January 2018

Designing the Teacher: Applying 'Design Thinking' to Improve Composition Pedagogy and Practice

Jordan Nicole Newman
Eastern Kentucky University

DESIGNING THE TEACHER: APPLYING 'DESIGN THINKING' TO IMPROVE COMPOSITION PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE

BY

JORDAN N. NEWMAN

THESIS APPROVED:

Chair, Advisory Committee

Member, Advisory Committee

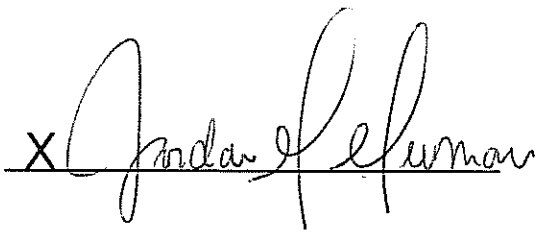
Member, Advisory Committee

Dean, Graduate School

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree at Eastern Kentucky University, I agree that the Library shall make it available to borrowers under rules of the Library. Brief quotations from this documents are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgements of the source is made. Permission for extensive quotation from or reproduction of this document may be granted my major professor in [his/her] absence, by the Head of Interlibrary Services when, in the opinion of either, the proposed use of the material is for scholarly purposes. Any copying or use of the material in this document for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature:

X 

Date: April 2, 2018

DESIGNING THE TEACHER: APPLYING ‘DESIGN THINKING’ TO IMPROVE COMPOSITION PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE

BY

JORDAN N. NEWMAN

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the support of the faculty, staff, and students of Eastern Kentucky University's Department of English and Theatre. I am grateful to Dr. Gerald Natchwey, Graduate Program Coordinator for the Master of Arts in English, for providing me with invaluable opportunities to learn and teach through my assistantship position and to the Noel Studio for Academic Creativity, consultants and administrators, for cultivating an inclusive and innovative space to support student success in communication-based projects; I am inspired by the important work carried out at the Noel Studio and will forever cherish my experiences there.

I want to express whole-hearted thanks to all persons whom I have had the pleasure of working with on this thesis. I am especially appreciative of Dr. Jill Parrott, First-Year Writing Coordinator and Advisory Committee Chair, whose counsel and guidance immeasurably bettered this project and will continue to encourage me to learn and grow as a professional educator. I would like to thank both Dr. Russell Carpenter, Executive Director of the Noel Studio for Academic Creativity, and Dr. Dominic Ashby, Assistant Professor of English, for their support and service as members on my Advisory Committee. I also want to extend my sincerest gratitude to Maggie Frozena and, again, Dr. Ashby for encouraging my interests and allowing me access into their spring 2017 courses for my personal research. To all of you, your kindness towards and dedication to your students is admirable and appreciated.

Finally, I would like to recognize my family, friends, and fiancé, Keith. In some way, all of you make what I do possible. I cherish your presence in my life.

ABSTRACT

College composition courses have conventionally relied on alphabetic, print writing as the primary method for constructing meaning, but contemporary communication practices are increasingly multimodal and media-based (Palmeri, 2012; Yancey, 2011). While many teachers and scholars advocate that students benefit from engaging in the production of multimodal texts, fewer educators create digital and new media products themselves. Through a meta-analytical approach, this project explores the potentials that the act of design offers teacher-scholars for improving their pedagogy and practice. Utilizing a *design thinking* framework, the generative analysis of established scholarship, primary research, and authentic experiences provided significant insights into the cognitive, physical, and social processes that make up design, which suggest a need to contemporize language and adapt approaches to suit modern materials and methods for composing. For instructors, the fruitful knowledge gained through design is not limited to a single product or person but should be applied to classroom practices to improve the teaching of multimodal projects. Further, teacher-scholars are encouraged to share their media products through digital platforms to serve as accessible resources for other educators, which might encourage and improve the instruction of design and cultivate change in the culture of the writing classroom by fostering an inclusive and innovative space for composing.

Keywords: design, design thinking, composition, metacognition, analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE PAGE

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Upon entering the English graduate program at Eastern Kentucky University, I began studying documentary video for my Modern Composition Theory course. Motivated largely by Palmeri's *Remixing Composition: A History of Multimodal Writing Pedagogy* (2012) and my primary research, I recognized that video was an underutilized medium in the classroom and felt confident that students could effectively navigate video design because of the paralleling rhetorical acts and composing processes that make up all communication. I found myself advocating for educators to produce video projects alongside student-learners in their writing classrooms. And, in an attempt to avoid hypocrisy, I needed to make the videos I was asserting other instructors should be composing, to live by example. "I am going to create a documentary film," I said assuredly. In fact, I did not create a film but a brief video as a facet of my master's thesis, but product failure does not equal project failure. Though the intermediate time between my ambitious objectives and my subsequent results was riddled with challenges and obstacles that were daunting and, at times, downright discouraging, the experiences offer substantial insights into the cognitive processes and physical materials that shape video design projects. The act of design coupled with meta-analytical[1] practices manufactures the most valuable result of my efforts: the designer, myself. Upon reflection, creating a

[1] A meta-analysis is the systematic review and consideration of results from multiple studies for the purpose of integrating the findings to increase the validity and/or effectiveness of the subsequent results.

multimedia project cultivated a more effective consumer, producer, and teacher of digital design.

Design, within the contexts of this project, can best be defined as the planning and composing (of something) with a specific purpose or intention and is utilized in place of the conventional term *writing* (the activity or skill of making coherent words on paper and composing text). Writing, as a noun, narrowly represents one physical manifestation of communication (Shipka, 2011, p.13). Design is more often utilized as verb and invokes action. While writing denotes a specific product to produce, design places value on the processes of creating meaning across multiple modes (though a product is typically produced). Design demands engagement in the ongoing and complex cognitive, physical, and social operations that make up all forms of composition, which are inherently multimodal. Additionally, design recognizes that both processes and products are shaped by and reflective of available materials and technologies (digital or otherwise). A writer produces a text, but a designer utilizes multiple modes and mediums to suit purpose, audience, and context, spanning disciplines and genres and reveling in moments of creativity or ingenuity. Designers do. And, engaging in the actual production of a video transformed my understanding and application of design so substantially that it shifted the entire focus of my project.

The term *design* offers instructors vocabulary that is inclusive of multimodality and encompasses new media and digital technologies for composing, yet the action that design invokes is not limited to physical practices but can and should be applied to cognitive operations. I began this project with an intent to study the affordances and challenges of embedding student-generated documentary film projects into first year

writing courses with a primary objective to observe instructor's approach to instruction and a secondary aim to note changes in student beliefs and conceptions, if any, about video design as academic composition. As previously mentioned, the entirety of the project was to be presented in a brief documentary film. However, an unanticipated result of this project was the fruitful reflective analysis of my own approaches to creating a digital video, which echoes Purdy's (2014) claim, "with design thinking, processes of composing are generative, not just because these activities matter in determining what products are created, but because they shape the future and motivate the ways in which we (learn to) represent and communicate" (p. 627). *Design thinking* applies the action-oriented, process-driven, and generative analysis of *design* to the intellectual properties of composing. Purdy recognizes that the cognitive processes involved in design are just as, if not more, impactful than the physical actions and materials that produce products, particularly for teaching and learning, as they have the potential to substantially impact the way individuals make meaning (2014).

For composition instructors, *design* encourages their active involvement in creating multimodal texts and *design thinking* offers a method for mindset, one that is open and adaptable and prioritizes critical consideration of the understandings and insights that design might offer about composing. I produced the most significant results from my project by creating a video and through meta-analytical reflections on the shifts or changes in my thinking about and approach to creating digital products. The results are substantial for their genuine ability to alter the way I design videos and teach digital design projects in my classroom, a foot soldier's approach to challenging the status quo and cultivating immediate change in the field of composition and rhetoric. Consequently,

the primary interest of my project became the valuable insights instructors could gain through creating digital products and the potential those revelations possess to impact pedagogy and practice. Engaging in the processes of design and implementing meta-analytical strategies reoriented my focus toward the task of learning and shifted my language and theoretical approaches to composing and teaching design projects. Specifically, the difficulty of making a freestanding film demonstrated the creativity-confining constraints of mono-modal composing and emphasized the need for teacher-scholars to develop language and practices that better encompass modern multimedia. Importantly, utilizing the *design thinking* framework fostered generative analysis that produced insights into the process of *design*, which can shape personal pedagogy and classroom practices to improve instruction and illustrates the value of engaging in processes over the production of a product.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (2005) defines multimodal literacy as "the interplay of meaning-making systems" and encourages students and teachers alike to study and produce multimodal texts. Despite the increase of technologically driven communication of the twenty-first century, the NCTE notes a digital disconnect, a discrepancy between the practices within and outside of the composition classroom (2005). Alphabetic, print-based writing has conventionally dominated writing instruction, but communication practices outside the university are increasingly grounded in digital technologies and spaces—and are a plurality of modalities. As the NCTE addresses, "in personal, civic, and professional discourse, alphabetic, visual, and aural works are not luxuries, but essential ways of knowing" (2005). García-Galera and Valdivia (2014) acknowledge that, in recent decades, media has been embraced in English classrooms as a text for students to analyze, but modern materials[2] have recently shifted teachers and students from the position of a consumer to a prosumer[3] of new media, but pedagogical practice has been relatively stalled in implementing multimodal texts for production. Composition scholars, such as Palmeri

[2] Modern materials references contemporary digital composing technologies that are increasing in feasibility and accessibilities for peoples. For example, smartphones often include professional-grade cameras and video recorders, technology that was, historically, exclusive to professionals or the elite.
[3] A prosumer is a person who consumes *and* produces a product with materials that are comparable to professional grade resources. The term is frequently associated with new media, particularly with image and video (See García-Galera & Valdivia, 2014).

(2012), Devitt (2014), and Anson (2014), advocate that educators should study and teach multimodal design, so students have opportunities to gain awareness of the rhetorical decisions, composition processes, and publication practices that produce media. Unfortunately, while there are increased calls to expand the conceptions of text and include media composition, the NCTE finds that there are not adequate resources for the traditional teacher to begin to incorporate new digital literacies into their classrooms on a continuing basis (2005).

Despite that educators often struggle to acquire the resources needed to implement multimodality into instruction, students who have access to contemporary communication technologies are, certainly, using them to compose beyond classroom walls (Brooke, 2014, p. 177). Brooke (2014) asserts that it is the composition teacher's obligation to understand the spaces and tools students use to write and then teach with and within those. Brooke promotes New Media or Multimedia Pedagogy, instruction that utilizes contemporary (often digital) technologies for teaching and learning, an approach that invokes exploration and invention from students and provides a means to challenge traditional hierarchical structures, importantly, the teacher as an exclusive academic authority (2014). Composition teachers are encouraged to shift anachronistic views and practices about what writing is or is not and begin joining students where, when, and how *they* write, working with technology themselves in reflective and mindful manners (Brooke, 2014, p.188).

New media texts, like image or video, can be understood and implemented into composition instruction through genre-based pedagogies (Devitt, 2014). Devitt (2014) asserts that genres are rhetorical acts, and teachers who implement genre pedagogies

(teaching genres, genre awareness, and genre critique) make rhetoric visible by helping students navigate strategies and choices that can empower them to consume and compose in particular genres and learn unfamiliar genres (p. 146-5). Brooke (2014) and Devitt (2014) agree that digital media more accurately reflects communication practices in the professional and public spheres, which are most frequently multimodal and use a plurality of genres. Additionally, Devitt maintains that genre pedagogies teach students *about* writing, rather than how *to* write, which "help[s] students move their knowledge beyond the writing classroom," so students might gain critical understanding of others' choices—and make their own (2014, p. 159).

However, as Anson (2014) indicates, composition students are rarely permitted with autonomous decision making about their writing. Conventionally, current-traditional[4] classrooms have assumed that students needed a set of rules for discourse to achieve polished, correct writing. However, Process Theory, which is credited largely to Murray's 1972 article, "Teaching Writing as Process, Not Product," compels instructors to move the orientation of learning away from the final text and toward the cultivation of the knowledge and abilities needed to produce it (Anson, 2014, p. 216-7). Anson argues that Process Pedagogy offers enormous opportunities for student-writers, particularly those who society and, subsequently, education marginalizes, as it chooses not to focus on the correct usage of dominant modes of discourse but prioritizes understanding and effectively navigating rhetorical circumstances (2014). Engagement in digital design processes, particularly digital publishing, makes the rhetorical situation more observable

[4] Current-traditional rhetoric (CTR) is a composition pedagogy that is defined by its emphasis on the final product and subscribes to the notion that discourse should be delivered by applying prescribed rules and systematic approaches for grammar, syntax, and arrangement (See Berlin & Inkster, 1980).

by embedding composition in a meaningful task beyond classroom exercises and providing students with a "real" audience (not only their instructor or classmates), which Brooke (2014) and Devitt (2014) suggest creates opportunities for students to impact or enact sociopolitical change.

Yet, to cultivate such change, students must be effective consumers and composers of new media, and, as Yancey (2011) addresses, never before have the composing and communicating practices of the discipline and society differed so greatly. Yancey compels compositionists to reconsider the way technology has propelled the popularity of print and urges English studies to readily embrace new digital devices in instruction (2011). "Our own practices suggest that we have already committed to a theory of communication that is both print and digital," as most educators access the Internet, utilize smartphones, and communicate via digital platforms daily (Yancey, 2011, p. 803). Yet, our teaching practices are often outdated, focusing primarily on alphabetic writing that neglects the rich affordances of multimodal design. And so, in this moment, Yancey suggests the discipline take action by developing a new curriculum and revisiting and revising writing-across-the-curriculum efforts to reflect contemporary communication practices (2011, p. 804). By enacting these changes, coupled with multimodal composing, Yancey claims students can develop rhetorical and material awareness through more familiar modes and in new literacies, like spatial[5], which are more accessible through digital technologies and spaces (2011, p. 818).

[5] Space, like text, aural, and image, is a mode for making-meaning. Spatial literacy implies that an individual can interpret the use of and compose using space, i.e. the arrangement of or movement through an environment.

Meaning-making is a material practice. Bolter (2001) explores new writing spaces made available by modern technologies but first reminds us that writing has come to be a prevalent and valued practice because of the materials that have, historically, been widely available for composition: pen and paper (2001, p. 8). The author exposes an indissoluble connection between material condition and cultural practice and recognizes that this cultural moment, a product of increasingly accessible digital technologies, has spawned the "late age of print," (Bolter, 2001, p. 1). Bolter reassures composition instructors that this cultural determination will not result in the death of print but a remediation of print within digital spaces, known as hypertext, "the dynamic interconnection of a set of symbolic elements" (Bolter, 2001, p. 38). While contemporary technologies, like computers, have made hypertext and other forms of electronic composition possible, Bolter claims it is the accessibility to digital spaces that facilitates a democratic-like empowerment among writers and readers and are increasingly more equitable and inclusive of users. Digital spaces, like the Internet, are not only shaping the way people compose but the manners in which individuals think and society operates (Bolter, 2001, p. 42). Bolter illustrates new media's reflection of human cognition through the discussion of hypertexts: "Hypertext reflects the nature of the human mind itself—that because we think associatively...hypertext allows us to write as we think" (2001, p. 42). Bolter presents the mind as writing space and asserts that digital environments are cultivated by and reflected within both cognitive and writing practices (2001).

Because contemporary digital technologies and spaces are altering the way humans construct meaning, composition instructors should be wary of transferring existing notions and conventions from alphabetic writing into new modes, which colors

the learning and teaching of multimodal projects with potentially antiquated approaches. In an attempt to resist this, Wysocki and Johnson-Eilola (2011) recommend that the discipline embrace new terminology to represent new practices. The authors are critical of educators' overuse of the term *literacy* as a generic expression for reading and writing, claiming the word illustrates academia's fondness of alphabetic, linear print text. The attachment to literacy is largely a product of society's belief that it is a "promise of social, political, and economic progress," when, in fact, Wysocki and Johnson-Eilola assert that traditional literacy often oppresses the marginalized and reinforces hierarchical sociopolitical power structures (2011, p. 728). Changes to the communicative landscape are propelling the interest in questioning terms like *literacy*, and Wysocki and Johnson-Eilola feel that transferring these terms into new modes and means of communication is misguided because new methods of meaning-making are defying existing assumptions (Wysocki & Johnson-Eilola, 2011, p. 731). Certainly the material dimensions of composing have a substantial influence over the types of texts people create, but people do produce texts. Humans shape materials, from paper to pixels. Wysoki and Johnson-Eilola present technology as not only a tool or an instrument for use, like pen and paper, but a space to work within that skews distance and time, so that it allows active participation and offers new possibilities to construct relations between information (2011, p. 733). Materiality matters for composition and rhetoric, but it is not so much the materials that must be accounted for in language and rather the expanding range of possibilities for constructing meaning, relating information, and connecting people, which is made more accessible by digital technologies (Wysocki & Johnson-Eilola, 2011, p. 736).

Archer (2012) agrees with Wysocki and Johnson-Eilola (2011): a need exists to better represent multimodality through language that reflects the expanding conceptions of text and literacy. Archer advocates for educators and scholars to develop a "metaform," "a means of description and analysis that works across modes" and for the use of the term *design* (2012, p. 417.). Relying on the scholarship of Kress and Jewitt, Archer asserts that meaning is constructed by an arrangement of modes, social and cultural means for meaning-making, in texts in a particular context (2012, p. 413). *Design*, then, is an extension of meaning-making; it is the energy and actions required to arrange modes in space. As Archer explains, "design refers to the 'processes of giving shape to the interests, purposes, and intentions of the rhetor in relation to semiotic resources available for realizing/materializing these purposes as apt material, complex signs, texts'" (2012, p. 414). Similarly, Cordova (2013) defines design as "the actual agentic capacity to construct and reappropriate cultural resources" (p. 145). Design, like writing, is a method of meaning-making. If learning to write teaches students how to produce correct texts, learning design facilitates practice of making critical rhetorical choices across mediums. *Design* is an action-oriented approach for the consideration of the specific ways modes can be utilized and combined within a particular environment for a certain audience through utilization of accessible material resources.

Purdy (2014) extends on the claims of Wysoki and Johnson-Eilola (2011), Archer (2012), and Cordova (2013) by professing that the discipline does not only need a new way of discussing multimodal composition but an innovative method of thinking about all forms of composition. The author offers *design thinking*, a theoretical framework for approaching multimedia projects that prioritizes rhetorical consciousness and generative

analysis and utilizes design processes, which work across all modes (Purdy, 2014, p. 626). In addition, Purdy outlines the steps for design and draws explicit parallels to the conventional writing processes (2014, p. 628). For example, the initial stage in design thinking, "understand," is composed of practices paralleling to brainstorming and research, and "prototype" is equivocate of a rough draft in conventional alphanumeric writing. By explicitly recognizing the interrelated nature of these activities, composition studies may more readily embrace *design thinking*, comprised of both language and practice that offer new lenses for viewing the work of the field—and its relationship to other disciplines. Purdy emphasizes that *design*, rather than the anachronistic "writing," better embodies modern communication practices that permeate society, which are collaborative, multimodal, and digital and, so, function to more adequately prepare students to compose outside of the classroom (2014).

Most twenty-first century students have grown up in a technology-saturated society where image and sound are increasingly supplanting the written word; this is why it is unsurprising that many "fear the act of alphabetic writing" (Palmeri, 2012, p. 95). Palmeri (2012) offers that instructors might find that digital and multimodal means of teaching composition provoke more interest and engagement from students—and can achieve the same learning objectives as traditional college writing assignments. Video design is one multimodal approach that is highly effective in teaching students the practices of research, the purposes of rhetoric, and the processes of composition, but is underutilized in contemporary pedagogical practices (Palmeri, 2012). Widely available technologies, like the smartphone, are expanding the types of composing students can undertake in the classroom, making student-generated videos a modern material reality.

Palmeri offers documentary film as an optimum video genre (2012, p. 133). Because documentary's primary goal is to educate or inform an audience, this type of video design parallels with more conventional modes of academic composition, like the research paper, which illuminates the recursive processes and skill sets that are transferable across a variety of modes and media. Furthermore, Palmeri claims that by asking students to compose text through a video medium, which encompasses visual, audial, and textual components, instructors may "potentially help them develop a richer understanding of how rhetorical concepts such as audience, context, and exigency can be applied" (2012, p.48). However, as Faigley (2003) acknowledges, "research literature on student-generated video is sparse" (p. 179). Current research and scholarship on video composition is inadequate in supporting instructor's aspirations to embrace video in the writing classroom, but Faigley offers a silver lining: there are fruitful potentials for teacher-scholars to research and publish on video design (Faigley, 2003).

In an attempt to cultivate new research and scholarship and promote digital video projects in composition courses, Graupner et. al. (2009) suggest that graduate programs for composition and rhetoric prioritize research and instruction on multimodality and multiliteracies, specifically through the teaching of design projects in digital environments. Future educators and mentors of undergraduate students should be studying multimodal composition and benefit from engaging in digital design practices. Graupner et al. advocate for "digital teaching and research as integral, sustainable components of [graduate students] knowledge-making spaces," which will "further their research and their digital literacies practices by taking a more integrative approach to their professionalization strategies" (2009, p. 14-5). Graduate student's digital design

projects have the potential to shape their pedagogy and practice, which will impact the undergraduate curriculum at universities by creating consistent and substantial change in English department's instruction. Providing future instructors experiences with new media production, as Graupner et al. propose, works to developing educator's "technical skills and commitment to incorporate evolving technologies into [instructor's] pedagogy and daily classroom life" (2009, p. 19). Palmeri (2012) agrees and explicitly states, "English teachers should not limit themselves to studying and teaching the composing of alphabetic texts alone—that English teachers have much to gain by studying and teaching other forms of composing," including, but certainly not limited to, video (p. 27). Developing technological learning outcomes and establishing media mentorships for graduate projects is the most direct method for cultivating substantial long-term changes in composition and rhetoric program's practices.

Graupner et. al (2009) emphasize that "both student and faculty must work in a variety of face-to-face and virtual spaces," and each has much to learn from digital design (p. 21). Selfe (2007), a pioneer in creating multimodal scholarship and resources to support instructors in implementing multimodality in the classroom, adds that, in order to amplify the learning potential from these projects, students and educators should critically reflect upon their experiences and learning. Selfe explains, "composition teachers serve students as role models in life-long learning, especially with regard to literacy" and, therefore, should be engaging in design projects and modeling effective practices with and for students (2007, p 10). Design projects provide instructors invaluable opportunities to work with contemporary technologies, software platforms, and digital spaces in addition to first-hand experiences composing in new modalities and

navigating infrastructure challenges. Selfe also notes that this approach provides a teacher with a chance to gain greater empathy for students and develop significant understandings in respect to their theory and practice of teaching design to fellow learners (2007, p. 92). To better facilitate video projects that are fruitful in cultivating insights that alter composition and rhetoric instruction, Selfe insists educators move beyond merely completing design projects. Instructors should "refocus attention on the task of learning" by implementing meta-reflective practices that "encourage critical thinking and deepen the learning that multimodal [design] demand[s]" (Selfe, 2007, p 33).

By engaging in design coupled with metacognitive strategies, instructors can deeply enrich their own learning experiences. McGuire and McGuire (2015) define metacognition as thinking about thinking or the process of becoming aware and reflective about one's awareness (p. 15). And, instructors should analyze their own thought processes as they develop, shift, or change during the creation of digital products. For writing teachers, actively researching and designing digital media provides invaluable perspective from the position of student-learners, which illuminates the affordances and challenges of design so that potential revelations might shape pedagogy and practice to improve instruction in college composition classrooms.

Metacognition facilitates the recognition of what approaches work and which do not in learning of design, so that we might, as McGuire and McGuire (2015) suggest, teach ourselves how to be better teachers of these projects (p. 16). Yet, the pedagogical impact that meta-reflective practices can have on instructors does not and should not be limited to themselves and their classrooms. One of the three elements Selfe (2007)

identifies as crucial to compositing multimodal pedagogy is circulation; design projects are meant to go *somewhere* that provide access to authentic audiences and purposes (p. 30). Instructors should create projects that serve as research, scholarship, and resources for other educators and publish their products in accessible digital spaces. Unlike purely bibliographic or empirical research, Selfe claims that these learning activities coupled with meta-analytical strategies might aid teachers in "rediscover[ing] a sense of experimentation and creative thinking about the task of meaning-making" (2007, p. 92). The excitement and ingenuity harnessed through design and metacognitive activities can transfer into engaging and relevant resources for other instructors. Selfe encourages teachers that producing new media projects contributes to the growing conversation on multimodal pedagogy and design so that current and future teachers might have the resources needed to shift composition education toward being more inclusive of new modes and media (2007).

Through this project, I have found that the majority of existing research is focused on the significance of digital composition projects and their rich potential for increasing student-learning across modes and medium, but, as Graupner, Nickoson-Massey, and Blair (2006) attests, there is a lack of research and scholarship on the affordances of digital design for graduate students (future educators) and teachers. Instructors should create digital projects for their pedagogical promise and potential to produce research, scholarship, and resources for other educators (Selfe, 2007). Through engagement in multimedia design and with the utilization of metacognitive strategies, an individual may actively interact with processes and materials to better conceptualize these communication practices, which is more impactful than the study of scholarship alone

(Shipka, 2012; Faigley, 2003). Applying meta-analytical strategies to the design of this multimedia project resulted in two categories of conceptive changes for understanding and implementing digital-video projects: language and approach. Both categories have the potential to alter personal and pedagogical practices. By shifting terminology to reflect new technologies and literacies and altering approaches to encompass multimodal processes and multimedia production and publication, student design projects might be better executed in college composition courses.

CHAPTER 3

PRIMARY RESEARCH

In the spring of 2017, I interviewed two instructors in the Department of English and Theater at Eastern Kentucky University. Both individuals were teaching two sections of English 102 in the first year writing program and implementing video components into their extended research projects, in which students remediated a portion of their academic paper into a brief video that was presented to their instructor and peers. I conducted two interviews with each instructor, once at the beginning and once at the conclusion of the semester (for a total of four interviews) in an attempt to discover the affordances and challenges of implementing digital video projects into composition courses (See Appendix A). In addition to the instructor interviews, I administered surveys to all the students enrolled in each instructor's courses (or to four English 102 classes) with the objective of recording noticeable shifts in students' conceptions about video design for academic composition, if any (See Appendix B).

The student survey included five statements, and students were to respond to a five point Likert scale correlating to their level of agreement with the position. Statements 1 and 2 prompted students to consider the value of film or video within the academy. Statement 3 had students gauge English instructors' (general) belief in video as a valid form of academic composition. Finally, statements 4 and 5 of the student survey prompted students to be introspective and consider their capabilities for producing a video and their personal preference in producing video (over writing) as a means of

academic composition. Students were provided the same survey both before and after they completed video projects in their English 102 classes. For the pre-project student survey, I collected 63 student responses and 55 for the post-project survey.

Of most significance from this research was the shift in students' beliefs regarding their own abilities to compose video and the considerable increase in students who preferred video as a medium. The responses to statement 1 were virtually identical between the pre and post-survey with 84% of students agreeing that video is a valid method of constructing and communicating meaning for academic purposes. Statement 2 had a small decrease in agreement; the results of the pre-project survey showed that 64% of students agreed or strongly agreed that video and writing are of equal value in an academic setting, while 58% responded in agreement in the post-project survey. For statement 3, 56% of student responses in the pre-project survey agreed that their English instructors valued video and writing equally as academic composition, but 64% of students agreed with this statement after completing the video design project in their English course. Notably, before the video project, only 56% of first year writing students agreed or strongly agreed to statement 4 regarding whether they could compose a video for academic purposes (See Figure 1). However, after engaging in video design, 89% of students felt confident that they could create video, an agreement increase of 33% (See Figure 2). Additionally, the pre-project survey results for statement 5 were that only 32% of students agreed that they would prefer to create a video rather than a research paper (See Figure 3). However, after producing a video in the first-year writing classroom, over half of all students (57%) agreed that they preferred video as a means of academic composition, an increase of 25% (See Figure 4).

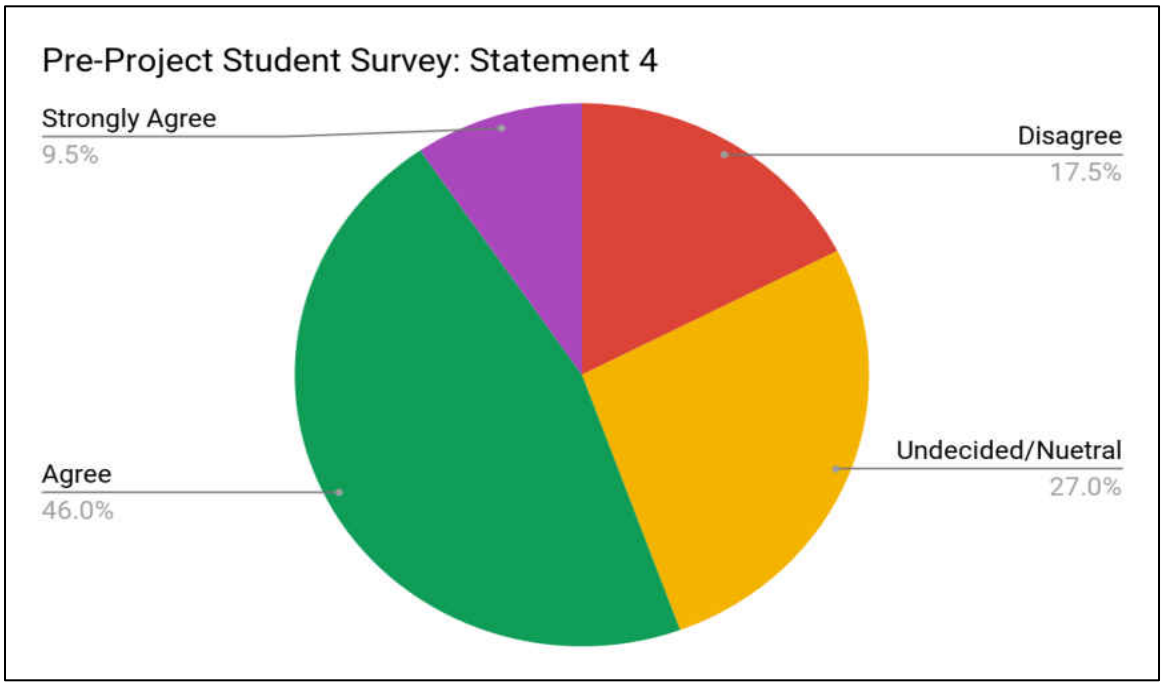


Figure 1. Pre-project student survey responses to statement 4. This figure illustrates that 56% agreed that they could compose a video for academic purposes.

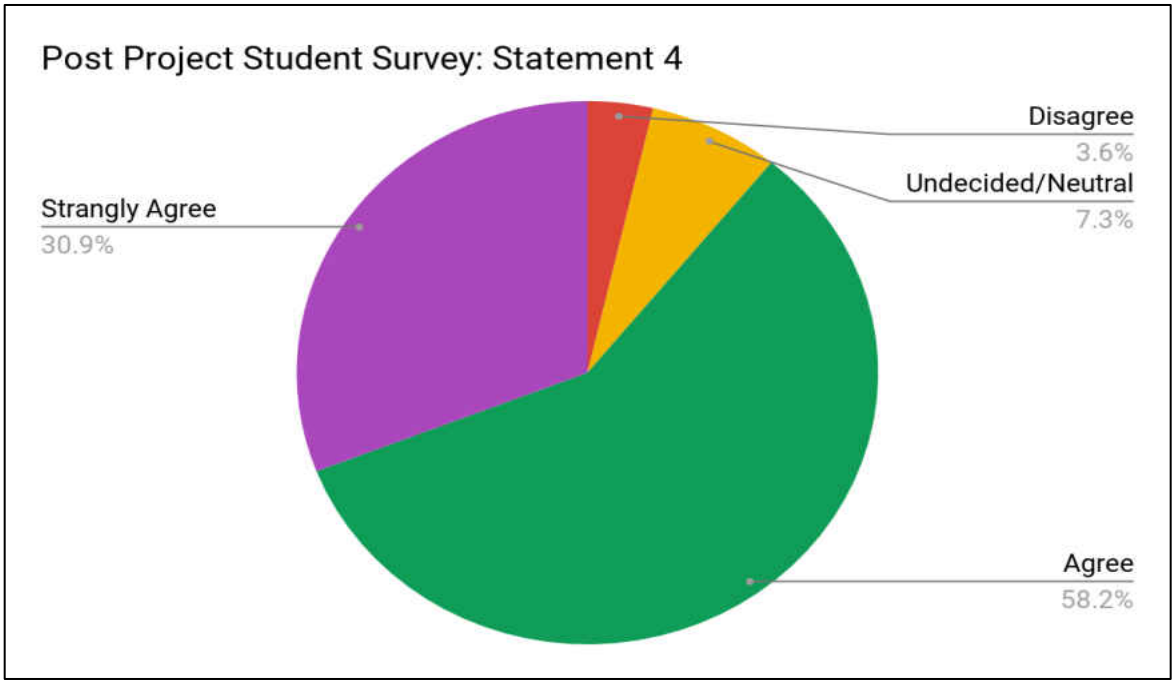


Figure 2. Post project student survey responses to statement 4. This figure illustrates that 89% of students agreed that they could compose a video for academic purposes after engaging in a video design project, a 33% increase from the pre-project survey.

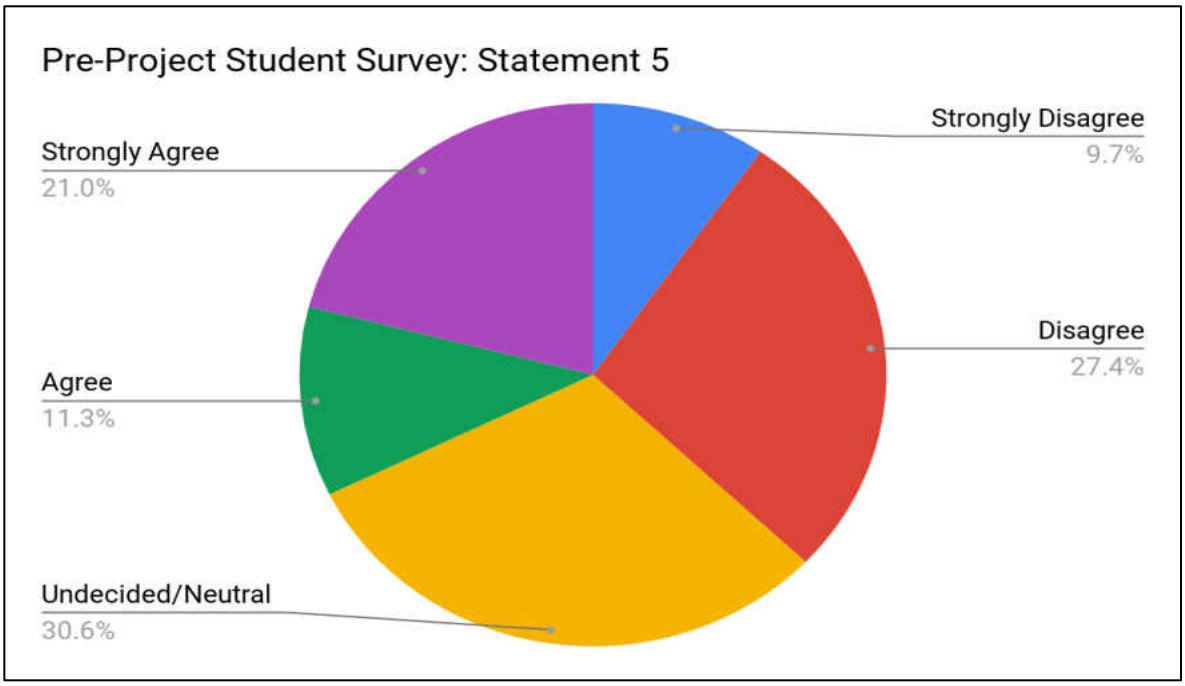


Figure 3. Pre-project student survey responses to statement 5. This figure illustrates that 32% of students agreed that they prefered to create a video rather than write a research paper.

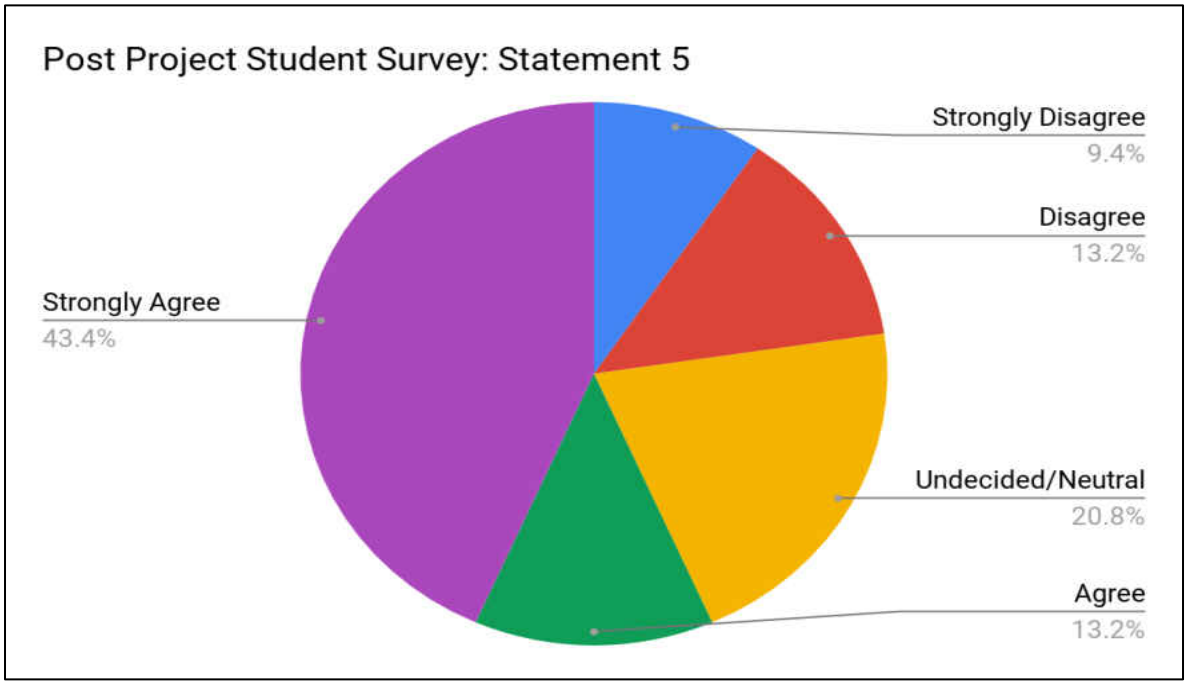


Figure 4. Post project student survey responses to statement 5. This figure illustrates that 57% of students agreed that they prefered to create a video rather than write a research paper, a 25% increase from the pre-project survey.

The results suggest that student perceptions about video composition are impacted by engaging in digital design projects in their first year writing courses, particularly relating to their own capabilities and interests in composing video. The data from statement 4 reveals that the majority of students gained skill-sets and confidence in their ability to create video. The responses to statement 5 illustrate that many student-learners prefer video as a medium or come to favor video design over academic writing as a result of completing a video project, suggesting that instructors must attend to this medium. The only statement where there was a lessening in agreement (from the pre to post survery responses) was statement 2: video and research papers are equal in the academic setting. The result could be because video was preferred by students thus not equal in their eyes or, potentially, because the videos are an embedded component within the larger research paper project. However, as I will address in the following section, this approach is the only feasible way to accomplish a video project within a conventional semester. Also, first year writing instructors are required to teach academic writing to achieve the course's student learning objectives, which might convey to students that academic composition is valued over video design. Finally, for all the survey statements there was a significant decrease in the number of students answering "undecided or neutral," which indicates these individuals gained knowledge and experience through the first year writing course and project that allowed them to make informed decisions about different modes and mediums of composition. (See Figure 5 for the pre and post student survey response averages).

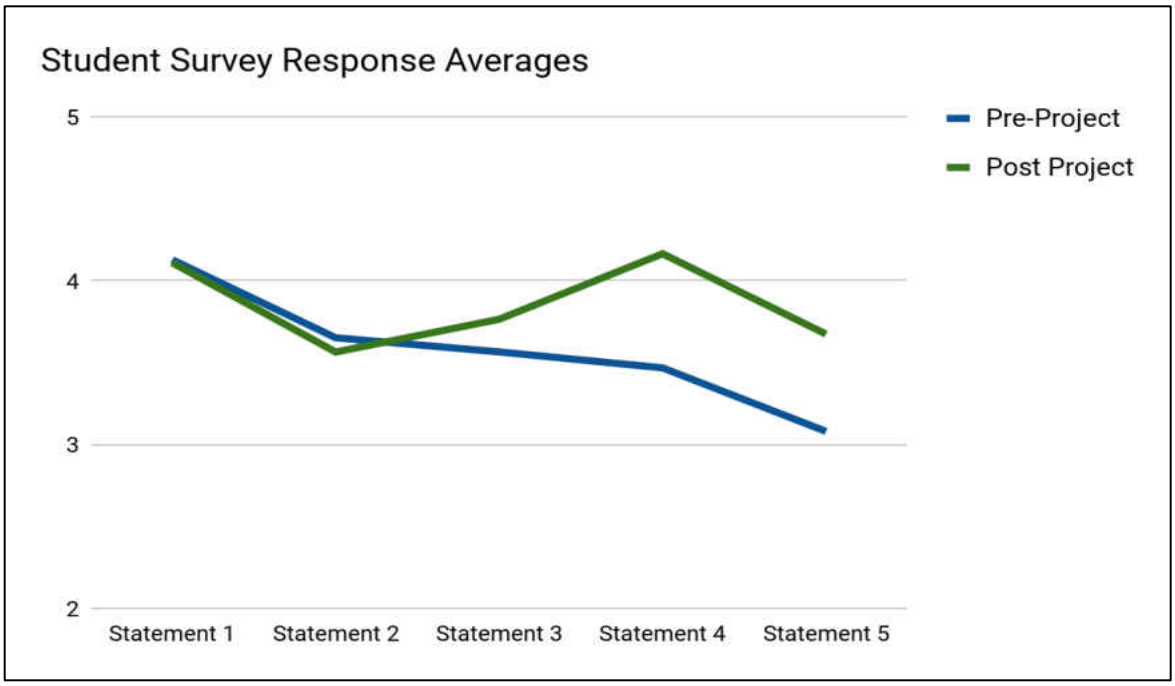


Figure 5. Pre and post project student survey response averages. The graph illustrates that student responses increased in agreeance to statements 3, 4, and 5 after engaging in a video design project, particularly in regards to their own capabilities and preferences for composing with video.

As much of the literature suggests, the results were relevant and useful to the project, but the experience of designing and executing a research study proved the most impactful in furthering my thinking. I recognized the affordances and challenges of implementing student-generated video (SGV) projects and recorded some changes in student conceptions about video as a medium for academic composition. Though a small sample size, the student responses assured me that video design had a role and purpose in the contemporary composition classroom and that individuals gained substantial knowledge through producing multimedia. If student-learners could attain understanding and confidence through digital design, then, perhaps, so could I—and so could their instructors. Maybe another reason statement 2 saw a decrease in agreement after the video project was because the instructors were not actively engaged in producing a video alongside their students, which implies that their valuing of video in their writing

classroom was unauthentic. I considered, in layman's terms, that instructors might be talking the talk but not walking the walk. Many scholars and teachers are interested in and writing on multimodality and the importance of utilizing digital technologies to produce multimedia texts, but far too often are these academic authorities not engaging in design practices and projects that they suggest students undertake in the composition classroom.

CHAPTER 4

META-ANALYSIS

The data I collected from the spring 2017 study was presented in series of charts and graphs arranged on a website and published in a digital space, and I had recorded and uploaded the instructor interviews to my *YouTube* and *Wix* pages (See Figures 6, 7, and 8). Yet, I still felt that I was not authentically experimenting with video design as Selfe (2014), Shipka (2011), Palmeri (2012), Purdy (2014), and Graupner et. al (2009) recommend. I was researching and writing with a premise that professed instructors should be engaging in and teaching design projects and, so, determined that I needed to design and publish a digital video to maximize the potential impacts my project might have on my own design practices and pedagogical approaches.

Figure 6. "Implementing SGV Projects into First-Year Writing Courses" website. The image depicts the home page of the website I created using *Wix*, which displayed and analyzed the data from my spring 2017 study.

Figure 7. Instructor interview videos. The image shows the videos I recorded and uploaded to the *Wix* website, which I created to communicate my spring 2017 research project.

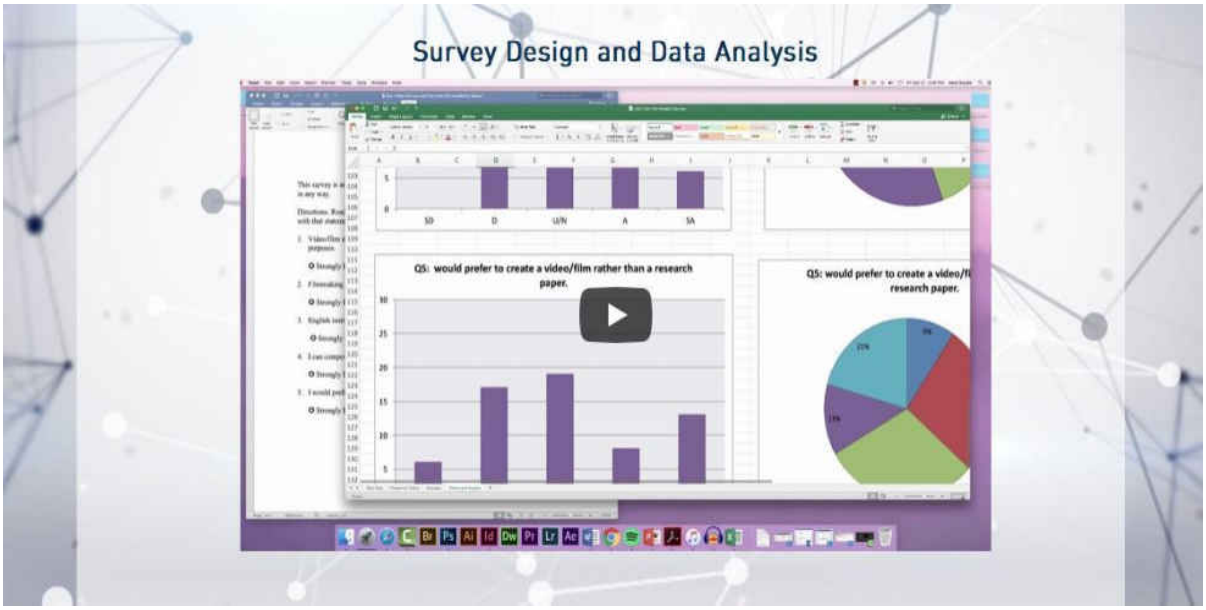


Figure 8. Survey design and data analysis screen-captured video. The image depicts a screen-capture video I created using *Camtasia* to display and analyze my student survey response data.

Most teachers subscribe to the belief in life-long learning, and subsequently continue to educate themselves throughout their professional careers. Yet, there's a considerable power difference between teacher-learners and student-learners regarding what they learn about. Students in undergraduate and particularly in general education courses like first year writing have little to no influence over the content they encounter or the types of projects they undertake. However, instructors, ranging from teaching-assistants to tenured professors, have specialized disciplines, degrees, and interests that allow them to control nearly every conceptual stage of their academic projects. For students at undergraduate status, they are continually challenged by outside entities to understand new concepts and produce unique products using unfamiliar approaches and materials. The academic authority has a much greater opportunity to stay with familiar comfort zones: modes, mediums, and manners.

Yet, there is substantial gain for the composition instructor in discarding the conventional and comfortable habits of writing and placing oneself in the vulnerable position of the student-learner. In "Moments of Productive Bafflement," Thomas (2005) explains to the English graduate student that, in order to know what you are doing, you have to *do* it. Every established academic began writing essays as a novice, not knowing expert conventions and practices, an experience that is often intimidating and uncomfortable. Thomas asserts that it is in these moments of confusion, while grappling to succeed at new tasks, that an individual can experience productive bafflement, "a bafflement productive of desire itself" (2005, p. 20). In order to learn, we must encounter new knowledge, engage in new activities, and expose ourselves to new experiences, and, by doing so, we foster a want and willingness to learn. If teachers are to continue to

develop as professionals, then at least at times, we must be baffled; if we are not baffled, we are not learning.

Viewing challenges as opportunities for learning is a fundamental principle of growth-mindset (as opposed to fixed-mindset), in which an individual believes in their ability to gain knowledge and develop understanding (McGuire & McGuire, 2015, p. 60-1). In 2006, Dweck (2015) presented mindset and discussed growth and fixed theories effects on learning for educators to utilize so that "[teachers] can maximize the benefits for our students" (para. 4). While growth-mindset has increasingly being implemented in educational settings for its substantial impacts on student-learning, the theory has not been widely applied to instructors. Yet, if teachers are champions of lifelong learning and mindset matters, then certainly educators should embrace challenges and revel in moments of bafflement, regarding digital technologies or otherwise. Rather than remaining stagnant within specialized discipline conventions of writing, educators should explore new modes, means, and methods for meaning-making, because, as Dweck (2015) reminds us, "the path to a growth-mindset is a journey, not a proclamation" (para. 11). To be a true practitioner of growth-mindset, instructors themselves must continually want to better their professional practices: learn about learning.

In an attempt to learn more about effective pedagogies and approaches for teaching digital design (and other) projects, instructors should engage in design and apply meta-reflective practices: "think about one's own thinking; be consciously aware of oneself as a problem solver; monitor, plan, and control one's mental processing; and accurately judge one's level of learning" (McGuire & McGuire, 2015, p. 17). Metacognition has been widely embraced by educational professionals as an effective

practice for students. In *Teach Students How to Learn*, McGuire and McGuire (2015) offer that "when students employ metacognition, they become consciously aware of themselves as problem solvers, which enables them to actively seek solutions" (p. 16). The affordances of metacognition are not limited to students, and when teacher-learners couple meta-reflection with educational practices, they become problem solvers of pedagogy and can seek solutions for current concerns about instructional approaches.

For this project, I embraced a meta-analytical approach for my cognitive reflective practices. Meta-analytics combines results from multiple sources, which in this instance is composed of literature, primary research data, and the insights derived from my engagement in metacognition throughout my independent video project, and then systematically analyzes the results to seek solutions for a problem or to resolve uncertainty about a matter. The approach was selected for its apparent parallels with Purdy's (2014) practices of *design thinking*, such as forward orientation (p. 620). Teacher-scholars who engage in *design thinking* actively pursue solutions to problems and strengthen their ability to understand and design all forms of composition, particularly as it related to new media products. Purdy emphasizes that *design thinking* focuses on "future directed design, not past-directed critique" (2014, p. 626). A project operating under the *design thinking* framework is generative; it does not end with evaluation but analyzes in order to create (Purdy, 2014, p. 626). I aimed to fashion a better designer, making myself a more effective consumer, producer, and teacher of video projects and to generate resources for other instructors to utilize while creating design projects, which encourage meta-reflective practices for their potential to inform pedagogy and instruction.

Language

Purdy (2014) explains that an essential component of *design thinking* is to critically consider the use of language and to contemporize discourse to more accurately represent contemporary communication, a practice the author models through discussion of the word *design*. The term is most frequently employed in the scholarship of sub-disciplines associated with new digital technologies, like the field of Computers and Composition (Purdy, 2014, p. 614). Yet, there are several reasons for teacher-scholars to embrace the word *design*. First, the term reflects composition studies turn toward embracing the visual and "recognize[s] digital and multimedia compositions" (Purdy, 2014, p. 617). Further, *design* helps teachers, scholars, and students "to conceptualize composing as multimodal[6]" (Purdy, 2014, p. 615). Finally, *design* offers a relatively neutral term for working across modes and mediums. Purdy implies *design* should be used in place of more traditional terminology like *writing* and *composition* that have largely dominated the English discipline's research and scholarship. Critically considering the language used to label the types of communication-based actions and projects has the potential to reshape our understanding of meaning-making.

Language often carries connotations from a variety of sociopolitical and historical contexts, so much so that it can become difficult to extract an objectified meaning from a word or phrase; this is true of the term *composition*. Historically, the word enters English from French, likely during the several hundred years the French controlled the English throne. Only prosperous members of the upper class would have spoken French, while the working classes spoke in English, thus the majority of words adopted from French

[6] Multimodal and multimedia, though often conflated, are two distinct entities to be discussed in the upcoming pages.

tend to be “high brow” and have prestigious connotations. In the twentieth century, American institutions embraced composition as a title for freshmen writing courses (Brereton, 1995). The term’s association with the arts likely made it an easy adoption for university English departments, which possess an affinity for great literary works. However, the goal of these courses was narrowly focused on alphabetic print writing, and, so, *composition* became inextricably bound with the notion of writing, an understanding that is still pervasive in the modern academy.

Writing is one mode of communication composed of signs and symbols. Using *writing* or *composition* to describe digital projects carries existing assumptions about the ways literacy and learning operate in contemporary communication practices, which utilize multiple modes and mediums for meaning-making. For example, this project employed audio and image to communicate knowledge and understanding, as well text, which exemplifies a need for a word to better represent the multiple types of composing processes and practices that exist when creating digital projects: *design*. *Design* also derives from Old French, and, regrettably, might still convey lofty or grandeur expectations to teachers and students. However, the term does imply the use of multiple modalities and embodies spatial literacies that are often underrepresented in the teaching and producing of alphabetic writing to illuminate the complex human interactions and recursive processes of all compositing practices.

Of significance, *design* communicates value for multimedia and distinguishes itself from composition’s exclusive privilege of print writing. Centuries of social, economic, and political hierarchies have constructed conventions and norms for language, which are often discriminatory and oppressive to certain groups. In addition,

inequitable educational funding and a variety of monetary factors creates discrepancies in the education backgrounds of individuals. While these concerns are beyond the scope of the project, they are important rationales for reshaping the discipline's use of language (and including design projects in the classroom). *Design* is inclusive of all modes, mediums, and manners of communication and the people who prefer to utilize multiple literacies; it does not exclude writing or text but welcomes other elements of human communication practices to collaborate alongside them.

There is a growing list of scholars challenging conventional discipline-specific vocabulary terms such "*authoring* (Slatin, 2008), *compositing* (Odell & Prell, 1999), *composition* (Johnson-Eilola, 1997), *literacy* (Wysocki & Johnson-Eilola, 1999), and *writing* (Yancy, 2004)," (Shipka, 2011, p. 22). While words like *writing* and *composition* are more evidently outdated, as contemporary materials are rapidly expanding the types of composings individuals undertake, more modern terminology can also pose a threat to objective understandings of and engagement in design. Shipka (2011) questions the use of *technology* for its overwhelming association with new digital devices, like smartphones and computers (p. 20-1). This definition neglects that *technology* is an umbrella term for all types of machinery and equipment developed with the application of scientific knowledge. Therefore, pen, paper, and books are all common technologies that have long been present in the traditional classroom. Composing has always been multimodal and technology has historically been used in the writing process (Palmeri, 2012). Yet, design projects tend to be associated exclusively with twenty-first century digital devices, which may neglect the rich rhetorical affordances of multiple modalities and mediums.

One method for addressing this concern is to ensure teachers and scholars understand the distinction between *multimodal* and *multimedia* and use them appropriately. Multimodality is the assemblance of multiple modes (textual, aural, linguistic, visual, and spatial) to communicate meaning. Like *design*, there is reason to be concerned with *multimodal*'s narrowing definition to correspond primarily with digital technologies or label specific artifacts as *multimodal* (Shipka, 2011, p. 9). In a 2006 study, presented at that year's Computers and Writing Conference, Ball reported that 85% of survey participants described *multimodality* as digital texts, like video and websites (Shipka, 2011, p. 9). This practice reflects a limited understanding of complexity and pervasiveness of multimodal communication. Text is inherently multimodal; Aspects like font style, size, or color can relay a variety of meanings (i.e. bolded text might communicate to a reader that information bolded is important). Associating *multimodality* with digital products fails to account for the many recursive processes that contribute to constructing communication products, like brainstorming using a mind map or talking with an instructor or peer. The issue prompting this misrepresentation is confusion between *multimodal* and *multimedia* texts.

Lauer (2014) contends with the conflation of the terms multi-*modal* and multi-*media*. The author distinguishes *modal* as theoretical or abstract in connotation and signifying ways of making meaning and *media* as the practical or physical application of design decisions, made possible through material practices (Lauer, 2014, p. 23-4). *Multimodal* and *multimedia* are frequently conflated because both are stages along the process continuum from which a text evolves, ranging from design to distribution (Laurer, 2014, p. 36). Lauer explains that *multimodal design* is "the cognitive and

socially-situated choices a student or scholar makes while in the process of composing a text," while *multimedia* is the material realization of those choices through tangible production and distribution of a text (2014, p. 36). Design projects are always multimodal and ideally should use multimedia. The challenge in determining which term is appropriate for use lies in the absence of a distinguishing moment in the process in which multimodal design ends and multimedia production begins. Lauer (2014) emphasizes that scholars and instructors must recognize and understand both *multimodal* and *multimedia*. Though the field of composition and rhetoric tends to favor multimodal design for its parallel to process and post-process oriented theories of learning, the public and professional spheres tend to value production and distribution, which demands that scholars and instructors attend to both, all stages along the continuum of creating texts.

I hesitate using the word *texts* at the end of the previous paragraph; though many scholars have called for an expanded understanding of text to include both *multimodal* and *multimedia* compositions, I am not sure I feel completely comfortable calling a video a text. In fact, I have struggled throughout this project in deciding what I should call the video component. I initially called it a film, but *film* quickly became problematic. *Film*, like composition, possesses a connotation of being prestigious and part of the high arts, and, even today, it is still a luxury to see a movie in theaters. And, I believe that some part of me decided to call it a *film* because it sounded distinguished, what I thought graduate-level thesis should be. However, during the course of this project, I shifted my terminology from film to *video* for two primary reasons. The first, most individuals (including myself) are likely to be intimidated by and feel incapable of creating a film and rightly so because, secondly, films are not produced anymore. The term is

anachronistic, as film (the material) is not used today because modern technological advances have instead offered digital video as a means to generate movies. By utilizing *video*, my language better depicts the processes engaged in, accurately describes the materials that create the final product, and, additionally, appears more readily approachable by avoiding terminology that conveys rigidity and exceedingly high, almost unachievable, expectations.

Language like *writing*, *film,* and *technology* can misrepresent design materials and practices, but certain termonology can also perpetuate misconceptions about the individuals that produce design projects. The label *digital native* has been widely applied to individuals born in the age of digital technology and implies that they are brought-up with access to computers and the Internet. While it is true that youth have had increasing access to digital technologies and spaces for the last three decades, and particularly in the new millenia, labeling an entire generation as *digital natives* or the *net generation* and professing their innate ability to effectively use digital technologies and spaces is misguided. Despite this, Selwyn (2009) explains that the notion of the digital native "remains influential in shaping contemporary public, political and academic expectations of the technological capabilities and demands" of students (p. 364-5). This stereotype suggests that Millennials and Generation Z, who have grown up with unprecedented access to digital technologies, can inherently create critical multimodal and multimedia products with ease and efficiency. For educators, it perpetuates the myth that there is little opportunity for an instructor to teach students about designing through digital means since they are already experienced in the use of technologies, perhaps even more so than their teachers.

To begin to work against this misrepresentation, educators should differentiate between academic and professional design and the creation of other types of social and entertainment media through technological means. While there are certainly parallels in the processes and practices, students engage in substantial critical thought and learn researching, composing, rhetorical, and design skill-sets by developing media projects for academic and professional purposes, just as they do with traditional alphanumeric writing. Students know how to write when they arrive to the university as undergraduates. In fact, they have been writing most of their lives. Individuals spend years writing in personal journals, scribbling notes to peers, texting their families and friends, and even composing narratives or essays for their classes in school—but the academy still teaches writing. Of course, the genres are different and the expectations increase: students are required to engage in critical thought and produce unique ideas relayed through sophisticated texts. Instructors dedicate entire courses to teaching students to achieve these composition goals, despite that students arrive to their class *technically* knowing how to write. Yet, holistically, the discipline's beliefs on new media and approaches to teaching design are drastically different. Despite that there is still a need for substantial instruction on the critical production of video (and other digital medias) for academic and professional purposes, there persists and inaccurate myth that instructors cannot offer students any new knowledge or skill sets that they do not already possess. There is a pressing need to reject exaggerated and inconsistent stereotyping of students and shift to promoting a realistic understanding of young people's relationship with digital technologies to reflect the reality of individuals engagement with media.

I am a millennial and represent the reality of flagrant misrepresentation of the digital native. The first computer I remember was a *Gateway* desktop that my parents brought home sometime around the year 2000. Like most nine-year-olds, my computer experience was limited to playing a *Barbie* horseback riding game and Solitaire. I had one computer class during my high school education where a software program tested our typing speed. I received my first cellphone, the hot pink *Motorola Razr,* when I was 15, which I could only use to call and send 200 texts a month using a T9 keyboard system. It is important that I acknowledge that I am privileged to have had access to such opportunities to use new technologies because accessibility remains an authentic concern for equitability in education and beyond. But, my point is I was not exactly using computers to write code, design websites, or compose and edit video.

In fact, for professional and academic purposes, until my graduate program I had done very little digital design. In 2015, I was a high school English teacher applying for graduate programs. During that same year the *Pew Research Center* reported that 86% of 18-29 year-olds have a smartphone, calling it "smartphone saturation," and 73% owned a laptop computer, as did I (Anderson, 2015). Yet, I had never designed or produced a digital product, beyond creating a simple PowerPoint or *Prezi* presentation. While the feasibility, accessibility, and capabilities of technologies are continually providing unprecedented composing opportunities for adolescents, few are engaged in critical design practices before arriving to the university. And, like myself, many students may find, depending on their chosen discipline, that they are provided with few occasions within the academy to create digital products, while the notion that they are competent in these areas persists.

While the assumptions about digital natives misrepresent students, the same myth marginalizes instructors and their abilities, roles, and responsibilities. Slewyn (2009) asserts, "these depictions of the digital native convey a range of attendant implications for adult generations as well as the institutions and organisations that seek to work with children and young people" (p. 369). The myth of digital natives often causes tension between students and teachers. Fear and frustration stemming from insecurities about technology use provokes instructors to perceive a loss of academic authority, which can lead to the exile of digital technologies in the classroom. And to provide rationale for this decision, educators often promote that technology is distracting to learning, corrupting communication practices, or misplace anxieties and suggest that digital devices and spaces promote plagiarism and undermine the integrity of information. The perpetuation of these views can have harmful effects on policy and pedagogy by prompting administrators and educators to believe that the "digital excesses of young people should be tempered and checked...depowering of the digital native wherever possible, through the increased regulation and control, blocking and filtering of young people's technology use" (Selwyn, 2009, p. 370). Educators have the power to negate both theirs and students critical engagements with digital design projects, like video, within the classroom, which hinders the development of new literacies and skill-sets made available through contemporary technologies that are demanded in the public and professional spheres. Recognizing that the *digital native* is in large part a myth will work toward alleviating anxieties and encourage instructors and students to engage in digital design alongside one another.

Language is impactful. The words we choose to represent our methods, manners, and materials for composing communicate certain connotations to both students and instructors, which impact the way we understand, approach, learn, and teach digital projects. Shipka (2011) advocates for teachers and scholars to "continue rethinking, redefining, or even expanding terms like *writing, authoring,* or *composing*" (p. 29). I too have emphasized the need to question the use of *composition* and have emphasized *design* as an alternative that is better representative of multiple modes and literacies, works across mediums, and invokes action and process-orientation. Additionally, I challenge the term *film* in the modern classroom and the stereotyping of the *digital native*. The narrow definitions of these words fail to encourage nuanced and situated views on modalities, technologies, and literacies, as well as the humans who utilize or interact with them. Teacher-scholars should actively analyze discipline-specific terminology and its associations as they work with multiple modes, means, and peoples. Authentic interactions with medias and students through design and coupled with conscious consideration of usage might prompt changes to linguistic practices, cultivating language that is more inclusive and representative of contemporary composing practices and materials.

Approach

Beyond merely shifting terminology to avoid misrepresentations, instructors should be wary of carrying assumptions about methods and styles from writing into new modes and mediums. Purdy's purpose in advocating for the use of the term *design* extends beyond the superficial selection of a new word to reflect multiple modes and media, but it prompts teacher-scholars to inclusively consider a range of texts through a

new perceptual lense (2014, p. 618). Language functions as a representation of conceptual shifts, marking the way we think about composing, but it is not enough just to change our words. We have to change our actions, and many of the assumptions we make and practices we engage in are habitual: difficult to notice and even more challenging to break. Shipka (2011) warns that researchers, scholars, and teachers should be taking into account that interactions with contemporary writing technologies, like computers, are themselves "haunted by earlier versions of textuality," such as reading, writing, and speaking (p. 35). Centuries of orality and textuality along with our personal experiences have constructed our understanding and value of certain linguistic attributes, types of modes and materials, and preferential approaches and styles. Fortunately, using metacognitive strategies to analyze our processes and practices during design has the potential to illuminate our biases so that we might troubleshoot issues with approach to or application of design before implementing multimodal projects into our classrooms.

Despite that Shipka (2011) and other scholars caution against the convention of transferring notions and approaches into new mediums that operate in different manners, I found myself shifting manners and techniques from traditional methods composition into video design, including adhering to rigid genre ideals. The narrative is a conventional and valued genre in the English discipline. Narrative-style accounts have dictated the required readings for my English and writing classes and decorate the bookshelves in my home, and, consequently, I found myself trying to implement a narrative style into my video instead of considering alternative (and potentially more effective) approaches. Narrative is not necessarily ineffective in video; quite the contrary, many movies and documentaries are presented using this style. The genre was

comfortable and familiar with me: I could easily write a narrative and recite it on camera. However, it was not an optimal approach for the purposes of my video, which aimed at serving as resource for instructors implementing video projects into their own courses.

While collaborating with a peer outside my discipline who has interests in and resources for creating a video, I was offered constructive feedback that altered my video design: the narrative script was, frankly, boring. I had created a product that was too long, tedious, and stagnant to maintain an audience's interest. Despite that I had engaged with numerous sources that warned against this habit and, admittedly, thought I was above falling victim to the creativity confining complacency of relying on familiar conventions (because I had set an intention not to do so), I tried to force elements of traditional texts into new media. This event solidifies the significance of *design*, actually creating a product, because it was only engaging in the practice of video design that highlighted my misconception and in real time demonstrated the concepts I was learning about through my research. The practice of design illuminated my misstep in transferring conceptions and conventions from traditional literacies to digital media, but it is through *design thinking*, specifically the use of generative analysis and critique, that I attained insights with the potential to improve my practices and pedagogy beyond a single product.

Thinking about my thought processes, metacognition, and analyzing my choice to use a narrative approach prompted me to consider potential factors that influenced my design choice, which facilitated a self-awareness that might prevent such misguided choices in a future project or assignment, and, in addition, allowed me to recognize the design processes and practices that were most successful for creating a final product. To shorten the length and provide more dynamic content for my video, I elected to take the

same information but present it in an interview style, an expert approach among videographers. In teaching composition, instructors encourage their students to engage in expert processes and practices (i.e. brainstorming and organization). Designers, too, should be encouraged to implement professional practices of experts in new media fields, like videography or graphic design. As instructors urge students to embrace their writing processes and guidance based on the merit they are agreed upon authority for writing, so educators designing in new mediums should look to other professionals in specialized fields for established practices. Based largely on my peer's suggestion, I created a series of interview questions, which would be prompted to me so that I might respond to create content for my video. Discarding the initial script and embracing the interview approach created authentic commentary that is dynamic and engaging for audiences to watch and condensed the length of the video, which was, overall, a more effective product that instructors might actually want to watch. The full video is published through *YouTube* and is accessible through the following hyperlink: "Video Design Projects in Composition Courses" [7].

Engaging in *design* and employing *design thinking* allowed me refocus my attention to the task of learning and maintain forward orientation through actively seeking solutions to challenges I encountered. Metacognitive analysis revealed that collaborating with others and engaging in expert practices were essential components of the design processes and substantially improved my final video component, but these insights into design are not limited to a single person or product. Instructors have the unique ability to transfer their gained understandings into instructional approaches for teaching digital

[7] The subsequent hyperlink displays the full URL for my video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVF81JOfdZc&feature=youtu.be

design projects, which has the potential to influence an infinite number of students' critical thinking and creative projects.

From Project to Practice

In addition to altering my language for and approach to digital video and related design projects, the knowledge produced through my personal experiences and meta-analytical practices will change my teaching methods. For example, my initial intent was to design and create a free standing video project, which was to represent the entirety of my thesis. Despite that my final product was not exclusively video but additionally employed audio, image—and text—the project remains successful because participating in the processes of digital design provides meaningful revelations, such as the need to embrace a plurality of modalities, means, and processes. Limiting the modalities of the project made achieving the goals and objectives extremely challenging.

When envisioning this project, I had an "out with the old and in with the new" mentality. I believed that, in order to be authentic to new media studies and video design, I had to reject all aspects of conventional academic writing, and I feel that I am likely not alone in this reaction. Shipka (2011) explains, "we have allowed ourselves to trade in one bundle of texts and techniques for another: pro-verbal becomes pro-digital" (p. 11). As individuals and educators, when it comes to creating digital compositions in the classroom, most of us are either in or we are out. When instructors do commit to teaching a digital design project, a frequent mistake is to assign projects in which the final product is exclusively ground in digital technologies. Often, in an effort to free ourselves and our students from the confinement of the page, we implement assignments that limit designers to the screen (Shipka, 2011, p. 11). Instead, individuals should have the ability

to utilize multiple modes and mediums to design multimodal projects to ensure they can choose the materials and means that are most effective for achieving primary rhetorical goals. Though video encompasses multiple modalities like audio, image, and, sometimes text, creating a freestanding documentary with no support from other mediums, like a website or research paper, lessened my ability to construct and convey meaning, as certain components and concepts were best represented through means other than video. Rejecting the confinement of mono-modality (which in reality cannot exist, as all communication is made up of multiple processes that are inherently multimodal) or single-medium product design increased the final project's effectiveness and allowed the initial goals and objectives to be achieved without compromise of content or creativity.

Another challenge is that the conventional structure of an academic calendar does not readily permit for learning and teaching of designing digital products. Individuals often enter the university fluent in English and have had general practice in writing, and this background experience makes it easier to teach conventional modes of composition, such as the research paper. While digital video is commonly consumed and produced beyond the university, it is unlikely students have had any formal education on designing media projects. Not only are students charged with understanding and navigating rhetorical and composition matters but also utilizing unfamiliar technologies and software platforms. This learning curve makes student-generated videos difficult to produce in a single semester.

To attempt to create a stand-alone video, even a relatively short production, is overwhelming, disorienting, and discouraging. The experience is similar to that of a child who possesses basic language skills attempting write a novel or beginner at ice-skating

striving to land a triple axel their first time in the rink. Early in this project, I recognized that I needed to learn an assortment of basic skills on a variety of technological platforms, and, even then, likely required extensive time, perhaps years, to practice and further develop my abilities to produce a video that upheld my initial intentions. I certainly was unable to accomplish these goals within a single sixteen-week semester. Analysis of my experience suggests that both the time constraints and limitations of mono-medium design suggest that video and other digitally designed products should be brief and embedded within larger research projects that have a foundation in more familiar modes and medium.

Instructors should include video elements within larger projects that lead with more traditional academic writing assignments, like essays or research papers. Students should learn and practice written composition before multimodal design, because, despite common misconception, the majority of students are more literate in the traditional mediums then in emerging genres ground in digital technologies, especially for academic composing. And while certainly video projects are worthwhile, Ellis (2013) claims that is "unrealistically ambitious for most undergraduates," and there is substantial value in "essay-based multimedia pedagogy" (p. 40). In the composition classroom, assigning multimedia projects that are components or facets of more conventional writing assignments makes the projects more readily approachable for students and instructors. Palmeri (2012) asserts, students can learn video design by "draw[ing] connections between alphabetic writing and [video]" (p. 120). Individuals are able to activate their prior knowledge about composing alphanumeric texts and transfer exist understandings about structure, style, and rhetoric into digital media. Instructors can rely on scaffold

learning to ensure initial design projects are manageable and beneficial for their students and themselves.

Another significant benefit for assigning video design as a component of larger research project is students are prompted to engage in creative thinking, which produces more effective final products. In projects that are purely media-based, students and instructors might be more likely to rely on existing images, sounds, texts, and videos to compose (but really remediate) design products, but the established requirements of traditional academic writings work against this by maintaining that students to develop original arguments. Just as with written scholarship, the best multimedia products are composed of nearly all original material that is presented in creative, interesting, and persuasive manners (Ellis, 2013, p. 63). Having a composition assignment like a research paper with a multimedia component in which student present elements of the written content through new modes and via new mediums will work to ensure the material is largely original and, subsequently, increase creativity and improve critical thinking among learners. Purdy (2014) would agree, asserting that instructors should recognize and allow student-designers to produce a wide range of texts with materials available (p. 619). *Design thinking* values the individual's rhetorical choices to utilize and combine modes and mediums to create the most effective product, and instructors who offer students the opportunity to explore multiple mediums within a single project provide a designer the authority to explore the limitless possibilities for interconnecting modes and materials to communicate meaning. Design projects, particularly for students new to digital design, should require students to employ multiple modes throughout the process, and digital components (i.e. video or infographics) should ideally function as a smaller

aspect within the larger research project to increase critical thought and ingenuity by offering an array of composing materials.

An additional affordance of embedding smaller media components within larger traditional projects is that the approach highlights the process and rhetorical parallels between composition and *design*. Aligning closely with the principle of scaffolding student knowledge from writing into video, educators should strive to make explicit the many corresponding processes that make up both written composition and video design. Many conventional stages of writing and video overlap; in fact, "filmmaking and alphabetic writing are ultimately quite similar processes" (Palmeri, 2012, p. 128). Several agreed upon processes for authors in traditional written composition are brainstorming, researching, writing, revising, editing, and publishing, and video design offers several paralleling processes (which may themselves be composed of several sub-processes, such as with writing that includes stages like outlining and drafting). Video design, for example, is often created through actions like storyboarding, designing, revising, editing, and publishing. Consider storyboarding, a conventional activity in video design that often operates as a graphic organizer in the form of illustrations or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre-visualizing a motion picture (See Appendix C for example). The approach relates to pre-writing practices of Process Pedagogy, which illustrates cross-medium connections about composing and reinforces the value of similar writing activities like brainstorming and outlining. Though components like editing and revising have identical titles across genres and more readily appear connected, students and teachers still benefit from critically considering and discussing the purposes of these processes to highlight the interconnected nature of all communication practices.

The paralleling processes between composing writing and video extend into all types of design. Purdy (2014) outlines several recursive steps that occur during the design process that provide a framework for *design thinking*: (1) understand, (2) observe, (3) define, (4) ideate, (5) prototype, and (6) test (p. 627). These recursive steps or stages in design are closely aligned with conventional methods for producing written text (See Figure 9). Purdy parallels (1) *understand* with researching, gathering and collecting information necessary to move forward with a project and offers that *define* best represents rhetorical consideration, when a designer identifies audience, purpose, and context, while *ideate* closely mimics brainstorming, generating ideas and creating an action-oriented plan (Purdy, 2014, p. 627). The process of creating a *prototype* aligns with writing or drafting, and to *test* parallels the final stages of print text: distribution and publication. *Observe*, unlike the other steps in design, is not traditionally represented in the writing process, but, as Purdy explains, is to watch or communicate with other people (2014, p. 627).

Design Thinking	Writing Process
Understand	Research
Observe	?
Define	Analyze Audience
Ideate	Brainstorm
Prototype	Write Rough Draft(s)
Test	Share and Revise

Figure 9: A comparison of the processes of design and writing. *Source(s):* "What can design thinking offer writing studies?," by J.P. Purdy, 2014, *College Composition and Communication*, 65(4), p. 628.

Though not formally acknowledged in the writing process, it is possible to see how observation is an important activity in producing written text: writers learn by reading and mimicking other authors and receiving guidance from mentors and peers. Purdy's framework for *design thinking* acknowledges observation as an essential element in learning communication practices and skill sets, and learning design by observing others makes a lot of sense, since, even young children learn new languages and literacies by mimicking those around them. Certainly, the stage of *observe* is more readily accessible during design, as people often utilize more physical space and movement in the creation of multimodal works, and, even in digital environments watching others create can further an individual's understanding of methods and practices of design. Including the additional process of *observe* can serve as a prompt to encourage a designer to prioritize and value collaborating with others while designing digital products. In fact, during this project, I learned how to use editing software from observing a peer and watching screen-captured instructional videos made and published online by other designers, which appears to be a time efficient and an effective manner for learning new

design practices. Though the writing process often fails to include *observe* as a fundamental step, observation practices occur frequently and include modeling and reading example texts. The processes of design are not so distinct that the explicit parallels between writing and design processes cannot be recognized, and these connections can reassure anxious instructors and students who are new to design. Further, the *design thinking* framework encourages individuals to explore the way people make meaning with any and all resources, and people *are* an often underutilized resource.

To prioritize observation and collaboration when teaching design projects, instructors should include a regular series of workshops throughout the course. Workshops are when groups meet to make decisions or engage in activities related to a project. Workshops are not exclusive to design, and some writing workshops that frequent traditional academic projects are brainstorming sessions and peer reviews. However, workshopping as a class is particularly important for projects that include elements of media both for navigating accessibility concerns and troubleshooting technical issues. Instructors should include a regular series of workshops during class meeting times that progress in a logical, coherent series that mimics common expert processes and practices, such as ideating, researching, and editing sessions, so that students can have structured time and space available for accessing resources (technology and space) and reviewing and responding to feedback in a relatively informal setting (Self, 2007). Additionally, it is unlikely and impractical for an instructor to be an expert in the multiple areas that make up design or sub-media specialties. To alleviate this concern, bringing in individuals experienced in areas of design (i.e. librarians for research and media and technology instructors for video editing) allows designers have access to

experts that can provide specialized instruction and model expert practices (to ensure designers *observe*), which can be applied to design projects in real time. Importantly, instructors should acknowledge that students in their courses might very well be experts in areas of design and can serve as valuable peer mentors during the design processes, if they choose to embrace those roles.

Ideally, to ensure that workshops are productive, student-designers will need access to technologies that can produce their products; wired classrooms are ideal for digital design projects, like video (Adsanatham et al., 2013, p. 286). While not necessary, tech-capable environments provide access to digital resources for all students, which makes the teaching of digital design more equitable. If a digital classroom is not immediately available, instructors can reach out within their institutions and reserve spaces like technology labs or writing studios, particularly for scheduled workshops, as student-designers will require technology to actively participate in design during those times. Though the *Pew Research Center* does find that an overwhelming majority of students own devices like smartphones and laptop computers, accessibility remains a concern that instructors must attend to in design projects. Issues with accessibility must be navigated on a person-to-person and class-to-class basis, and educators should always promot campus resources that offer technologies for student use. Instructors will need to research their institutions resources before implementing digital design projects and cumulate a list of spaces, technologies, and professionals along with their locations and services and provide that to students. Ensuring designers have access to spaces, technologies, and professionals will maximize the time they have to engage in the processes of design.

Though composition studies and the *design thinking* mindset value engaging in composing processes, the professional sphere tends to prioritize the production of products, and, in an attempt to cultivate design projects that are relevant to students and educators beyond the walls of the classroom, designers should digitally publish their work. Publication provides an authentic purpose and audience for all texts. A central purpose of the academy is to generate and contribute to collective knowledge, and, though historically the means of publication have been through print texts (even recent scholarship on new media texts and topics), scholars and teachers can and should be sharing their digital design projects for their ability to serve as resources and examples for others. For student-designers, distribution through digital environments offers an opportunity to reach an audience other than their classroom instructor and creates the potential for actual change on issues of import in their lives, because online publication is substantially more accessible and feasible than print for both producers and consumers, as platforms like *YouTube* and *Wix* offer free and immediate digital content publishing that is available to audiences all over the world (Dubisar & Palmeri, 2010; Palmeri, 2012). And, media is meant to be shared.

Through meta-analysis of my experiences, my understanding of and approach to *design* has substantially changed, but one intent has remained consistent throughout the entirety of this project: to publish my video via digital means. I aimed to make a resource video to assist instructors in implementing video design projects in their classrooms, but in order for the video to achieve that purpose, it has to be able to be viewed by others. Too often academic work goes unshared, particularly for students, and this practice is disjointed from the professional practices of distributing work. The process for publishing

a text is long and tedious, which discourages or denies many authors from sharing their writing, particularly for students who have limited or no experience with submitting for publications. In addition, the publication process requires extended time, which might dissuade instructors from teaching students about or how to publish texts because it is not readily feasible within the confines of a semester. Yet, digital publishing can negate these concerns. Video-sharing websites, like *YouTube*, offer student video designers immediate opportunity for publication by creating a free personal account/page and uploading a video. While academic publications often cost money to access and the audiences for those publications are narrow (often exclusive to profession and discipline), *YouTube* costs nothing for general accounts and boasts one billion monthly users—nearly one out of every two people using the Internet (*Reuters*, 2013). I elected to post my video to the site for these reasons, and, with a few clicks of a mouse pad, my resource video is available to educators, instructors, and students, which allowed me to attain my primary rhetorical objectives: achieving purpose and reaching audience. I had produced and distributed my video, but the realization that others were going to be able to watch (and even critique) my work left me with an immediate question: how to I know if my video is effective?

Assessment and Reflection

Though *design thinking* values the processes of design and idealizes forward orientation (learning and growth), there is a pressing pragmatic concern for digital design projects in academic courses: summative assessment and final grades. For all designers, there is an initial experience of composing with new modes, mediums, and methods, and, for instructors, there always is an initial course in which digital design projects are

piloted, which not only creates challenges for instruction but also for assessment. For teacher-scholars, analyzing our own media products may offer guidance for generating requirements and student-learning objectives for design projects.

Bringing together multiple modes and media is a challenging communication act, and the evaluation of new media texts can be equally difficult. In *Toward a Composition Made Whole*, Shipka (2011) echoes Yancey's understanding that composing is "an expression of relationship—between parts and parts, parts and the whole, the visual and the verbal, between text and context, [and] reader and composer" (p. 9). Emerging technologies and digital spaces are undoubtedly increasing the challenge and complexity of assessment because they increase the number of possible connections between modalities, mediums, spaces, and people. Shipka explains that "digital compositions then bring us together in new ways" (2011, p. 9). These new manners of digital composing are not necessarily distinct from methods of writing or creating text, but they are different. And there is still much opportunity for scholars to research and explore the possibilities that these new materials afford for combining modes and mediums for communicative acts. Perhaps due to the relative newness of digital composing or hesitation to learn and implement current technologies, limited scholarship on assessment of new media projects in composition courses is available for instructors. While there is a growing number of scholars and educators advocating for the inclusion of new media texts and exploring familiar concerns like accessibility of technologies, the recognition and understanding of these issues has prompted little research on digital writing *assessment* (McKee & DeVoss, 2013). Educators and, subsequently, students struggle due to this lack of

resources, like theorized frameworks, rubrics, and example products, and are left to guess about expectations and use their best judgment to assess design projects.

One method for approaching design assessment is to utilize a broad rhetorical approach, which can accommodate for many concerns because of rhetoric's flexibility across contexts. Murray, Sheets, and Williams (2009) state, "rhetorical principles of communication—which composition teachers have applied primarily to literate communication—also apply, just as appropriately to multimodal compositions" (Conclusion, para. 2). Just as with writing, individuals engaged in design should concern themselves with consideration of individual elements working toward fundamental rhetorical goals of any form of communication: presenting an issue, reaching the audience, and achieving the purpose. Shipka (2011) offers a list of general rhetorical objectives for students to achieve when working across modes and media, whcih includes responding to the needs of different audiences, understanding how genre influences composition, adopting appropriate voice, tone, and formality, and integrating their own ideas with those of others (p. 102-3). Instructors should reward student-designers who demonstrate rhetorical flexibility, taking up different approaches and materials for design based on what the individual intends to achieve (and why, how, and for whom). This approach to assessment should alleviate stress for instructors, because the weight of the decision making is placed on the student; they are autonomous designers of their project. In fact, Shipka encourages instructors to not only allow students to make their own design choices, but to have students account for those decisions, working toward a metacommunicative awareness (2011, p. 87). Instructors are encouraged to prompt students to think deeply about the materials and approaches they utilize in creating

communication-based design products. Both student-designers and instructors should analyze and evaluate design choices to strengthen rhetorical awareness.

But with digital design, instructors must focus on the relationships between multiple modes in support of these common rhetorical goals. Yancey (2004) offers, "digital compositions weave words and context and images. They are exercises in ordered complexity—and complex in some different ways than print precisely because they include more kinds of threads" (p. 95). In an alphanumeric text, an author might consider how word choice and structure work to support the rhetorical goals of the piece, and many of these same textual elements can be present in design but are to be considered with additional modes. But in video design, an individual might reflect on image and audio correlation and their effectiveness at relaying the video's message to the target audience. SoraPure (2006) offers two principle ways of understanding how rhetoric and meaning-making can be understood and evaluated across modes, through metaphor (relation based on substitution) and metonymy (relation based on combination) (p. 5). Though metaphor and metonymy are commonly understood as verbal tropes, applying these concepts to digital design provides instructors with an approach for discussing the relationships of multiple modes: "when reading and assessing multimodal compositions, instructors cannot just look at each mode separately (i.e. writing as one entity and image as another entity), but rather the modes need to be examined together" (Murray, Sheets, & Williams, 2009, para. 2). While there might be more modes to consider within a digital project, each element should be working toward achieving conventional rhetorical goals within a single context, as would any mono-modal communication, like writing or speaking. Instructors should caution student-designers against arbitrariness and excess of

multiple modes. Every element of text, image, sound, and even the utilization of space should have purpose: contributing to the text's meaning and rhetorical effectiveness.

In addition to finding solace in traditional rhetorical principles, instructors may further rely on the frequent and familiar when developing assessment tools for media products, and, as Murray, Sheets, and Williams (2009) suggest, teachers should use and adapt traditional writing program rubrics to suit new contexts (Writing Program Rubric, para. 1). Teachers, like lecturers, adjuncts, and teaching assistants, often do not have the freedom to create their own rubric, and departments frequently implement program wide rubrics, particularly for first year or general education courses. And, because rhetoric and semantics are transferable across modes and medium, often the objectives listed on rubrics for written work can be easily applied to digital media products. For example, Eastern Kentucky University's Department of English and Theatre's First Year Writing Rubric identifies unity, development, and coherence as major objectives for student-writers (See Appendix D). The idea of unity very clearly aligns with general rhetorical goals like "focus[ing] on a specific purpose for a defined audience," and development attends to aspects of researching and utilizing sources, as well as the integration of the student's own unique ideas. These concepts readily transfer to all types of composing. Even the element of coherence, where the rubric's language is specifically tailored to written text (i.e. "presents effective transitions between paragraphs and between sentences"), can feasibly be adapted to apply to new digital mediums like video (i.e. presents effective transitions between segments and scenes). Adapting existing rubrics may be reassuring to instructors new to design. They are not required to "reinvent the

wheel" when it comes to new media assessment strategies, but they are required to think critically about existing evaluation tools and adapt them to suit new modes and mediums.

Summative assessment is of pragmatic importance for instructors and students in their courses, but the significance of formative assessment, such as reflection, is often undervalued. Reflection is a commonly accepted professional development strategy for educators, and instructor-designers should continually evaluate, reflect upon, and refine both the implementation and assessment of design projects. Just as engaging metacognitive analysis offers insight into effective design practices, instructors who self-assess using their own grading tools can come to develop better understandings of the strengths and weaknesses of their assessment methods and materials and then make necessary adaptations. Teacher-scholars should create, analyze, and evaluate their own digital products using their rubrics to reveal which concepts can be explicitly transferred and which components should be altered so that the language is appropriate and multiple modes and materials are accounted for, so student-designers are able to understand and utilize the rubric. Further, analyzing our projects using our own grading rubrics can illuminate best practices for achieving ideals, like unity and coherence, through design and illustrate how those might manifest in final media products, which may help instructors both teach and assess design projects in their courses.

While a lack quantitative guidance on best practices for digital media assessment makes it challenging to offer concrete guidelines for creating assessment tools, engaging in *design* and applying the *design thinking* principle of generative analysis allows instructors to gain immediate insights from their own experiences and implement those understandings into their teaching and evaluation of design projects. Relying on the

understanding of rhetoric as the basis for all communication, it is important to acknowledge that assessment is a method of communication (for teachers to convey to students the successfulness of academic work) and that all communicative practices are situated within unique rhetorical contexts. This awareness indicates, unfortunately, that there is no one-size-fits-all method for effective assessment of digital design projects. As Morgan and Herrington (2013) acknowledge, "teachers' actual practice, directly observed in context and in tandem with specific classroom materials, is the best source for that guidance." Though each instructor must ultimately determines their manners and methods for assessing design projects, by engaging in reflective practices on their approaches, teachers model and emphasize the importance of metacognition and a willingness to learn and adapt for their students and other professionals.

My engagement in meta-reflective practices throughout the design process was so substantial in propelling my understanding of video design that it shifted the focus of my project from teaching others about teaching video projects to teaching myself about video design. And, most significantly, I became impassioned about the potentials for meta-analysis to produce insights that would transform the way I design and teach digital composing and ultimately wanted to share my experiences with others so that they might teach themselves about similar medias. Again, while metacognition has been widely accepted and applied to student-learning, it is an underutilized practice by professional educators. But, it can be transformative for research, scholarship, pedagogy, and practice, and one significant approach for cultivating change in composition pedagogy and practice is through the embrace and encouragement of digital design projects in graduate programs, specifically in thesis and dissertation projects (Graupner et al., 2009). Graduate

students, like myself, are the future educators of the academy, and remediating conventional genres in graduate education is an essential step in preparing future academic professionals to implement and teach multimodal literacy skills in the composition classroom.

I recognize the irony of my discussing digital design in a traditional print format and hope the video element offsets some of that hypocrisy, but, again, this was the first video I have created and a variety of factors like mono-modality, time constraints, and lack of resources and mentorship from professional videographers limited my abilities to produce a freestanding video thesis. Like myself, Ball (2014), in "Show, Not Tell: The Value of New Media Scholarship," recognizes the often ironic publication format of the text on new media topics and elaborates on a few reasons why linear, print scholarship persists in the academy, despite new technological affordances: overwhelmingly, academic publications, such as journals, are not publishing new media texts, like video. There are digital publications that are progressive, like *Kairos*, in offering experiential and reflective scholarship, but has not made a transformational impact on practices (Ball, 2014, p. 167). Consequently, few individuals are producing new media scholarship. Though a significant portion of composition studies research and interest attends to new media, scholarship is often published in print-based formats, which includes digital versions of books and articles, like PDFs, that are made for online distribution but embrace traditional conventions of print. Ball draws an important distinction between online scholarship *about* new media and new media scholarship (2014, p. 167). To label scholarship as new media, the text must make multimodality a material actualization through contemporary digital technologies. Graduate students and educators need to be

researching, designing, producing, publishing, and assessing their own digital products, which create authentic experiences to learn from, and, when coupled with *design thinking* and, most importantly, metacognitive analysis, can generate insights that will transform an instructor's pedagogy and practices. Through sharing knowledge and understanding through new media means those changes might ripple out from the individual instructor to shift the practices of an entire discipline.

Designing the Teacher

My final video, "Video Design Projects in Composition Courses," aims to support instructors in implementing video projects into their courses. The 4 minute and 14 second video succinctly offers viewers information about the materials, technology, and resources needed to facilitate video projects and provides commentary on the affordances and challenges of implementing digital design projects in composition courses. Upon reflection, there are aspects of the video I believe are successful and elements that I would change. However, for the purposes of this project and my central premise that instructors should engage in design, creating a video is a success in and of itself. However, it would be inaccurate to deem the project successful based solely final product or even one the cumulative experience. The project was fruitful because the mental, physical, and social processes that constructed the video were consciously analyzed to generate understandings about the language, materials, and practices that make up design.

As Purdy (2014) reminds us, those who employ *design thinking* analyze in order to create (p. 626). I strive to create a more critical and effective designer, thinker, student, and teacher—a better version of me. The knowledge and insight that meta-analysis of *design* offers for teachers has purpose beyond the single project and should be applied to

personal pedagogy, classroom practices, and professional resources. My hope is that sharing my experiences, processes, and insights may serve others or encourage similar design projects that might then teach others about teaching:

> It is important that we, as researchers and scholars, explore the potentials of different representational systems in our own work…[and] find ways not only to value these texts and increase both their numbers and visibility, but also to develop and articulate for others analytical and interretational strategies for engaging with new media. (Shipka, 2011, p.135)

Creating digital projects and actively engaging in meta-analytical practices can produce substantial insights into the process of design that have the real potential to influence our immediate practices, both in our own projects, classroom instructions, and professional publications. This project or yours could be the drop that creates a ripple and changes the culture of the composition classroom.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The cumulative understandings that I reached through my engagement in design and corresponding meta-analysis will alter the way I use language regarding composing and the materials, modes, and methods that collaborate in communicative acts. Common language used to describe communication practices in composition studies does not accurately account for new literacies and mediums. Words like *film* are materially inaccurate, and terms like *writing* narrowly denote a single product. Language can often carry connotations that are misrepresentative, such as *technology* and its frequent association with digital devices or the title of *digital native* which inaccurately stereotypes Millennials' design abilities. Educators should critically analyze language and embrace vocabulary that is accurate and objective, all while remaining alert to and cautious about transferring existing notions from traditional composition (approaches, genres, or mediums) into digital spaces.

Furthermore, this project altered my approaches for teaching digital design projects. Assignments that limit modes and mediums restrict a designer's opportunity to convey knowledge and understanding, and a plurality of modes and means is often best practice. Imposing a goal of learning new technologies and designing a comprehensive product through digital platforms is unrealistic and almost unachievable in an academic semester, but embedding brief media components with larger and more conventional academic writing project is ideal. Instructors should include a regular series of workshops

that align with the stages of design and strive to provide students with access to the resources needed to create media products. Assessment of multimodal works should utilize a broad rhetorical approach that evaluates the effectiveness of relationships between modes, but ultimately assessment tools must be developed in context according to the specific course, instructor, and project. Regardless, instructors should analyze and evaluate their own design products using their assessment tools and critically reflect upon their usefulness for students' projects.

Finally, instructors should engage in design to create digital products and embrace a *design thinking* framework, which "from individual composing projects to course curricula to program-level organization, design thinking provides new lenses with which to understand and approach our work" (Purdy, 2014, p. 632). *Design thinking* values forward and process-oriented learning and rhetorical awareness, encouraging the use of all modes and materials for composing communication and critical reflection regarding design choices. The act of design and employing *design thinking* facilitates awareness of the manners in which digital technologies and spaces operate and can illuminate best practices creating multimodal projects. For educators, adding reflective meta-analytical strategies fosters understandings and insights that transfers inro pedagogical practices and has the potential to reshape our classrooms into a contemporary, inclusive, and innovative space for composing through *design*.

REFERENCES

Anderson, M. (2015, October). Technology ownership: 2015. *Pew Research Center*, Retrieved from http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/29/technology-device-ownership-2015/

Adsanatham, C., Alexander, P., Carsey, K., Dubisar, A., Fedeczka, W., Landrum-Geyer, C., & Polak, M. (2013). Going multimodal: Programmatic, curricular, and classroom change. In T. Bowen & C. Whithaus (Eds.), *Multimodal literacies and emerging genres* (pp. 282-312). Pittsburgh; London: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Anson, C. M. (2014). Process pedagogy and its legacy. In G. Tate, A. R. Taggart, K. Schick, & H. B. Hessler (Eds.), *A guide to composition pedagogies* (2nd ed., pp. 212-230). New York: Oxford University Press.

Archer, A. A. (2012). Writing as design: Enabling access to academic discourse in a multimodal environment. *South African Journal Of Higher Education*, 26(3), 411-421.

Ball, C. E. (2014). Show, not tell: The value of new media scholarship. In C. Lutkewitte (Ed.), *Multimodal composition: A critical source book* (pp. 163-186). Bedford/St. Martins.

Berlin, J., & Inkster, R. (1980). Current-traditional rhetoric: Paradigm and practice. *Freshman English News, 8*(3), 1-14. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/43519330

Bolter, J. D. (2001). *Writing space: Computers, hypertext, and the remediation of print* (2nd ed.). Taylor & Francis.

Brereton, J. (Ed.). (1995). *The origins of composition studies in the American college, 1875–1925: A documentary history*. Pittsburgh; London: University of Pittsburgh Press. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5hjsd2

Brooke, C. G. (2014). New media pedagogy. In G. Tate, A. R. Taggart, K. Schick, & H. B. Hessler (Eds.), *A guide to composition pedagogies* (2nd ed., pp. 177-193). New York: Oxford University Press.

Cordova, C. (2013). Invention, ethos, and new media in the rhetoric classroom: The storyboard as exemplary genre. In T. Bowen & C. Whithaus (Eds.), *Multimodal literacies and emerging genres* (pp. 143-163). Pittsburgh; London: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Devitt, A. J. (2014). Genre pedagogies. In G. Tate, A. R. Taggart, K. Schick, & H. B. Hessler (Eds.), *A guide to composition pedagogies* (2nd ed., p. 146-162). New York: Oxford University Press.

Dubisar, A. M., & Palmeri,J. (2010). Palin/Pathos/Peter Griffin: Political video remix and composition pedagogy." *Computers and Composition*, 27(2), 77-93.

Dweck, C. (2015, September). Carol Dweck revisits the 'growth mindset.' *Education Week, 35*(5). Retrieved from https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/09/23/carol-dweck-revisits-the-growth-mindset.html

Ellis, E. (2013). Back to the future? The pedagogical promise of the (multimedia) essay. In T. Bowen & C. Whithaus (Eds.), *Multimodal literacies and emerging genres* (pp. 37-74). Pittsburgh; London: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Faigley, L. (2003). The challenge of the multimedia essay. In L. Z. Bloom (Ed.) *Composition studies in the new millennium* (pp. 174–187). Southern Illinois University Press.

García-Galera, M. C., & Valdivia, A. (2014). Media prosumers: Participatory culture of audiences and media responsibilities. *Comunicar, 43*(22), 10-13. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C43-2014-a2

Graupner, M., Nickoson-Massey, L., & Blair, K. (2009). Remediating knowledge-making spaces in the graduate curriculum: Developing and sustaining multimodal teaching and research. *Computers and Composition*, *26*(1), 13-23.

Hafner, C. A. (2014). Embedding digital literacies in English language teaching: Digital video projects as multimodal ensembles. *TESOL* 48(4), 655-85.

Lauer, C. (2014). Contending with terms: "multimodal" and multimedia" in the academic public spheres. In C. Lutkewitte (Ed.), *Multimodal composition: A critical sourcebook* (pp. 22-41). Bedford/St. Martins.

McGuire, S. Y., & McGuire, S. (2015). *Teach students how to learn*. Stylus Publishing.

McKee, H. A., & DeVoss, D. N. (Eds.). (2013). *Digital writing: Assessment & evaluation*. Logan, Utah: Computers and Composition Digital Press/Utah State University Press. Retrieved from http://ccdigitalpress.org/dwae

Morgan, C., & Herrington, A. (2013). Seeking guidance for assessing digital compositions/ composing. In H. McKee & D. N. DeVoss (Eds.), *Digital writing: Assessment and evaluation*. Computers and Composition Digital Press/Utah State University Press. Retrieved from http://ccdigitalpress.org/dwae/03_moran.html

Murray, E. A., Sheets, H. A., & Williams, N. A. (2009). The new work of assessment. *Computers and Composition Online*. Retrieved from http://cconlinejournal.org/murray_etal/index.html

National Council of Teachers of English. (2005). Position statement on multimodal literacies. Retrieved April 21, 2017, from http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/multimodalliteracies

Palmeri, J. (2012). *Remixing composition: A history of multimodal writing pedagogy*. Southern Illinois University Press.

Purdy, J. P. (2014). What can design thinking offer writing studies? *College Composition and Communication*, 65(4), 612-641.

Reuters. (2013). YouTube stats: Site has one billion active users. *Huffington Post,* Retrieved from https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/21/youtube-stats_n_2922543.html

Selfe, C. (Ed.). (2007). *Multimodal composition: Resources for teachers*. Hampton Press.

Selwyn N. (2009) "The digital native–myth and reality," *Aslib Proceedings*, Vol. 61 Issue: 4, pp.364-379, https://doi.org/10.1108/00012530910973776.

Shipka, J. (2011). *Toward a composition made whole*. University of Pittsburgh Press.

SoraPure, M. (2006). Between modes: Assessing student new media compositions. *Kairos, 10*(2), 1-15. Retrieved from http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/10.2/coverweb/sorapure/between_modes.pdf

Thomas, C. (2005). Moments of productive bafflements. *Pedagogy, 5*(1), 19-35. Retrieved from https://muse.jhu.edu/article/177783.

Wysocki, A. F., & Johnson-Eilola, J. (2011). Blinded by the letter: Why are we using literacy as a metaphor for everything else? In V. Villanueva & K. L. Arola (Eds.), *Cross-talk in comp theory* (pp. 717-738). National Council of English Teachers.

Yancey, K. B. (2004). Looking for sources of coherence in a fragmented world: Notes toward a new assessment design. *Computers and Composition*, 21 (1), 89-102.

Yancey, K. B. (2011). Made not only in words: Composition in a new key. In V. Villanueva & K. L. Arola (Eds.), *Cross-talk in comp theory* (pp. 791-826). National Council of English Teachers.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Initial and Final Instructor Interview Questions

Appendix A: Initial and Final Instructor Interview Questions

1. What class(es) are you teaching this semester that will include film/video project(s)? Can you briefly describe those projects?
2. Have you had any previous experience implementing video/film projects into composition courses? If so, briefly describe those projects and major "take-aways" from the experience(s).
3. Why do you want to implement a video/film project in your composition course(s)?
4. What are your goals/hopes for student learning through this project?
5. What would you like to learn or how do you hope to grow as an instructor through implementation of the video/film project(s)?
6. What is the single greatest challenge in implementing a video/film-based composition project in an English course?
7. What other challenges do you anticipate in implementing this project?
8. Do you have any additional comments?

Appendix B: Pre and Post Video Project Student Survey

Appendix B: Pre and Post Video Project Student Survey

This survey is anonymous, voluntary, and will not affect a student's grade or academic standing in any way.

Directions: Read each statement and fill in the circle corresponding to your level of agreement with that statement.

1. Video/film is a valid method of constructing and communicating meaning for academic purposes.

   O Strongly Disagree O Disagree O Undecided/Neutral O Agree O Strongly Agree

2. Filmmaking and writing are of equal value in an academic setting.

   O Strongly Disagree O Disagree O Undecided/Neutral O Agree O Strongly Agree

3. English instructors view video/film as a valid method of academic composition.

   O Strongly Disagree O Disagree O Undecided/Neutral O Agree O Strongly Agree

4. I can compose a video/film for academic purposes.

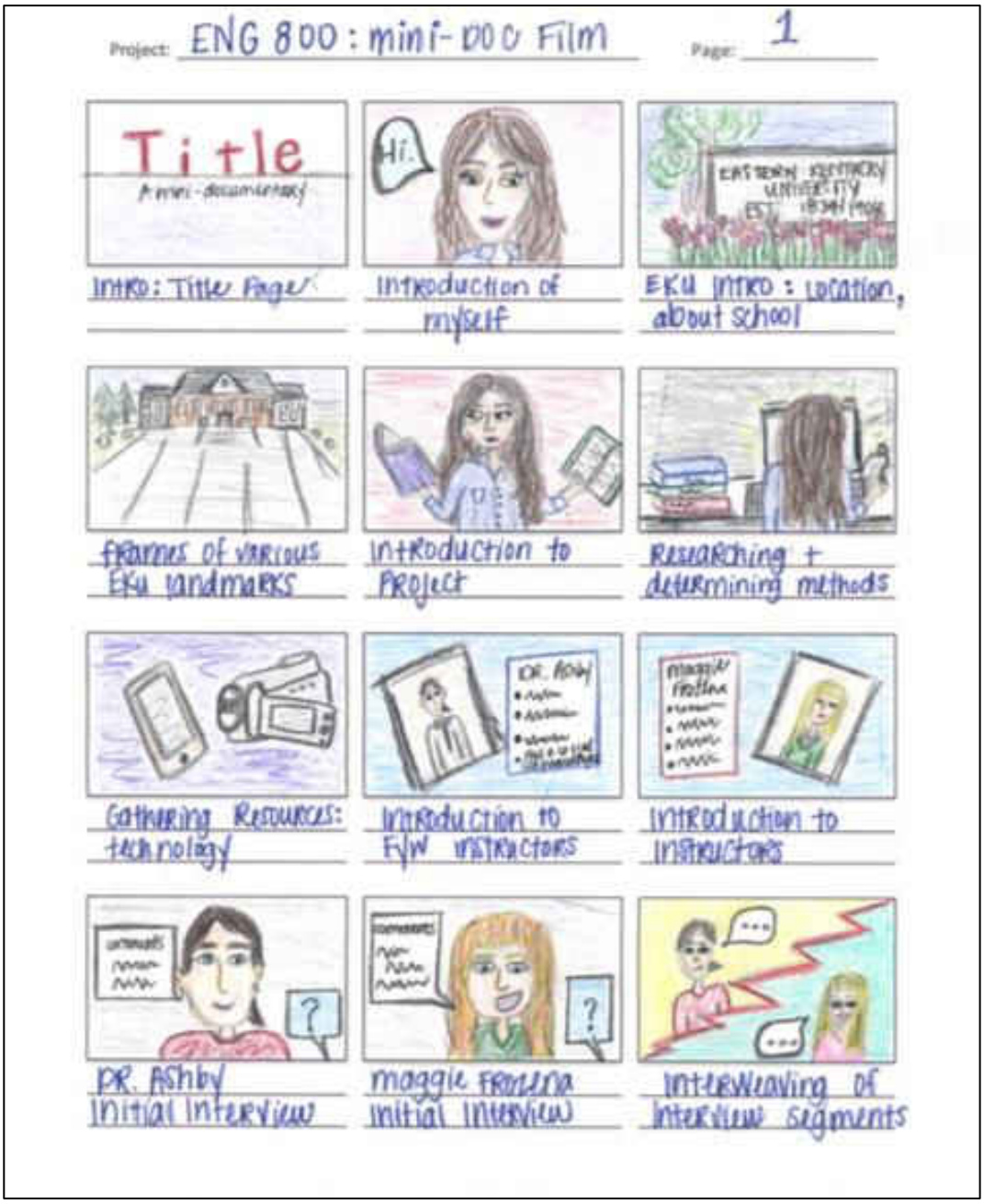
   O Strongly Disagree O Disagree O Undecided/Neutral O Agree O Strongly Agree

5. I would prefer to create a video/film rather than a research paper.

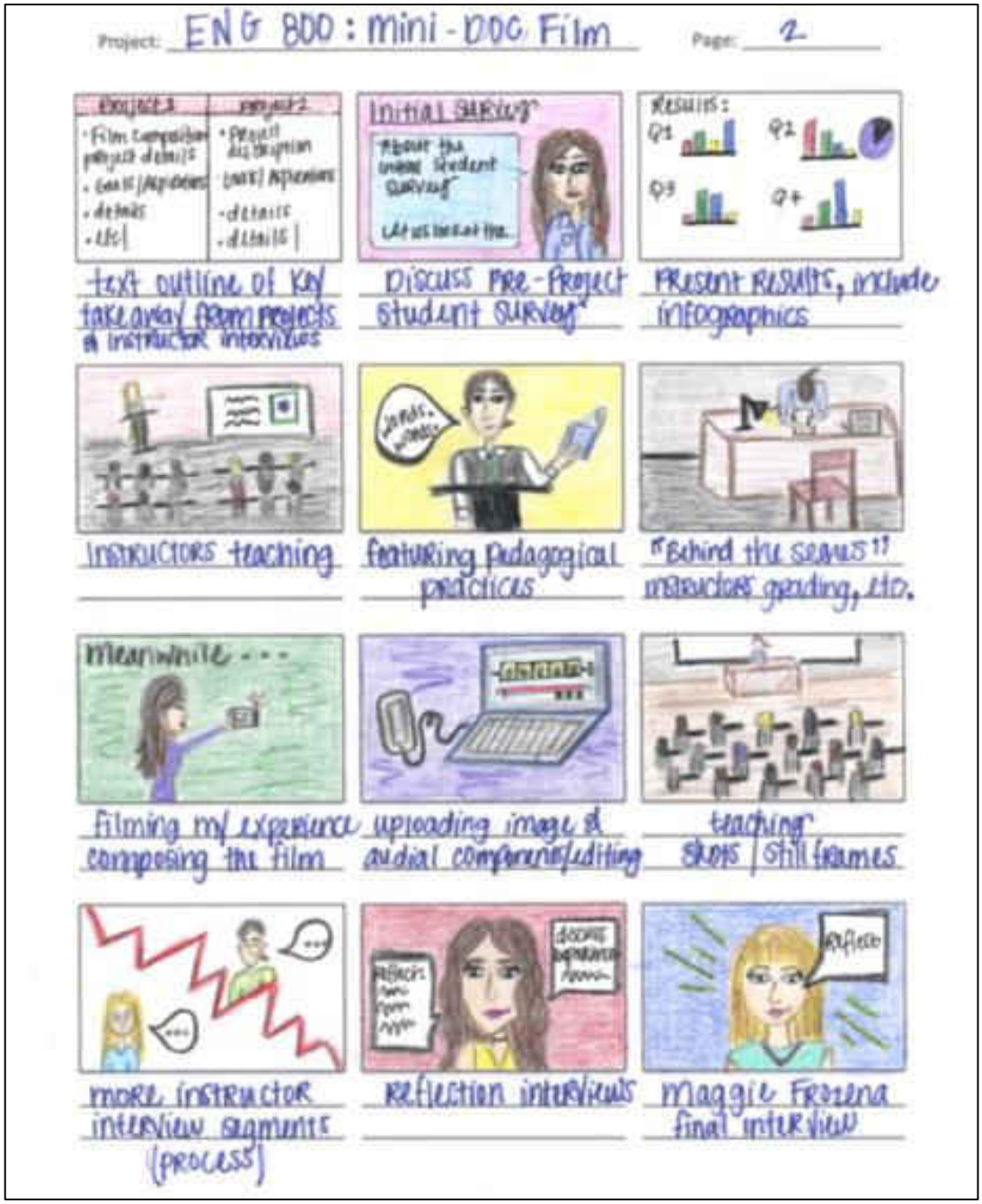
   O Strongly Disagree O Disagree O Undecided/Neutral O Agree O Strongly Agree

Appendix C: Storyboard Example: Early Ideating of my Video

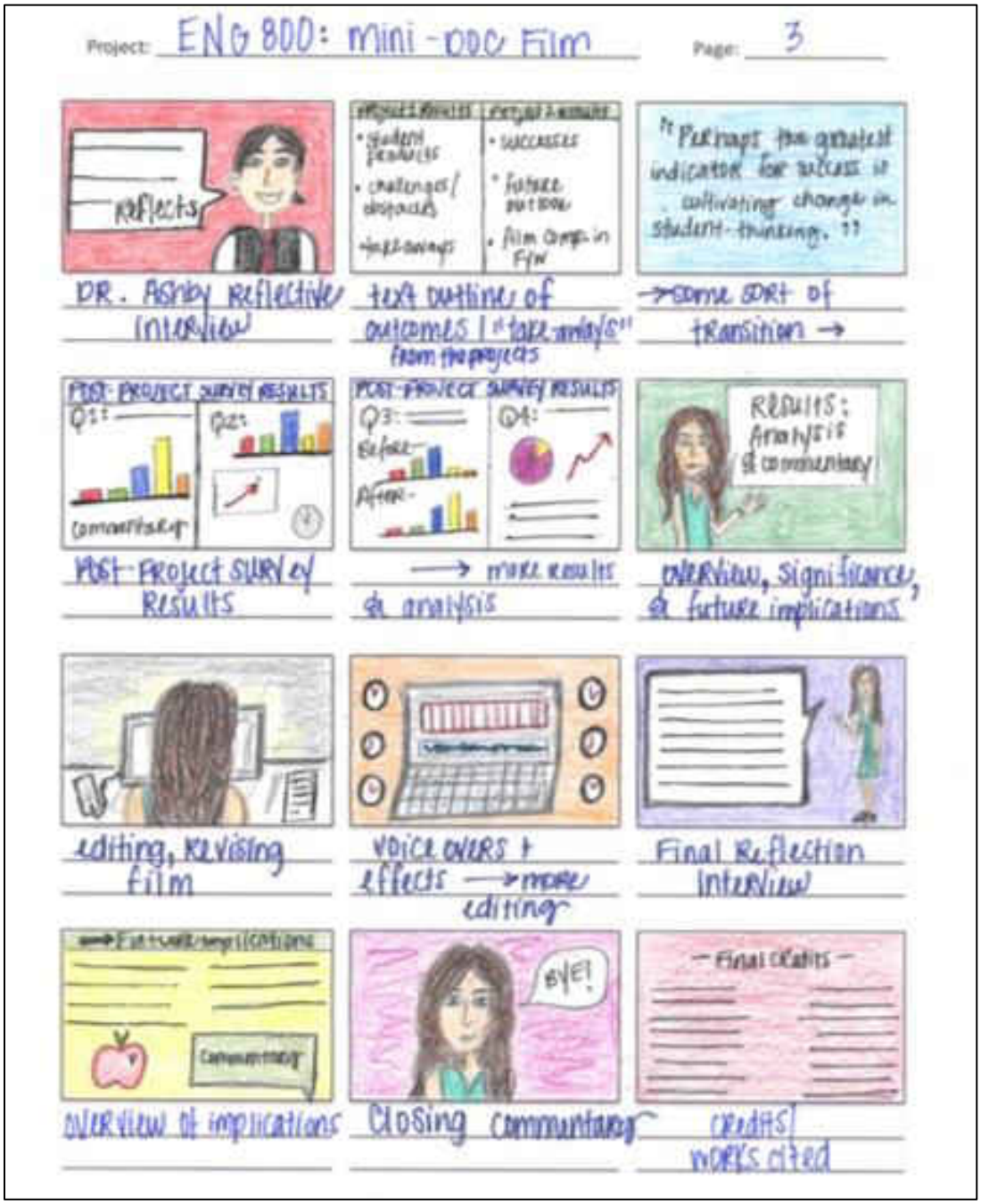
Appendix C: Storyboard Example: Early Ideating of my Video



Appendix C: Storyboard Example: Early Ideating of my Video



Appendix C: Storyboard Example: Early Ideating of my Video



Appendix D: Eastern Kentucky University's First Year Writing Program Rubric

Appendix D: Eastern Kentucky University's First Year Writing Program Rubric

Eastern Kentucky University Department of English & Theatre
First-Year Writing Grading Rubric

C = COMPETENT (70-79)

A competent text meets the following standards:

Follows assignment instructions as specified by the instructor.
Is organized as the assignment requires (summary, narrative, argument, analysis, etc.).
Meets assignment requirements for length, genre, approach, or rhetorical situation.

Unity

Focuses on a specific purpose for a defined audience (SLO 1).
Defines a topic leading to a clearly stated thesis (SLO 2).
Analyzes and synthesizes evidence coherently around thesis throughout the text (SLO 5).

Development

Provides adequate and relevant supporting information gathered from the critical reading of college-level texts from primary sources for 101 and from primary and/or secondary sources for 102 and 105 (SLO 3).
Shows careful research and use of trustworthy sources (if required) (SLO 3).
Integrates the student's ideas with the ideas of others to draw conclusions and build arguments (SLO 4).
Paraphrases, summarizes, and quotes sources effectively (SLO 6).
Documents all sources appropriately in-text and in a reference listing such as a Works Cited when quoted, paraphrased, summarized or otherwise used for information (SLO 6).

Conventions of Academic Writing

Uses sentence structure, tone, voice, and vocabulary appropriate for academic writing (SLO 7).
Has been proofread and edited carefully to reflect Standard English considerations such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling (SLO 8).
Is formatted according to MLA or other standards of the assignment (SLO 8).

B = PERSUASIVE (80-89)

A persuasive text meets the following standards in addition to the competency standards above:

Coherence

Presents effective transitions between paragraphs and between sentences.
Uses clear prose including sentence-level style such as variation, rhythm, vocabulary, and phrasing.

Evidence

Develops points thoroughly with specific and concrete evidence (ex: quotes, data, statistics).
Engages with an appropriate number of reliable, college-level sources for support.
Integrates evidence from outside sources smoothly and with precise documentation.

A = ACCOMPLISHED (90-100)

An accomplished essay distinguishes itself through one or more of the following characteristics in addition to meeting the competent and persuasive standards above:

Clarity	Accuracy	Precision	Relevance
Depth	Breadth	Logic	Significance
Fairness	Seamless Coherence	Sophistication	Recognizable Voice

D = DEVELOPING (60-69)

Appendix D: Eastern Kentucky University's First Year Writing Program Rubric

A text is developing and will receive a D if it attempts to establish a controlling purpose but fails to competently maintain unity throughout the composition. This text may also lack audience awareness, coherence, and/or evidence and/or have several problems with the conventions of academic writing. *You should schedule a conference with your instructor if your text earns a D.*

F = BEGINNING/INEFFECTIVE

A text that does not meet the basic standards of competency will receive an F. *In this case, you should schedule a conference with your instructor to discuss your ability to be successful in the class.*

This text does not meet competency standards because:

- it shows minor problems in all areas, or
- major problems in one or two competence areas.

The most common reasons for receiving an F include unintentional plagiarism, failure to meet assignment requirements such as length or research, or lack of a controlling purpose or thesis.

If you are found to have plagiarized intentionally, your paper will be removed from this general rubric, and we will follow guidelines for an infraction of Academic Integrity. You can see EKU's Academic Integrity policy at www.academicintegrity.eku.edu.

STUDENT:
GRADE:
COMMENTS: