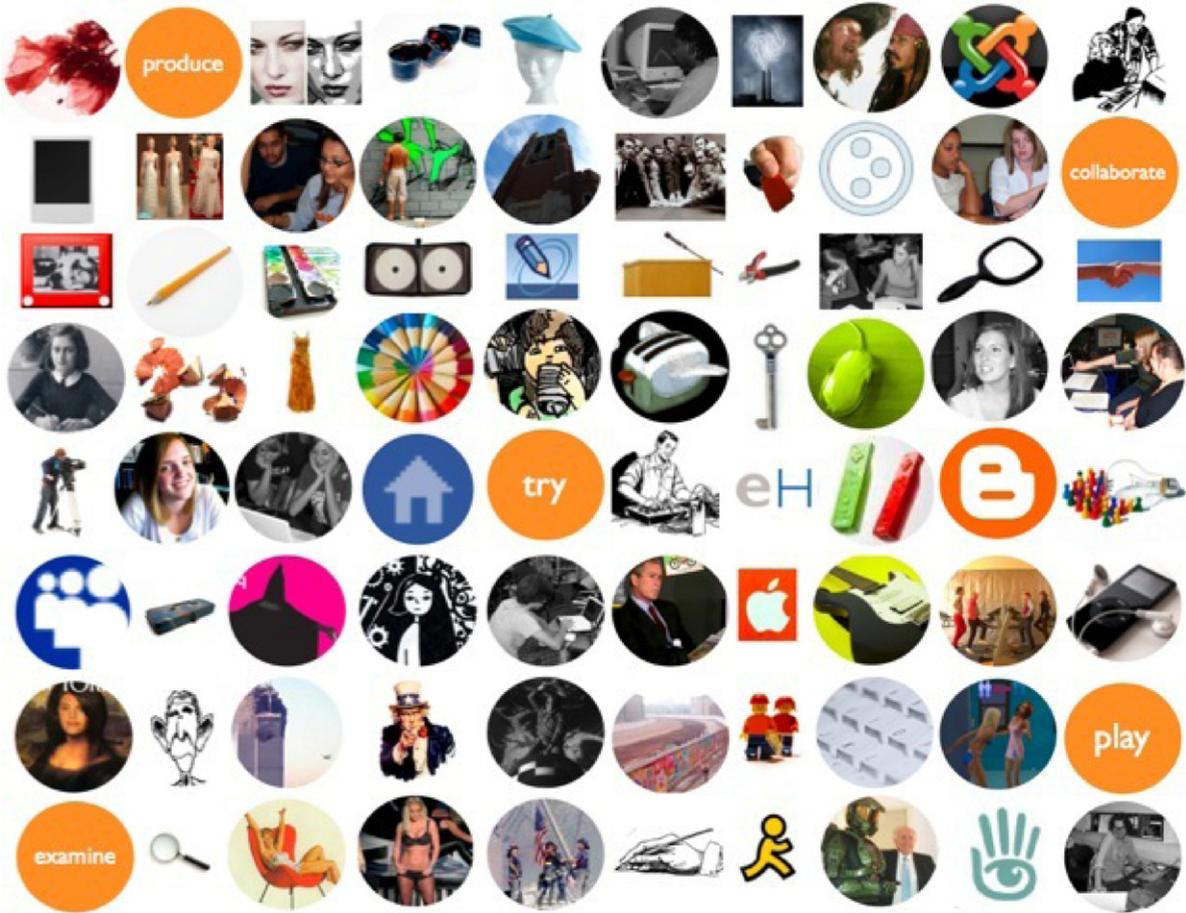


Fig. 1. Karissa's Technology Collage.

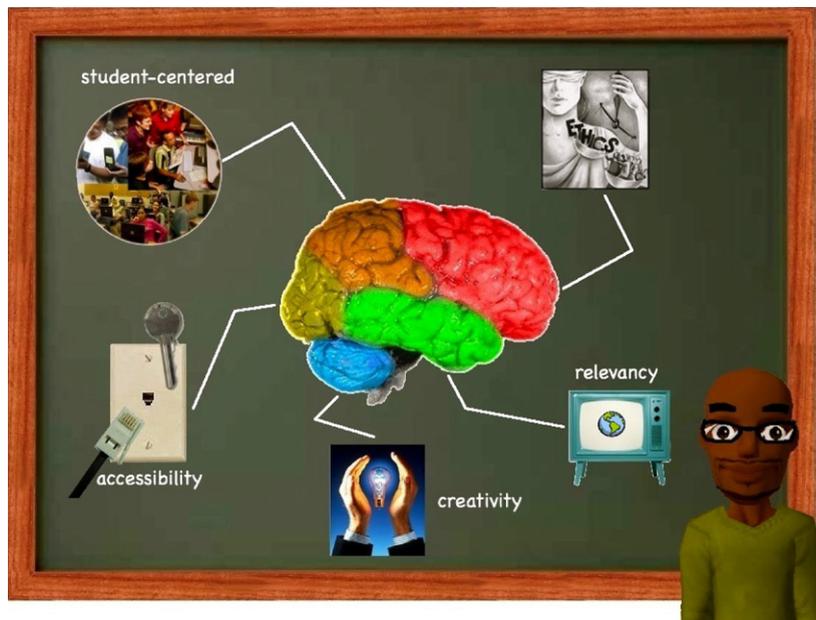


Fig. 2. Donnie's Technology Collage.

existing meaning. In this sense, the act of remediation provided a richer space to rethink, revise, and re-media-te our teaching statements.

Each of us experienced difficulties as we attempted to define and represent our values and practices regarding teaching with technology within the various iterations of our philosophies. Because many of the media types we deployed were radically different from the standard paper versions and its expectations, we had to be creative in terms of how we chose to represent our pedagogical beliefs. Remediating the teaching philosophy thus involved a level of play and creativity, and each of us approached remediation differently. Remediation is not just the act of pushing a media piece to a new media form—it requires waves of cutting, editing, merging, combining, recombining, rethinking, rescripting, and much, much more.

Matt noted that in approaching the first remediation, he first focused on the aspects or characteristics of technology that had been key in his academic journey, as well as those he has seen as vital to others: collaboration, access, identity, and expansiveness. Of course, identifying and defining these in a text-based statement was much easier than crafting a representation of these aspects and showing clear, relevant examples of these things in a digital–visual medium. Although a first-year doctoral student, Matt had returned to academia with many previous years’ experiences as a professional writer and intense user of technology, and found that this professional, workplace-situated background often overpowered his view toward classroom-anchored pedagogy. Of course, during the time when he was in industry, he had limited exposure to teaching—a problem many, if not most, in our field do not have. In fact, many may have the opposite problem—a real familiarity with the ins and outs of teaching and a hesitancy to give technology a prominent, workable place at the table, an emphasis on the theoretical and less so the practical and technological (and here we refer to practical in the same ways that Stuart Selber, 2004a, 2004b, refers to the functional). Remediating his statement allowed Matt a space to identify some of the places where his professional and pedagogical stances seemed to be in conflict with one another, and where they seemed to be in concert, and remediating the piece allowed him to select visual and textual content to represent this dynamic.

Matt found that while remediating from textual artifact to visual collage to digital movie, the medium carried the message along and reshaped the piece in some ways: The technological examples seemed to become magnified and multiplied through the act of remediation—blogging, podcasting, social networking, and wikis were hardly mentioned in his initial textual statement, but took on prominent places in later versions of the work (see Fig. 3 for a still from Matt’s movie). Matt pondered: While it’s easy to demonstrate a podcast by using imagery of an iPod or someone speaking into a microphone for example, how do you visually portray a student having an “aha moment” while doing a podcasting classroom exercise? Matt relied on the imagery of collaboration, access, identity, and expansiveness to do this work across remediations.

Phill noted that his series of remediations made one thing readily apparent: The practices that many of us in computers and writing talk about do indeed change texts—the surface, shape, and other aspects of texts as we mix, mash, and work across media—but we will never be able to make that argument in a compelling, embodied way unless we are *enacting* the practices we value. Different mediums call for a different consideration of audience(s) and a different set of composing criteria. The fragmented nature of our digital–visual collages, for instance, would have been jarring in standard textual format. The techno-heavy tone of some of our work would have read as “flippant” were it presented as an entirely textual “teaching philosophy” statement (as indeed it did). Our slideshows and Web sites would have seemed alien if they were simply bulleted lists on printed sheets of paper. By remediating the text, adding different content, and transforming them through the methods and mediums selected for each particular instance, we found we were able to breathe life into a genre (i.e., the teaching philosophy statement) that is by its very nature and history somewhat scripted and restrictive.

3.3. Multiple and layered transformations

Linked closely to our acts of remediation, we found that the *idea* of the teaching philosophy statement contained within it the potential for something much more. We also found that significant transformations in media and in meaning occurred as we worked on our statements. Almost all of us, as we worked on the first iteration of our statements—bound by print conventions and traditional formatting—longed to create a different kind of teaching philosophy, a dynamic and active text that would resonate with the sustained, productive questions we had about teaching, and not just the “easy answers” or template-style approach we felt obligated by for the typical, textual statement. We talked through this desire and unpacked it, making sure that we weren’t falling prey to some utopic calculation that *text + technology = dynamic*,



Fig. 3. Still from Matt's Technology Movie.

active texts. Our approaches to our texts, our understandings of remediation, and our approaches to “active” documents did deepen as we worked on the iterations of our statements, and our documents moved from being relatively flat things to being more nimble, mobile, layered compositions.

The layers that emerged as Staci worked across her remediations gave her pause, and she noticed how flimsy the connection was between these versions and the teaching philosophy statement she crafted earlier in her career and made available on her Web site. She quickly realized, further, that each remediation forced her to move deeper into thinking about pedagogical complexities. She noted that prior to crafting the teaching *with technology* philosophy statements, she had not considered how teaching philosophy statements might include a discussion of teaching with technology. The original, static statement she had published on her Web site prior to the class focused on teaching in general, but did not consider how teaching philosophies may change depending on the physical and technological space of a given classroom. In thinking about how her technology philosophy changed shape and form when the media used to convey that philosophy changed, larger questions emerged, including: How do teaching philosophies change when the classroom itself also changes shape or form? What happens to our philosophies as writing teachers when we move from a traditional classroom to a computer lab or technology classroom? Do writing teachers need two different—or three or four or more—teaching philosophies, or might just one that includes a discussion of technology suffice in this digital age?

Julie reflected on her desire to represent student identity, and how that representation emerged across media pieces: she noted that just as the origin point on a mathematical grid marks the primary point of reference for all subsequent lines and marks, students are the origin at which all meaning converges. She knew that she wanted to metaphorically situate students in that space, and on her Web site remediation chose a representative image that linked to a separate page offering further discussion of this assertion (see Fig. 4). The visual and navigational relationship she created between “constants” and “variables” helps to show how each interacts with the other in relationship to students’ needs in particular learning situations. Julie worked to visually and textually assert that although students’ needs change over time, student needs must remain at the center of meaning and meaning-making in the classroom.



Fig. 4. Capture from Julie's Web Page.

3.4. Complexities related to our professional identities

Each of us found that in moving across remediations and anchoring our professional, teacherly identities beyond flat text was a complex act, both in how we situated ourselves as teachers and as how we represented our pedagogical beliefs. Each of us found that remediating and remixing our philosophy statements forced us to do exactly what we are always asking students to do: think reflectively, and think critically. Each remediation was a moment for both invention and frustration. Each remediation raised questions like: What is my purpose? Who is my audience? How would I achieve my goals with each new technology? How could I navigate tools that initially seemed to complicate the process rather than enhance it? We found that once we each identified our purposes and audiences, the benefits of each remediation and each new technology began to resonate. The acts of creating and remixing a teaching with technology statement allowed us to look at the use of technology in the classroom in a different realm. We found we could implement projects into our course designs that use technology as a strategy, allowing students to become both consumers and producers. And, importantly, our technology philosophy statements provided goals and objectives that support and sustain a technology-enriched classroom.

There is much at stake when we choose to represent ourselves in non-standard mediums—in this case, slideshow presentations, Web sites, digital–visual collages, and digital movies, and, especially, if we chose to remediate an established genre to do so. The belief that audience was extremely important to keep in mind, *perhaps even more so* than with a written piece was what we each found to be true as we attempted to define ourselves professionally and explain ourselves pedagogically across media. As documents that represent our professional interests and practices, teaching philosophies help us articulate our scholarly identities. We were all skilled and trained in creating flat text, and almost all of us had created a teaching philosophy statement in the past. Yet, we often found ourselves confounded

by questions of whether it was possible to truly represent ourselves in genres that do not fit the structure of a traditional narrative to tell the story of our scholarly practices.

For Phill, at the same time that he was in the course and creating his teaching with technology statements, he was composing a series of professional documents—a more-standard teaching philosophy, a CV, and a research précis. He considered himself first and foremost a computers and writing scholar, and, as such, his teaching philosophy reflected that. When he presented his teaching philosophy statement in a professional development mentoring group, the coordinator—and several of his peers—responded to his focus on technology by asking “do you actually teach writing?” Although the question was hyperbole, the underlying sentiment was not. As the instructor noted, “some universities wouldn’t hire someone who speaks dismissively of traditional papers.”

Julie had a very different type of eye-opening experience. She initially composed her statement with an abstract, quasi-metaphorical assertion: that “education must deeply mediate the co-existence of constants and variables.” As per the initial seminar assignment, she began composing a traditional paper, an alphabetic text produced in Microsoft Word. She wandered from paragraph to paragraph, weaving in ideas of multiplicity and simultaneity, shifting literacies, and student agency in the classroom and beyond. As comfortable as she was in the familiar environment of word-processing software, her first pass at composing this technology philosophy presented difficulties in releasing, shaping, and concretizing her ideas. In this first project, she realized she had replicated the original, frustrating feeling she had come to associate with composing traditional teaching philosophy statements—focusing so singularly on saying the “right” things that she couldn’t see herself in what she had written. In the next remediation, however, she had a breakthrough not just in terms of improving clarity and organization, but also in terms of praxis. When she started to envision her technology philosophy statement as a visual and spatial text, and when she started to imagine *where* students, critical thought, and the challenges of technology in the classroom would be located, she was able to successfully refine her argument and define corresponding classroom practices. With these ideas for a more generative exploration of student-centered pedagogy, she engaged the next two remediations and left the class having built a syllabus for a composition course focused around the writing and rhetoric of digital identities.

4. Conclusions and implications: The future of the teaching philosophy statement

Certainly, we recognize that we have raised some significant questions here about revision, remix, remediation, and moving across media, such as: How does revision via remediation take place, when an author mixes her own work to create a new and different media product? How does revision via remix take place, when an author mixes his work with that of other authors to create a new and different media product? As for questions specific to teaching philosophy statements, we are left pondering:

- As one of us eloquently noted, as instructional and communication technologies become more and more ubiquitous, will teaching philosophy statements necessarily become, at least in part, teaching with technology philosophy statements?
- What is the future role of the teaching philosophy statement? Will it retain its currency in the job search? Will its currency change shape as it migrates across media?
- What are the affordances and limitations of making one’s teaching philosophy statement publicly and digitally available?

We hope, here, to have illustrated the importance of teaching philosophy statements. We hope, also, to have argued for the promise in rethinking this particular professional genre. Resituating the teaching philosophy statement offers several productive possibilities. First, expanding the statement and adding technology to the mix allows us to reflect—in ways we typically don’t and aren’t expected to—on the value we place on instructional, informational, and communication technologies. Articulating our goals and hopes, and describing our approaches and assessment measures, helps us to situate technology carefully in our classrooms, not as an object or tool somehow free of its own affordances and limitations, but instead as an agent worth studying and situating. Certainly, digital technologies are extending, and in some ways transforming, our pedagogy. Identifying the value we place in such extensions and transformations is a critical professionalization process, especially for those of us who wish to situate ourselves within digital rhetoric or computers and writing.

Second, remediating requires us—as our examples and reflection illustrates—to resituate ourselves and our pedagogy as we implement different tools to compose and create different media objects. It was impossible for us not to think deeply about our values and overall philosophy as we moved from one technological tool to the next, and we migrated from one delivery mode to the next. In doing so, our statements became not only more honed and nuanced, but the ways in which we displayed, illustrated, reflected on, and argued for our beliefs became more honed and nuanced. Importantly, these transformations, we would argue, would not have happened had we not worked across different tools.

We think that this genre and our processes have much to tell us in our current climate of analysis and production, and attention to visual rhetoric; we hope to have contributed to the line of research that addresses the ways in which moving from analysis to production helps equip us and equip students with the critical skills needed to produce within and across media, and to think rhetorically and reflect critically as we select and deploy different tools. A range of scholars (e.g., Blakesley & Brooke, 2002; George, 2002; Handa, 2004; Hocks, 2003; Hocks & Kendrick, 2005; Mitchell, 1995; Stroupe, 2000; and others) have encouraged us to better address the “interpenetrating, dialogic relationships” between “word and image, verbal texts and visual texts” (Hocks & Kendrick, p. 1). Although most Humanities-oriented disciplines are steeped in analysis, these scholars have also encouraged us to recognize the value of production. Discussing a digital film, for instance, may be a useful and important analytical moment; producing a digital film should be the next step in scholarly inquiry. Some may be technologically hesitant to do so, but, as Carolyn Handa (2001) reminded us, what we offer production is of great value—we offer rhetorical lenses, analytical abilities, and tools to deeply critique; as Handa noted, “incorporating digital elements into writing—especially in the form of Web pages and multimedia projects—demands that we draw on our knowledge of rhetoric perhaps even more than our knowledge of HTML, design issues, or graphics software” (pp. 1–2).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we hope we have demonstrated the value of situating teaching philosophy statements as robust, living documents, and articulated a need for us to compose our teacherly identities in tandem with the technologies with which we teach. Integrating digital creation processes deliberately into teacher training is a crucial programmatic need. Rather than situating the teaching philosophy statement as something created solely for the job market and entirely in textual form, we can resituate it as a space for scholarly inquiry and reflection, and for work across media.

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