

Issue Preview

Tracy Bridgeford

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Michael J. Salvo

Purdue University

Bill Williamson

Saginaw Valley State University

This issue marks the end of our second year of publication as well as a transition for Karla Saari Kitalong, who is stepping down as Editor and assuming the Book Review Editor position. Be sure to read our tribute to Karla later in this section. With this issue, we also welcome Michael Salvo, Purdue University, as Karla's replacement and Mark Hannah, Associate Editor and PhD candidate at Purdue.

The issue opens with a piece from Carol Johnson and Norbert Elliot of the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Their article, which focuses on assessing student performance in technical writing programs, is the first of its kind both for *Programmatic Perspectives* and in its use of statistical analysis to quantify student and program progress. By tracking and analyzing student performance over short and long terms, Johnson and Elliot were able to pinpoint student weaknesses and alter their program to address those needs. They propose a thoroughly described model based on five years of results that is fully adaptable to other technical writing programs.

Before Michael Salvo came on board, we were lucky to have accepted and published an article by him and his colleagues at Purdue, Jennifer Bay, Mark A. Hannah, and Karen Kaiser Lee, which appears as this issue's second article. We can assure readers that Michael was not involved in the editing or publishing of this article. After reading the article, we're sure you see why we asked him to join our editorial team. The focus of their is the Purdue Professional Writing Program's Semester @SEA initiative, which was intended to foster community engagement and student activism through an ongoing partnership with a community organization. Each author held a different role in @SEA, and they report on their experiences and observed developments. Engagement as immersion, adaptation

to emerging postindustrial workplaces, enhancement of student leadership and transactionality, and pedagogical transfer are some of the topics discussed. From their observations, the authors give advice for partnership-based innovation within professional writing programs.

In this issue's Program Showcase, David Beard describes the creation and growth of the Writing Studies and Professional Writing majors within the Department of Writing Studies at the University of Minnesota Duluth. Although the intellectual argument for the existence of a Writing Studies major plays a large role in Beard's description, he completes the picture of UMD's program by articulating the institutional resources available to the major, and the core courses for both the Professional Writing and Writing Studies majors.

Bill Williamson writes this issue's editorial in which he begins a discussion of emerging online technical communication programs. He raises questions about certification, the Body of Knowledge, and integrity of online programs. In his exploration of new programmatic developments, Williamson urges the CPTSC and its members to look to the future, encouraging increased intellectual exchange and the maturation of promising Council initiatives.

We include in this issue memorials for Stuart Brown who was instrumental in New Mexico State's Technical Communication program. Patti Wojahn and Stephen A. Bernhardt share their memories of his work, his life, and his spirit.

Joshua Prenosil of Purdue University reviews Clay Spinuzzi's *Network: Theorizing Knowledge Work in Telecommunication* in this issue's book review. The work comes highly recommended by Prenosil for its clear, situation-based discussion and comparison of actor-network and activity theories. Prenosil finds Spinuzzi's work adaptable to administrators in terms of pedagogy as well as understanding organizational dynamics.

As always, we welcome your submissions focusing on all areas of programmatic development and program administration. Work will soon begin on Volume 3 publications for March and September 2011. Also, any and all commentary on this or previous issues is invited if you wish to respond.

Notes of Appreciation and Welcome

Transition

Karla Saari Kitalong

Michigan Technological University

More than a decade ago in graduate school at Michigan Tech, Bill, Tracy, and I became friends. We read, wrote, and laughed together, planned our futures as university professors and program administrators, and imagined the journal we would someday edit. That journal, *Programmatic Perspectives*, has become a reality, as have many of the other visions we shared. Bill and Tracy have cemented their roles as technical communication program administrators, Tracy at the University of Nebraska Omaha and Bill at Saginaw Valley State University. In contrast, I moved into more general writing program administration and my research interests, which were never solidly in the program administration realm to begin with, have veered even more sharply away from that turf in recent years. Actually, WPA work and technical communication program administration are closely related, but the NSF-funded usability research with which I am involved, while unfailingly interesting and productive, makes increasing demands on my time and energy.

So with this issue I'm stepping down as co-editor of *Programmatic Perspectives*. It was a difficult step, which I tried to avoid having to make. I've truly enjoyed working with the CPTSC Executive Board and membership, with the authors who have trusted *Programmatic Perspectives* with their work, and especially with my good friends, Bill and Tracy. But I know that it's the right decision for me and for the journal. Any residual doubts I may have harbored were assuaged once Michael Salvo of Purdue University agreed to assume the co-editorship.

I've known Michael for a long time. He's well published in technical communication and is a member of the editorial board of the Technical Communication Library of the E-Server, an online repository of technical communication research. He was a founder of *Kairos* and continues to serve on its editorial board. I can't think of a better choice for co-editor of *Programmatic Perspectives*, and I look forward to the journal's evolution over the next several years.

I will miss my in-depth involvement with *Programmatic Perspectives*, but I will stay involved as the review editor, beginning with Volume 3, Issue 1. Send me your ideas for book, media, website, and software reviews or review essays

that inform the work of technical communication program administrators. What are the resources that help you do your jobs? I hope you'll consider sharing them with others through the lens of *Programmatic Perspectives* reviews. Thanks for reading.

Transition

Laurence José

Grand Valley State University

I became the associate editor for *Programmatic Perspectives* in Fall 2008. At that time, I was a PhD candidate at Michigan Technological University who was in the midst of writing her dissertation. Of course, I welcomed the opportunity to expand my professional landscape. Looking back at these last two years, I can say that my involvement with the journal has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my graduate student career. Serving as the associate editor not only gave me the chance to participate in the making of a new scholarly space, but it also deepened my own reflection on how we as a community define, articulate, and situate programmatic research within the field of technical communication. For instance, besides defining procedures to streamline the editorial process, working on the editors' manual became a way to enact productive questions regarding the scope of the journal and its role for defining new ways to articulate the intellectual dimension characterizing the work of program administrators. Hence, although the work I was performing was deeply rooted in "practice," it also gave me new and precious insights into the theory and disciplinary identity of technical communication.

As I am moving to a new stage in my career, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Tracy Bridgeford, Karla Saari Kitalong, and Bill Williamson for giving me the opportunity to serve on the editorial team and for fostering an environment where questions and dialogues were always welcome and encouraged. It is under their impetus and their desire to define an editorial philosophy rooted in "mutual mentoring" (See Kitalong editorial in volume 1.2) that the journal has become such an intellectually dynamic and stimulating space. I will miss serving on the editorial team but hope to continue to contribute at another level.

Tribute and Welcome

Bill Williamson

Saginaw Valley State University

Tracy Bridgeford

University of Nebraska at Omaha

As we complete volume two of *Programmatic Perspectives*, and close our fifth year of work on the journal, we find it is time to pay thanks to the people who have helped get us here and to acknowledge some transitions in roles and new additions to our editorial staff.

Karla Saari Kitalong, one of the original three editors of *Programmatic Perspectives*, let us know in mid-2009 that she needed to reduce her responsibilities to the journal in anticipation of investing greater time in other projects. Around the same time, Kathryn Northcut was stepping down as our original Book Review Editor and thus offered Karla the opportunity to make a transition of roles within the journal staff.

We cannot emphasize enough how critical was Karla's role in the process of proposing the journal initially and producing this publication once we had secured the support of the CPTSC Executive Board and general membership. Karla took on the very challenging role of Acquisitions Editor for *Programmatic Perspectives*. This meant that she and Laurence José, Associate Editor, were the point of contact for authors during the first three years of the journal's existence. Together they handled initial reviews of manuscripts, managed the peer review process, and drafted most of the response letters to authors. Such work requires diligence, care and vision, and is crucial to our editorial process.

Karla approached her work for *Programmatic Perspectives* the way she does most things—with humility, grace, and quiet resolve. She is slow to claim even her justifiable share of any accolades in the offering and quick to accept responsibility for short comings sometimes only she sees. If you've worked with Karla, you've heard her giggle and her all-out laugh. However, personality alone does not get the work done. It is therefore a good thing that Karla also has tenacity to spare and that she balances rigor with effective, respectful editorial vision. Karla has helped us assemble two years of solid scholarly content and had a hand in developing more that will appear in future issues.

Laurence makes a transition as well from Associate Editor, a position she held while completing her doctoral studies at Michigan Tech, to member of the Review Board for the journal. Laurence too was instrumental to the journal

in its early phases of development. She brought editorial experience to *Programmatic Perspectives*, and played an important role in creating our editorial policies and procedures.

Programmatic Perspectives is indebted to these colleagues.

Several months of work, including many hallway, phone, and electronic mail exchanges, resulted in *Programmatic Perspectives* receiving a commitment from Michael Salvo of Purdue University to become the next member of our editorial team. He brings Mark Hannah with him as Associate Editor. These gentlemen are handling their own introduction in a companion piece, so we will take this opportunity only to welcome them to *Programmatic Perspectives*.

As we close this note, we want to acknowledge and express our gratitude to all of the people who have served so far in the editorial process for the journal. We list these colleagues here and offer our sincere thanks for their contributions.

Michigan Technological University

Karla Saari Kitalong, Editor

Laurence José, Associate Editor

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Greg Thompson, Current Associate Editor

Kristin Gabel-Beccard, Associate Editor

Sam Evans, Associate Editor

Fred McVaugh, Associate Editor

Saginaw Valley State University

Jodi Radloff, Assistant Editor

Initial Thoughts

Michael J. Salvo

Purdue University

I feel both great happiness and trepidation as I accept the responsibilities of Editor at *Programmatic Perspectives*. I can never nor would I try to replace Karla Saari Kitalong, who has created so many new opportunities for herself and others that there aren't enough hours in her day. Thank you, Karla, for trusting me with the journal you, Bill, and Tracy have worked so hard to create and launch in service to this very important and valuable organization, the Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication. As readers of

the journal well know, this publication offers an important, if all too rare, outlet for administrative research, articulating a scholarship of program building and innovation. Although other journals sometimes publish individual essays that focus on issues of concern to administrators and other organizations serve the needs of writing specialists, CPTSC serves a specialized need, and *Programmatic Perspectives* is the one place where the unique nexus of administrators of writing programs in scientific and technical communication have a home and consistent voice. *Programmatic Perspectives* is focused on and dedicated to this productive community.

As Editor, Karla has worked effectively to help administrators articulate their hard-won knowledge and prepare it for presentation in the most rigorous and accessible form available. That patient, steady guidance is my model, and as any of you who have worked directly with Karla know, we are all lucky to have her as our colleague. Luckily for *Programmatic Perspectives*, Karla has agreed to stay on as Reviews Editor, and I hope to enlist her as a manuscript reviewer.

So Karla will be very hard to follow as she has established the voice and direction of this new journal, worked so effectively to bring new essays and voices, and articulated a new electronic format that sustainably offers open access to the very best administrative research the community produces.

My goal as Editor is to listen closely to CPTSC members and pay close attention at the annual conference, and I may have already been in contact with some of you, asking you to turn your presentations into manuscripts. My role is one of service: service to the community and to act in service to our scholarly voice and need. As such, it is a reflection of our ongoing conversations and concerns, and my goal is to act as catalyst to bring the best expressions of those conversations to fruition as peer-reviewed research articles and program profiles. Moreover, I see the opportunity to expand publication in *Programmatic Perspectives* to as wide a potential author pool as possible, inviting new voices into our conversation to represent new and emerging programs growing to meet the needs at their home institutions as well as existing programs being revamped by a new generation of administrators facing emerging challenges of the administering programs in technical, scientific, and professional writing and communication into the second decade of the twenty-first century.

Therefore, I will be working with you all to attract readers among these new scholars, teachers, administrators, and professionals who want to read about and share their own experiences to both feed the CPTSC and act as gateway for new members and participants—bring in some new faces, new ideas, articulate new challenges—while supporting new administrators with the substantial expertise and knowledge base CPTSC has created since its founding in 1974, supporting, expanding, and challenging its members with a journal that is as

interesting to read as it is useful. In addition to the challenges of promoting programs and research, their development and evaluation, and acting as a voice of the community, *Programmatic Perspectives* can also bring new members into CPTSC, encourage new voices, conversations, and directions for our communities and institutions. Mark Hannah, my trusted colleague and friend at Purdue, has some innovative ideas for encouraging new voices that he describes in his introduction below in his new role as Associate Editor.

Introduction

Mark A. Hannah

Purdue University

I am excited to step into the role of Associate Editor and continue the excellent work begun by Laurence José. Early in the design of the journal, there was a section titled “emerging voices” that was intended to open space for new scholarly voices and encourage them to contribute their work. It was an important and still timely goal that I plan to pursue. Overall, I see my role as encouraging, inviting, and working with new authors and their manuscripts so that *Programmatic Perspectives* fulfills its goal of encouraging new voices, and preparing this work for publication, which ultimately will attract new readers on new campuses. Accordingly, we will continue celebrating the voices of emerging scholars and attracting new administrators to CPTSC as authors, contributors, and participants.