WHAT'S IN A MODE: WRITING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTION, VALUE, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTIMODALITY IN FIRST-YEAR WRITING

A Dissertation Presented for the
Doctorate of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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May 2021

DEDICATION

To Zach, my best friend and husband, for never wavering in support of my dreams. From 14-year old kids to now, this one's for us.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my family, for remaining steadfast in love and support as they never questioned my extended stint as a student. Thank you to my parents for igniting my love of books, learning, and most importantly, people. To my mom, thank you for your example of never giving up, as you achieved your goal and now give back so freely to your students. To my dad, for encouraging me to try new things, see new places, and learn from everyone I encounter. To my siblings for making me the proudest big sister. To Granny, Pa, Grandmommy, and Grandaddy--I hope to always make you proud and am thankful everyday to continue your legacy. To the family I was privileged to marry into--for the constant support in too many forms to name.

A special note of appreciation to my three nieces--Addie, Lucie, and Emma Kate-- who remind me of the joys of life through their laughter and wonder. I will always support you and root for you as you chase your dreams.

Thank you to my chair for your guidance. Thank you to my committee members for your expertise and service, pushing me to grow.

Thank you to the research support team at UTK--Cary and Rochelle--for your knowledge and guidance as I navigated new softwares.

Thank you to the participants of this study. As writing program administrators, their time is already stretched thin. To spend time during a global pandemic responding to a graduate student's request showed me true kindness.

Thank you, finally, to my students. Without them, this would not exist. They are my reason for pursuing the best teaching practices and research. Because of them, I have hope for our future.

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on writing program administrators' (WPAs) views towards the definition and value of multimodality within their first-year writing program curriculum. Furthermore, the study seeks to discover how first-year writing programs in associate colleges, Master's, and doctoral institutions, integrate a multimodal focus, including support structures that are in place, such as training, equipment, technology, and other resources. Multimodality has become a popular topic of discussion for those in Rhetoric/Composition, yet its program-wide implementation remains low. This study updates a 2006 study published in *Composition Studies,* which provided an overview of what participants labeled as multimodal or new media for their Composition classroom instruction (Anderson, Atkins, Ball, Millar, Selfe, & Selfe, 2006). My research was explored through the theoretical framework of anti-racism, utilitarianism, and grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2007, 2015). Methodology included surveys and semi-structured interviews via Zoom. Data analysis was used to identify themes of student and faculty perception of multimodality, balancing expectations and faculty experiences, and labor conditions. This study demonstrates that overall WPAs value multimodality, yet most first-year writing programs do not implement multimodality at the programmatic level and instead rely on individual instructor choice. However, the WPAs are aware that many of their instructors are too overwhelmed, overworked, or uncertain of multimodal's definition, preventing the effective incorporation of multimodality. The conversations centered on multimodality highlight larger systematic problems within our field such as relying heavily on contingent labor, the purpose of first-year writing, and balancing student and instructor needs. Further research is warranted for expanding this research into even more contexts, especially associate's colleges and liberal arts institutions.

PREFACE

I started the writing process of this dissertation at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Everyone's daily lives shifted. We adjusted to working with students through online learning. We quarantined in our homes for the greater good. People lost their jobs, stockpiled food, and remained uncertain.

As I dove into my first chapter, I was brought a sense of peace in the midst of so much chaos. From its initial conception, I have felt a passion for this project, because of the underlying people it serves: students, more specifically, marginalized students whose voices have been silenced by institutions.

As a student of rhetoric, I couldn't help but come back to the kairos of this situation. For so many, the COVID-19 outbreak led to adapting new modalities for class, both for professors and students alike. This situation required more than the traditional learning structures, and emphasized in new ways that we are all contributing members to the learning environment.

It just so happened that the last major unit my English 101 class had to cover online was the one that involved multimodality, the theme of this dissertation. I found students could utilize these multimodal-based assignments to create, engage with a new side of learning, and take a breather from other constraints. You will find their words at the opening of each chapter. All names have been replaced with pseudonyms for privacy.

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“The multimodal assignment was the best one for me, because it has full real-world applications and I wanted, more than any of the other assignments, to make this one good. I hope that came across in my work.” --James

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Study

This study examines writing program administrators' (WPAs) views towards the value and implementation of multimodality within first-year writing programs. These views are shared via surveys and interviews. This study draws on both writing program administration work and multimodality scholarship (Briand, 1970). The rationale behind limiting these responses to strictly those involved with first-year writing was to allow for more of a clear comparison, since upper-level or Writing Across the Curriculum programs would have different goals and serve a different range of students.

The pulse of this research started when I was a Master's student and enrolled in a course on Computers and Writing. I was opened to a new world, learning of multimodality, material rhetorics, digital rhetorics, and ways to express oneself outside of standard alphabetic text and traditional academic essays. I took this course within the same year I taught my first-ever Composition 101 course as a graduate teaching assistant. Perhaps this is why the idea of multimodality was so empowering to me, as I was learning beside the very students I was teaching for the first time. I began to recognize how the tools I as a teacher provided to students could shape the way they approached their writing process, their chosen medium of representation, and the ability to share their work with other readers besides only the instructor. The tools we select as teachers inherently reveal our own values, and in turn, can be internalized by students in terms of what does and does not belong in academic classrooms.

Furthermore, as I dug around in scholarship surrounding multimodality, I discovered pieces centered on multimodal assignments and classroom or larger theoretical discussions. I

wanted more from a programmatic and curricular perspective, which is my exigence for this piece and why I chose to focus on only writing program administrators' voices.

This dissertation's thesis sparked after following a similar approach during my Master's; I designed a project for which I interviewed 13 WPAs at R1 institutions within the Big Ten and Southeastern conferences. After writing and submitting an article based on this project, I received feedback from the *WPA Journal* editors for the need to expand my context into other types of writing programs, especially smaller schools. After already cutting so much information from my original piece to meet the constraints of the article-length, I decided that a project of that size could become a dissertation. Furthermore, I recognized how invested I was in having conversations regarding multimodality, especially how necessary I feel it is when discussing the future of our field.

Connection to Previous Study

A 2006 survey[1] conducted by Daniel Anderson, Anthony Atkins, Cheryl Ball, Krist Homicz Millar, Cynthia Selfe, and Richard Selfe sought to discover how those within writing programs--from administrators to teachers to graduate students--used multimodality in their teaching. This 2006 survey served as a springboard for my own survey, although mine ended up quite differently than the original. The survey aimed "to identify how individual teachers and their Composition programs were working to integrate multimodality into classes and how faculty and administrators perceived efforts to introduce multimodal composition into departmental curricula and professional development" (p. 63). The survey organized questions into eight categories and included 141 questions total. The goal for this survey was to gain an up-to-date snapshot of how colleges were teaching multimodality, and to identify how teachers

[1] For clarification when referencing, this study will be referenced as "the 2006 study" throughout this dissertation. This 2006 study can be accessed at the following link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/?sm=HQ7l5ex2ZIJkF0LlOktZUA_3D_3D

implemented multimodality into their writing classrooms. Participants represented thirty-one schools and included an array of graduate students, instructors, and tenure-track professors. Themes included: defining multimodality, assessment, access to technology, professional development, instructional approaches, and tenure and promotion concerns.

I used the 2006 survey as a springboard for my own survey creation, but moved away from many of the detailed pragmatic questions, such as software used and lessons taught, prioritizing questions based on the decisions to implement or not implement multimodality, participants' own background and familiarity with multimodality, and contextual questions based around the program. I also asked respondents how they define multimodal, further revealing how WPAs value multimodality and implement it within their respective programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to better understand the values and responses towards multimodality from the perspective of writing program administrators of first-year writing programs, as well to learn how multimodality is implemented, and the reasons behind choosing to implement or not implement multimodality within first-year writing programs. Much of the scholarship on multimodality has centered on defining the concept, proposing practical ways to incorporate multimodality into classroom-level instruction, and analyzing the pros and cons of multimodality's incorporation. So far, not much scholarship has been directly targeted to WPAs or primarily included the voices of WPAs sharing their own perspectives. This project seeks to explore the theoretical approaches to multimodality through curriculum implementation by presenting an overview of what works for writing programs in multiple contexts, ranging from associate's colleges to Master's granting institutions and doctoral-granting institutions across the United States.

Research Questions

To address the purpose of the study, the researcher posed the following three questions:

1. What outcomes related to multimodality are used in writing programs? What do programmatic documents (missions statements, outcomes, other materials) say about the program goals?
2. What perceptions do WPAs have regarding the definition, usefulness, and value of multimodality? Do these perceptions shift based on the WPA's institutional context (Doctoral Universities versus Associate's Colleges-as named in the Carnegie classifications)?
3. What value do WPAs place on incorporating multimodal outcomes into their programs, and what does that incorporation look like on the ground level, including curriculum, training of staff, technological support and accessibility, evaluation, assessment?

Statement of the Problem

While discussions on multimodality and first-year writing were first introduced decades ago, there is a "gap between theory and practice and between students' preferred literacy practices and actual instruction in writing classrooms" (Khadka & Lee, 2019, p. 3). This study sought to answer the "Why?" behind that gap, and discover possibilities for closing that gap in the future. Furthermore, this study compares current writing programs to the those captured in the 2006 study to see if the integration of multimodality has become more program-wide or if it still relies on a more individual instructor effort. The 2006 study reported, "Only 7 percent of respondents reported that program committee recommendations informed the design and implementation of these assessments" (p. 70). Comparing the stagnancy and strides that have developed since this 2006 study prove that this type of conversation regarding multimodal

outcomes is still relevant and very much needed. As Khadka and Lee (2019) continue: "A quick review of scholarship in the field reveals that the theoretical conversations around multimodal composing are already quite sophisticated, but the pedagogical translation of these conversations has not reached the same level" (p. 3). The goal of this research is to continue conversations about first-year writing and multimodality by first listening to those involved in making writing program decisions at a variety of institutional contexts.

Incorporating Various Institutional Contexts

A major goal of this study was to hear from WPAs of all institutional contexts and in all regions of the U.S, including doctoral universities, Master's colleges and universities, baccalaureate colleges, and associate's colleges. One of the main issues to arise through this data collection was the difficulty of first-year writing programs balancing contingent labor ethically while best meeting the needs of students. This labor concern stems from a much wider angle, and the shift of academia and tenure-track lines. For many colleges, contingent faculty were first welcomed in order to share practical real-world knowledge in the classroom, while also filling a temporary need when enrollment numbers spiked, yet "Increasingly, however, contingent faculty have become a fundamental feature of the economic model that sustains community college education" (Center for Community College Engagement, 2014). Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder (2010) reported between 2003 and 2009, the number of full-time faculty increased by 2%, compared to approximately 10% increase for part-time faculty. Part-time faculty typically have fewer opportunities to engage with colleagues, in some cases are not asked or available to attend departmental meetings/training, and for many, work at multiple institutions with multiple curricula requirements. They are oftentimes excluded from voicing their opinions on student learning, curriculum, or other decisions; not to mention, they are underpaid and overworked. The

ethics of labor crosses all institutional contexts, from doctoral universities, Master's universities, and associate's colleges, as shown in all participant responses. However, based on responses from this study, it is apparent associate's colleges are hit harder, because they feel there is even less stability among faculty.

One area that I did not anticipate was learning about the disconnect associate's colleges feel among other higher educational institutions. Community colleges offer the most first-year writing courses, as well as serve the most diverse student bodies. According to The American Association of Community Colleges Annual Fact Sheet, two-year colleges teach a large number of historically oppressed and underrepresented students, including Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students. Furthermore, two-year colleges serve a high number of first-generation students with 39% of first-time students (AACC, 2019). Facts like these highlight the importance of including community colleges in the larger discussion of our field and further solidify choices of this study to incorporate their voices.

Significance of the Study

The study is situated within the context of first-year writing programs. Historically first-year writing has been perceived as a service-department or a place to solve students' writing problems. Many colleagues across institutions do not understand what first-year writing courses do. Because of this and other mounting pressures from administrators, first-year writing is overflowing with expectations on material to cover, from grammar, academic writing, discourse communities, research skills, citation lessons, learning the writing process and peer review skills, and more. Furthermore, first-year writing can be many student's first introduction to the academic community at large. First-year writing can connect not only students but faculty to interdisciplinary connection. This opportunity for connection increases first-year writing's

importance. As Adam Banks declared in his 2015 Conference on College Composition and Communication Chair's address,

> I also believe that because of our training we have a chance to be a hub for intellectual life on campus for other departments and for administrators as well. Because we are a discipline and at the same time cannot be contained by ideas of disciplinarity, we can be a model and connecting point for the hard work of interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity we often hear talked about across campus, but rarely lived out. In fact, I often imagine composition programs and departments operating more like interdisciplinary centers than as programs and departments. And I've always believed we ought to be a hub for connections between the academy and local communities.

Because of first-year writing's unique positioning and serving, for many students, as the introduction to academic discourse communities, the curriculum we prioritize affects students through multiple realms, through their college coursework, future majors, careers, as well as civically and personally. Our curriculum choices also speak to what is important and valued within academia. Therefore, this study's focus on first-year writing programs at various institutional contexts and locations highlights the decisions behind incorporating multimodality and how faculty and students respond to such changes.

Design

This study utilized a mixed methods approach, using both quantitative data from surveys and qualitative data from one-on-one interviews. This study follows an Explanatory Sequential Core design, by collecting data in two distinct phases; for instance, survey responses were analyzed in order to determine interview questions for the qualitative phases. The goal for this order is to understand why the survey results occurred and what they mean, to help explain variations in outcome responses, and to assess how institutional context may influence outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

This study's theoretical framework stemmed primarily from a commitment to anti-racism. In the opening chapter of *Black Perspectives in Writing Program Administration*, Stacy

Perryman-Clark and Colin Craig (2019) highlight how all experiences involving writing program administration, from policies to documents, to labor, are already race work. Just as in all institutional systems, race cannot be separated from WPA work because this work is "always situated in larger histories and contexts of white supremacy and structural racism" (Inoue, 2019, p. 141).

An additional theoretical framework for this study came from utilitarianism. Even if utilitarianism is meant to benefit the most people as possible, we must be careful about who is excluded and why within this type of framework. Therefore, partnering this theory with anti-racism helps to create a balanced approach since minorities are excluded with the idea that "a greater number of people" benefit when certain policies are in place. Pairing anti-racism and utilitarianism leads with a focus on helping all people, with an emphasis on who is not being served, in this case, within our first-year writing program contexts.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this research, specific definitions are used to refer to various processes. Explaining these definitions is important in moving forward with the study; therefore each major term is defined below:

First-year writing program

As a term, "writing program," much like a WPA's duties, differs from institution to institution. Defining first-year writing (or first-year composition) is difficult because its definition depends on who you ask. The university sees it as a place to prepare students for college and workplace writing. First-year writing is also a transitional time for students: "First-year composition can and should be a space, a moment, and an experience--in which students might reconsider writing apart from previous schooling and work, within the context of inquiry-

based higher education" (Downs, 2016, p. 51). For this project's focus, writing program refers to a program with one or more courses, with multiple sections, typically first-year courses, that share a set of objectives, curriculum, and common placement procedures (Schwalm, 2002, p. 11). Participants represented first-year writing programs called FYC, FYW, or FYS. I limited this project's scope to primarily first-year writing programs, not extending into writing centers, WAC or WID, or other kinds of writing programs.

Writing program administrator

While the term writing program administrator can cover an array of writing programs, centers, and curriculum, for the purpose of this study, a writing program administrator participant is defined as someone who currently directs or coordinates a first-year writing program at an institution of higher education within the United States.

Multimodality

Multimodality, by definition, uses multiple modes to communicate, including aural, visual, tactile, linguistic, and gestural (New London Group). Multimodality's interpretation varies, but one view this project centers on is as noted in National Council of Teachers of English 2005 statement: "Integration of multiple modes of communication and expression can enhance or transform the meaning of the work beyond illustration or decoration" and "the interplay of meaning-making systems (alphabetic, oral, visual, etc.)". It is also important to recognize that multimodality has been a discussion even before the field of Rhetoric/Composition's existence; material rhetorics and cultural rhetorics have long advocated for the use of materials and different modes (Arola, 2012). Long before Western hypertext, American Indian communities utilized wampum belts as nonlinear connectors to memories, experiences, and knowledge--hypertextual technologies. In fact, "wampum is multimodal in its

meaning making," due to the connection of oral tradition, symbolism, colors, and cultural context represented through material rhetoric and working towards a common form of cultural knowledge production and preservation (Haas, 2007, p. 77). Recognizing the significant impact from indigenous cultures is important when considering the larger conversations and influences surrounding multimodality.

Limitations

Participants in the study were limited to writing program administrators of first-year writing programs. Surveys and interviews were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, participants were limited to interviewing using the Zoom platform.

Summary

This chapter situated this dissertation within other works regarding multimodality, history of first-year writing, and the theoretical frameworks of anti-racism and utilitarian. The following section provides an overview of each of the remaining chapters.

Chapter Two "Literature Review" provides an overview of what scholarship notes regarding defining multimodality, institutional contexts, and discussions on the role of first-year writing.

Chapter Three "Methodological Frameworks" introduces my use of mixed methods methodology and rationale for approaching this study in such a way to focus on only WPAs at a variety of first-year writing programs.

Chapter Four "Quantitative Results" presents data gained from survey responses.

Chapter Five "Qualitative Results" presents data from follow-ups interviews conducted with writing program administrators.

Chapter Six “Discussion” presents an overview of the results and discussion of what this means for the field of writing studies.

Finally, Chapter Seven “Conclusion” sums up what this study reveals and the larger takeaways for the field.

"This was one of my favorite English projects I've done because information in the real world is very rarely presented in the form of an essay." -Kara

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

While the Introduction provides an overview of the study's motivation and rationale, this chapter defines multimodality and tracks its use in scholarly discussions. Furthermore, it provides theoretical frameworks, primarily focused on a utilitarian perspective and anti-racism, and how these approaches affected the research design. The chapter also includes the rationale behind the focus on writing program administration and first-year writing as the context for this study's data. The second half of the chapter lays out the history of both technological developments and Rhetoric/Composition's history of writing programs in order to situate current discussions in a wider context. The chapter concludes by highlighting the study's exigence and driving purpose.

This study's participant focus is on writing program administrators. While recognizing student perspectives is a critical step, this project solely analyzes how WPAs define, value, and implement multimodal practices into their writing program curriculum since the choices writing programs make impact the value students place on their own experiences, whether in academia, work, or their home lives. It is crucial to understand the rationale behind curricular choices and the systematic history behind them in order to make the best informed choices possible for one's own institutional context and student population. Therefore, because WPAs make the choices to emphasize what is important in writing program curriculum, their own perspectives have a direct effect on student's experiences. At the heart of this work is the principle that students are the primary concern of Rhetoric/Composition and writing program curricula. We must recognize the experiences they bring to the writing classroom, and to also recognize the places they will go upon leaving the writing classroom.

Rationale for Framework: Why Writing Program Administration?

This study targets WPAs because of their placement in making decisions for their students and faculty. WPAs can be divided into three major areas: academic, student, and administrative (McLeod, p. 10), but their duties cover far beyond these expectations. WPAs have to take on many roles, from managers to politicians to rhetors (Hesse, 2002). They must consider their faculty members, their students, their students' parents, their department heads, deans and other university administrators, depending on context, their legislators and government officials, among many other considerations. WPAs oversee instructors with a varying amount of teaching experience, from novice teachers to seasoned experts, balancing administrative leadership with mentorship. Inoue calls for WPAs to consider how their framework makes priorities: "Whom does it serve most, or primarily, that is, whom does it serve first, then second, etc.?" (2019, p. 152). This project's rationale for focusing specifically on WPAs begins with the call posed by Dominic DelliCarpini: "Curricular decisions are always already arguments—arguments that indicate to a variety of stakeholders what it is that we value (and, at least to some extent, what we devalue)" (2010, p. 196). By focusing on the programmatic level, the goal is to trace the messages and priorities programs deem as important for students—and in this case, specifically if and how multimodality is a part of those curricular outcomes.

While scholarship has discussed the relevance of multimodality for today's students, it has also recognized the benefits and consequences its implementation brings. This project highlights these challenges and rewards from the perspective of the WPAs. How have they seen multimodality play out in their program? Who (stakeholders, faculty, administrators) did they have to convince of multimodality's value, and how did they go about doing so? What do they think is multimodality's value? On what base is their belief or idea? What drawbacks are there to

multimodality's use? While these questions are meant to uncover WPA's attitudes, motivations, and whatever about multimodal writing, the theories that drive this study also beg the analysis of how the answers to these questions address questions of utilitarian access and anti-racist pedagogies. In other words, this study ultimately seeks to discover how to build practical and more accessible multimodality pedagogies within writing programs.

While scholarship continues to develop about multimodality, its implementation into writing classrooms and programs is still less common. Santosh Khadka and J.C. Lee, editors of *Bridging the Multimodal Gap*, note that multimodality is still far from being a standard component of writing instruction and programs (2019, p. 4). In addition to the need to develop pedagogical approaches regarding multimodality, we as writing scholars, administrators, and teachers must understand the fundamental differences between writing a standard essay versus writing for digital media or other modes (Skains, 2017). Little research has been conducted to understand these differences (DePalma & Alexander, 2015). This gap between conversations regarding multimodality and actual program implementation further lead to the focus on WPAs.

Programmatic curriculum is created through the choices of many factors: university requirements, nation-wide or state-wide requirements, departmental faculty, attainable resources, and the WPA themselves. This study seeks to discover how WPAs' background, specifically through their graduate programs, led to their own valuing of multimodality. As Rita Malenczyk expounds, while WPA does utilize other fields within Rhetoric and Composition (writing process, genre theory, and other fields)- "writing program administration nevertheless grounds itself, perhaps more than any other discipline, on the rhetoric and politics of departmental and university life and structure, as well as on the lived experiences of the practitioners" (2016, p. 4). Because lived experience affects choices and value systems, this project focuses on hearing from

WPAs about their own value of multimodality as well as the first-year writing program's value of multimodality, and how those values match with theories about the need for multimodal literacies.

The original goal of this research was to discover from WPAs, what are the things preventing multimodality from happening? As Adam Banks argues, multimodal implementation can open up more opportunities for more voices to enter the conversations in academia. However, there are roadblocks for making this happen; these roadblocks quickly emerged as including labor issues within first-year writing programs (involving the history of Rhetoric/Composition as a field) as well as support for learning new forms of technology.

History of the field of Rhetoric/Composition

Deep-rooted problems among labor in Composition include staffing primarily by contingent faculty even in administrative positions, lack of resources within writing programs, and lack of understanding of Composition ("fix grammar"; "teach students to write"). These problems culminate to form the perfect storm. As John Warner writes in "Overworked and Underpaid: The Labor and Laborers of the Writing Classroom" (2015),

> first-year writing is viewed through the lens of a logistical problem, as opposed to an academic or disciplinary one. Is there another subject at the college-level that gets similar treatment? On the one hand, over and over we hear how important writing and communication skills are, and yet the courses where this is expected to be covered are consistently the least resourced in the entire college or university.

The conversations I shared with writing program administrators from across the U.S. all connected back to these issues surrounding the perception of first-year writing in some way.

To discuss labor conditions, first one must look to the development and history of Rhetoric/Composition as a field. As John Brereton notes in *The Origins of Composition Studies: 1875-1925* (1995), four areas of change stand out among the impact of Composition: model of German universities, changing nature of knowledge, higher education's expansion, and updating university's overall purview (p. 5). Graduate students started teaching Composition courses in the 1940s when American universities shifted to a research model, supplemented by part-time teachers in the decades following from post-war increased enrollment (Crowley). After World War II, Composition studies became a recognizable field for the huge number of first-generation students entering college in the 1950s. The first publication of *College Composition and Communication* included an article by its first president, John C.. Gerber who wrote about the lack of unity among faculty teaching composition: "we have for the most part gone our separate ways, experimenting here and improvising there...and as a result have had no systematic way of exchanging views and information quickly" (p. 4).

As our field's history reveals, service and teaching are often at the heart of what we do in Rhetoric and Composition. Related to service, the teaching aspect of Rhet/Comp also differs from many other fields because teaching first-year writing is fundamentally tied to our discipline. Most of the labor these first-year writing programs draw on comes from adjuncts and graduate students acting as instructors of record. In short, because of Rhet/Comp's precarious positionality within academia, faculty needs have been neglected as labor conditions worsen.

The classroom is a place where students begin noting importance based on what is presented and included in class discussions and materials (i.e. textbooks, assignments, and samples), in addition to recognizing if their home language is accepted or ignored. Arguably, educational institutions have placed an importance on the development of students' literacy, of

reading alphabetic text and of drafting essays to show knowledge and understanding of a subject area. Students connect alphabetic text with importance and evaluation.

In terms of what is not covered, the topic of delivery has been mostly neglected within the field of rhetoric, falling out of priority as delivery shifted from medium of body (speeches) to medium of writing. However, digital writing technologies once again make delivery visible (Morey, 2016). Incorporating multimodal discussions in writing programs is important, for many reasons. Teaching students the skills to analyze how technologies are used transfers beyond words on a page and carries over into other mediums (Wardle, 2014). Furthermore, students gain comfort when utilizing new mediums in the classroom setting: "As students become comfortable with using both mundane texts and multiple literacies in networked environments, compositionists can also count on students becoming even more aware of how texts are read by others" (Penrod, 2005, p. 52). Because writing has changed and is changing, and because student writers themselves have changed based on their environments, writing programs can do a disservice to their students by not embracing new mediums and approaches to composing.

Defining multimodality

The naming of any concept is of particular importance, politically and theoretically. Multimodality's meaning, like all terms, has shifted over the years, in the same way that views towards composing have shifted. Jason Palmeri (2012) recounts the time from 1967-1974 when the field of writing moved beyond an "exclusive focus on linear, alphabetic text" (87). Concern arose regarding students' increasing interest in multimedia compositions--television, film, comics--than in "academically tradition" forms. Scholars highlighted the need for writing courses to incorporate multimodal texts, even more beyond students analyzing but actually producing their own multimodality. During this same time period, Paul Briand's "Turned On:

Multi-Media and Advanced Composition" initiated a discussion of what multimodality looked like in the writing classroom, noting that "the skill of writing can be taught--and with great success--by means of a multi-media approach" (1970, p. 269).

Technologies lead to changes in composing, creating, and writing, which ultimately lead to eventual changes in writing programs. According to *Computers and the Teaching of Writing in American Higher Education, 1979-1994: A History,* while 1993 was deemed the "Year of the Internet," 1991 was the year that multimedia in the sense of linking text, sound, video, and graphics, became significant in computing. The first shift in use of computers occurred when computers moved from data processors to word processors, while the second turn occurred with the shift from computer-as-word-processor to computer as a global communication device (Hawisher, 1996, p. 184). This shift did not immediately change the writing classroom, however. For the most part, English classes used technology conservatively, as shown by the types of software packages purchased. Typically this software was developed by those who had little experience with teaching writing and was purchased by administrators who also did not have familiarity with the field of Composition; style checkers, for instance, emphasized "traditional authority structures" (Hawisher, 1996). While the early 1990s saw a boom in technology, the way it was used reinforced older and conventional approaches to writing. This example shows how changes in technology do not immediately correlate with advancements in writing; it all comes back to effective implementation.

While some scholars felt hypermedia would radically change the relationship between reading and writing and between readers and writers, others, such as David Dobrin (1994) argued that hypertext had "no potential for fundamental change in how we write or read" (p. 308). These discussions laid the groundwork for further discussions about multimodality in the field of

Rhetoric and Composition, and have only continued to grow and be shaped over the last few decades. More recently, Claire Lauer's 2009 work "Contending with Terms" references Briand's 1970 interpretation of multimodal and discusses how over forty years later, "our attitudes toward multimedia and our reasons for wanting students to produce such texts have evolved as our culture and technologies have evolved" (24).

Terms that overlap and supplement "multimodality" include "new media," "multimedia," "multiliteracies," and "digital media." While multimodality's origin is situated in multiple modes, the term's present-day association has become conflated with digital technologies (Shipka, 2009). Misconceptions exist about what counts as multimodal. For example, Cheryl Ball and Colin Charlton (2015) discuss two misconceptions stemming from the assumption that all multimodal texts are digital and that the opposite of multimodal is monomodal (42). Regarding the first misconception, that all multimodal texts are forms of digital media, this can be better understood by highlighting the differences between "modes" and "media." Examples of modes range from words, sounds, images, and color, while media includes the tools used to produce and disseminate texts, such as computers, books, television, and voices (Lauer, 2009).

Shipka notes that the term multimodal is more inclusive and does not rely solely on digital technologies. Furthermore, Ball and Charlton dispel there is no such thing a monomodal text. Typically people reference a traditional essay using alphabetic text as a monomodal example. Yet even essays involve the use of space on a page to enhance the reader's experience. Therefore, what is really involved is how "a traditional essay privileges the linguistic mode over the spatial or visual modes" (43). These misconceptions surrounding multimodality come back to the terminology and definition of modes.

Multimodality does differ from new media, however. While multimodality and new media are often used interchangeably, the two carry distinct meanings. Multimodal composing can utilize different modes and does not have to incorporate new media. Cheryl Ball warns of conflating new media with multimodal. New media is defined as "texts that juxtapose semiotic modes in new and aesthetically pleasing ways and, in doing so, break away from print traditions so that written text is not the primary rhetorical means" (Ball, 2004, p. 405). Multimodality can take on forms from drama, art, text, music, speech, dance, movement, and beyond. By limiting the multimodal definition to strictly digital forms, we are in turn applying a restrictive view of mediums to students in terms of digital technologies (Shipka, 2011).

While multimodality is larger than digital use, its use does overlap with digital technologies. Perhaps this association comes from many users' personal writing experiences: as the reliance on computers as "the tool of choice for writing" (Baron, 2009, p. xi). This discussion of what multimodality includes shows the broad use of the term and its implementation. While some may state that multimodality is synonymous with digital, others would argue that multimodality is much more expansive and includes use of any mode. This study takes these competing discussions of multimodality as a point of departure. Indeed, the major goal of this study is to discover and highlight the different interpretations and applications of multimodality through writing programs. Examples of these differing implementation methods will be further discussed in Chapter Four, which highlights participants' responses towards multimodality in survey data, and Chapter Five, which situates participants' responses towards multimodality from qualitative data captured in interviews.

Multimodality as an Intersection

Conversations surrounding multimodality supplement a gap currently within academia, the intersection of three major areas: student need, student experience, and instructor knowledge, as displayed in Figure 2.1 below. These concepts became my guiding focus for shifting attention further surrounding multimodality in the context of first-year writing programs. Student need includes the present need of students when they enter our classrooms in terms of strategies to enhance their rhetorical awareness of writing situations. Student need extends beyond the present and into students' futures, including academic courses, civic engagement, and the workforce, with the immense amount of writing and communication in digital forms. Jobs demand students have experience in learning that focuses on preparing them for real world writing situations that are hyper-textual and multimodal in nature. The category of student experience recognizes the experiences students have encountered in their educational backgrounds, experiences with literacy in classrooms ranging from elementary to high school levels, as well as the inherent valuing or devaluing of certain mediums. Student experience also addresses the experiences students have outside of the classroom, in their homes and communities. The third area, instructor knowledge, provides opportunity for students to learn from instructors' knowledge and background, including a new approach to entering academic discourse and thinking rhetorically about audience and subject area. Ultimately these three areas must be addressed within the context of first-year writing. As addressed throughout this study, multimodality provides an opportunity to intersect these areas and ultimately connect student needs and experiences with instructor knowledge in a practical yet inclusive way.

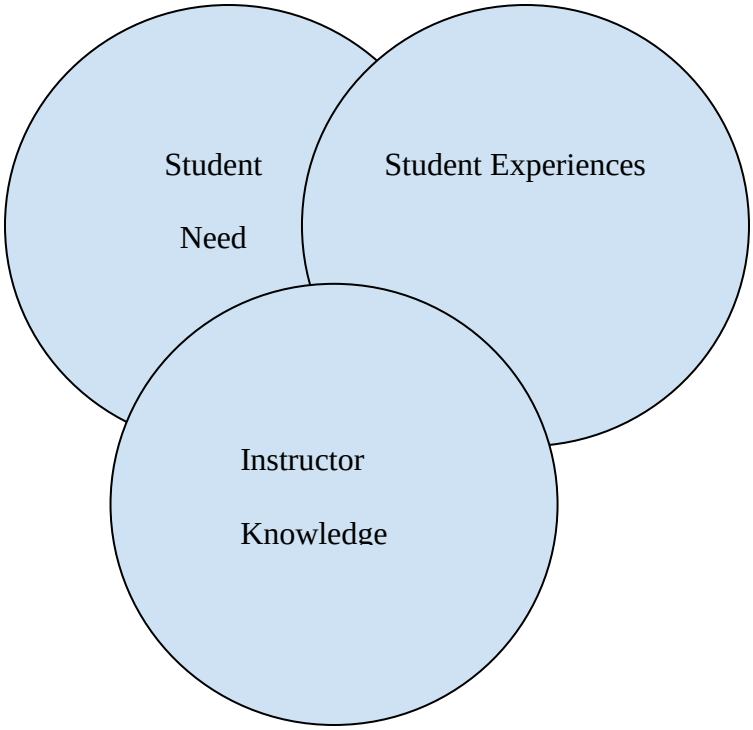

Figure 2.1 The Intersection of Three Major Areas Multimodality Can Bring Together

Why First-Year Writing?

One question important to Rhetoric/Composition is: "Where do we draw the line at questioning the structures, the regimes of power, the ideologies that normalize "literacy"?" (Alexander & Rhodes, 2014, p. 196). Rhetoric and Composition's history has challenged the norms in academia and makes room for those students who have not typically been welcomed or invited to participate in academic conversations. Multimodality provides an avenue for further incorporating more voices and recognizing that students' prior composing experiences both matter and are valued in the composition classroom. First-year writing classes are one of the primary places where students from all backgrounds are exposed to the larger field of Rhetoric/Composition. One of first-year writing's typical topics is an introduction to academic conversations: "First year comp occupies a powerful role in socializing students to the ways and means of the academy" (Ritter, 2009, p. 15). Students' experiences in writing classes directly inform factors such as continued enrollment, choice of major, and perceptions of college overall (Griffiths & Toth, 2017).

As Doug Hesse asks in response to Cynthia Selfe's (2009) "The Movement of Air," "What is the proper subject matter for composition classes?" Selfe notes that by promoting only writing as composing teaches students a narrow view of literacy. The composition classroom can serve as a starting place for students to question and apply design resources (New London Group), ranging from alphabetic text to sounds and music to images, in order to "communicate in rhetorically effective ways" (Selfe, 2010, p. 606).

The prioritization of written alphabetic text as the most accepted form of communication is nothing new. As Lester Faigley notes, "heritage of alphabetic literacy from the Enlightenment still dominates within the academy and in literacy instruction. The totemization of alphabetic

literacy and the denial of the materiality of literacy have had the attendant effect of treating images as trivial, transitory, and manipulative" (1999, p. 188). WPAs must first recognize the long and deeply embedded history of how written words became more respected than visuals (or multimodal forms). By recognizing that other forms of expression are effective, FYW classrooms can become more inclusive of more students.

First-year writing provides an opportunity for students to reflect on what previously worked in high school and what is now expected in college as "students have the double perspective of threshold, a liminal state from which they might leap forward—or linger at the door" (Sommers & Saltz, 2004, p. 125). In *College Writing and Beyond,* Anne Beaufort studies one writer bridging from high school to freshman writing. Beaufort notes a problem in our approach to FYW: "transfer of writing skills from one social context to another is a major issue as yet given too little attention in conception of writing curricula" (2007, p. 6). Students bring prior composing experiences and carry these experiences into new forms outside of a "traditional" writing classroom.

Multimodal composing can aid in the transition of adapting to new genres and expectations that college-level writing can bring. Incorporating multimodal assignments can help prevent negative transfer that may occur when moving from high school level writing assignments to college level essays, for example, relying on the five-paragraph essay to meet college assignments. The solution can be found in the type of genres students are asked to compose in once arriving to college: "To students, the process of transitioning to college writing seems even more complicated when they are asked to compose in genres that seem familiar to high school genres, but they are expected to apply a different set of values" (Saidy, 2018, p. 255). The first-year writing classroom can illuminate the problem that students enter college with

confusion about new guidelines and seemingly familiar assignments. However, in line with the argument by Saidy (2018), by completely altering the mode of composition, students can prevent negative transfer. This aid in students' transitions, especially students who are already at-risk, is another draw of multimodality centered in first-year composition classrooms. Because of the opportune space first-year writing provides, it remains the primary context of this study.

Multimodality can help "fill in the gaps" that many current FYW curricula maintain. One example is through providing more analysis opportunities of rhetorical situations in individual communicative acts. As Beaufort explains, expert writers draw on five knowledge domains: 1. Writing process 2. Subject matter 3. Rhetorical knowledge 4. Genre knowledge 5. Discourse community knowledge (2007, p.19). Multimodality can help emphasize the writing process, rhetorical knowledge, and genre knowledge by building students' mindset of considering the audience and purpose for a particular medium and how to best communicate within constraints—material conditions, timing, and others (p. 20).

Consideration of Technological History and Impact

To best understand the rationale for incorporating multimodal elements into the writing classroom, it is crucial to have background knowledge of the larger scope of technological history, as well as the immediate effects on the writing classroom. Writing curriculum, approaches to writing, and even shift in technologies all play into the larger social and historical contexts. While multimodality has existed for a long time and while there are many conversations regarding its usefulness, challenges remain prevalent. The skepticism of multimodal implementation is nothing new, and in fact, mirrors the history of technological tools over time. As Baron (2009) notes, Plato warned of negatives from the act of writing, weakening memory and falsely portraying meaning. The same negative associations arose towards the

printing press, the telegraph, typewriter, computer, and so on. A healthy dose of skepticism is crucial in addressing new concerns that technology brings. After all, the digital revolution impacted not only our writing but reading process, and in turn, affects the way users consume, challenge, analyze, and connect information. The turn of writing programs from only or heavily emphasizing traditional written essays to incorporating multimodal forms of composition is no different: there are challenges and difficulties and there are benefits and strengths. The solution is not, and cannot be, however, simply ignoring what students are producing, consuming, and creating outside of the writing classroom.

Recognizing the history and how social events have shaped first-year writing is important in knowing how multimodality can help fill in the gaps. Ever since the late 19th century, instruction in composition was required for students in American higher education. Emphasis on communication itself was a direct result of the rhetoric of war (Crowley, 1998, p. 169). Two themes that informed the communication skills movement appear in this war rhetoric: faith that contradiction and hostility can be erased by communication, and realization that modern communications technology enhances distribution of powerful rhetorics (Crowley, 1998, p. 170).

In addition to programmatic demands, first-year writing was expected to be a "one stop shop" for students entering the university. First-year writing was seen as a way to:

> develop taste, improve their grasps of formal and mechanical correctness, become liberally educated, to prepare for jobs or professions, to develop their personalities, to become able citizens of a democracy, to become skilled communicators, to develop skill in textual analysis, become critical thinkers, establish personal voices, master composing process, master composition of discourses within academic disciplines, become oppositional critics of their culture. (Crowley, 1998, p. 6)

The traditional essay took priority as a way for students to show their knowledge and skill. As the university grew and GI bills were distributed, more students began to attend, many

of which from backgrounds previously excluded by academia; teachers utilized the essay as a way to evaluate and consume a large number of students' work (Crowley, 1998, p. 192).

Over the last several decades, technologies have changed, audiences have changed, and the experiences students share have changed (Walker, 2018, p. 270). How are we responding to these changes within our own writing classroom? While the workforce, career readiness, and communication in general has changed quickly, education has remained more stagnant and changed at a slower pace. For most courses, the traditional essay remains the prominent way for students to express themselves and show understanding of materials. Fiona English has argued:

> variation in genre allows for different kinds of responses and different ways of relating to the academic knowledge[...] It allows students to interact with the information in different ways, linking it to experience and to other kinds of contexts. It embeds the concepts better, deepens understanding and allows for new perspectives on old knowledge. (2012, p. 207–08)

Opening up our pedagogies to include new perspectives also allows for more voices to enter the conversation. Adam Banks calls for retiring the essay as the dominant genre for writing instruction to include conversations on other aspects of literacies. Furthermore, relying solely on the essay focuses more on an individualistic rather than communal approach to literacy.

In most classes, students are expected to show what they know through writing. Writing has many benefits, including learning concepts and drawing connections, and allows instructors a way to track students' thoughts and responses to a subject. However, what do students miss when they are restricted to representing their thoughts through only the traditional academic essay? (English, 2011). Scholars have pointed out the limitations provided by this restrictive view of what "writing" is, such as: "If we restrict students to word-based planning activities, we

may be unduly limiting their ability to think deeply about their rhetorical tasks" (Palmeri, 2012, p. 34). Anne Beaufort points out that students perceive writing papers as "an activity to earn a grade rather than to communicate to an audience of readers in a given discourse community" (2007, p. 10). Furthermore, students begin viewing writing as a generic skill, when in fact, universally "good writing" does not exist (Wardle, 2017).

Positions Regarding Multimodality

Benefits of multimodality

Much scholarship points to the idea that failing to incorporate or recognize some form of multimodality in composition disservices our students as scholars, communicators, and citizens. After all, "at its core, pedagogy exists to respond to student writers' needs" (Tate, et. al., 2014, p. 7). As writing has shifted in forms through the last decade, more exploration is needed to understand how these changes affect students (Bezemer & Kress, 2008, p. 233). Multimodality can sharpen students' alphabetic composing processes and can even enhance their understanding of process writing. The WPA Outcomes Statement for Composition July 2014 notes: "the process of learning to write in any medium is complex: it is both individual and social and demands continued practice and informed guidance. Programmatic decisions about helping students demonstrate these outcomes should be informed by an understanding of this research." WPAs must continue to seek out new research that shows the importance of updating program outcomes in order to meet the needs of students in present-day. As scholarship shows, remediation, turning an essay into a new form, allows students to discover new ways to target their audience. In fact, "adaptive remediation also assumes that composers can be trained to think about their motives or rhetorical purposes in ways that allow them to reshape and remediate their

composing knowledge from one medium into another" (Alexander et al., 2016, p. 34). Transforming an alphabetic text into a new medium taps into students' critical thinking skills.

One concern raised is that shifting focus to multimodality can deter from traditional writing instruction. The goal of multimodality is not to eliminate the use of alphabetic text in the writing classroom. Instead of viewing alphabetic text and multimodality as binaries, the two can actually benefit from one another and work together to allow writers new ways of approaching composing (Palmeri, 2012). Studies involving composing in a variety of forms are not new to the field (Flower & Hayes, 1980; Emig, 1971). Janet Emig's 1971 *Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders* has been recognized as foundational for development of process approaches. Emig defined composing broadly as "the selection and ordering of elements" (66). Emig incorporates pieces involving other forms of composing in her literature view and encourages English teachers to learn from many types of composing. Flower and Hayes (1980) note that incorporating multimodal activities can add value to planning for alphabetic writing. According to the Council of Writing Program Administrators Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (approved July 2014), "Writers' composing activities have always been shaped by the technologies available to them, and digital technologies are changing writers' relationships to their texts and audiences in evolving ways." The tools used to compose allow students opportunities to discover and to grow in their own composing processes. While today's student is typically increasingly immersed in digital technology, students have not been instructed to consider and navigate the rhetorical situations these technologies provide. In addition, many educators face a gap in terms of lack of exposure to this media in their own writing backgrounds (Skains, 2017, p. 115). So what can WPAs do with that information? Where do we go from there? These are questions this study hopes to further explore.

Scholars within writing studies urge writing instruction to incorporate perspectives on composing mediums and students' modalities of expression. Multimodality can strengthen students' approaches to rhetorical contexts. Exposing students to multimodal assignments can shift the focus "less on the text and more on the construction and articulation of the larger rhetorical situation and students' growing awareness of how to navigate that situation" (Ferruci & Derosa, 2019, p. 204). Students are better prepared in addressing rhetorical situations when they utilize and understanding multiple modes (Ferruci & Derosa, 2019, p. 201).

Challenges of multimodality

While there are numerous benefits to multimodality, many challenges remain. These challenges are a driving reason for this study. How can WPAs balance logistical constraints, budget concerns, and contingent faculty training in order to effectively implement multimodality for their student body? From a practical perspective, it is challenging to train all instructors within a writing program to learn how to use multimodal software (when composing multimodality digitally), in addition to training all students. Because first-year writing programs are typically staffed by so many graduate students and adjunct faculty, each year requires training for new members, who are already underpaid with numerous responsibilities. It is no secret that first-year writing programs are staffed primarily by contingent faculty. Because of the labor required by these teachers, time and energy are not readily available, and therefore, branching out from the standard programmatic curriculum poses a challenge, and training of new instructors is expected to be completed in three-four days. Composition's history reveals that "Most of the people who teach composition in American colleges and universities are undervalued, overworked, and underpaid" (Crowley, 1998, p. 5). With technology constantly updating, after one software is learned, another will come in its place. Once again, in terms of

labor conditions, how do WPAs balance this for not only themselves but their staff? (Penrod, 2005, p. 158).

Need for support

Another issue to consider comes from available support, from the writing program, the department it is within, the library, technological center, writing center, and other units across campus. The addition of multimodality requires more technological support and awareness, from faculty and students. Without professional development or training opportunities for faculty to learn about new approaches and tools available, an already overworked staff becomes increasingly overwhelmed. Students as well may not be familiar or comfortable with the steps necessary to completing a multimodal project, which in turn results in even more labor load for the instructor. However, by interrupting this need with forms of support in other areas, both parties can be assisted.

Skepticism of multimodality's value

Because writing is so ingrained within our educational systems as a form of alphabetic text or traditional essay, faculty and students can show skepticism and even resistance to incorporating multimodal assignments. Even outside of the standard classroom, online writing classes have difficulties in multimodal implementation. Borgman and McArdle (2019) note hesitation from the online writing classroom in terms of four themes: fear of logistics, fear of attempting multimodal assignments because of complications, fear students will not see connections, and fear of being judged since "often the value of multimodal assignments is not recognized and therefore must be defended and explained" (p. 49). The framing of multimodality within classroom discussions and assignments is critical in making sure all parties understand the relevance and connection among composing practices, as well as how the individual assignment

contributes to the course's larger outcomes and goals. Without this necessary framing, students can remain unconfident and ultimately disinterested in the role of multimodality in their academic careers.

Theoretical frameworks

Chapter Three will discuss how the theoretical frameworks of anti-racism and utilitarianism contributed to purposeful design choices of the study. The following section will briefly highlight these two theories in terms of content and positioning their approaches in the field of Composition at large. Banks (2016) calls for composition to analyze the social contexts of writing and larger cultural impacts. In the first-year writing classroom, students are instructed to adapt to a variety of audiences and discourse communities. Rarely, however, is the term "home community" used, implying the distancing of oneself from their own background (Banks, 2011, p. 31). This is where multimodality can help bridge that gap and meet students where they are, placing value on their own experiences. Banks notes that consideration must shift from the student as an individual writer to the larger networks they inhabit (2011, p. 21). Banks notes that "despite the major gaps that exist in cross-talk between work in multimedia writing and African American rhetoric and other American ethnic rhetorics, there is also good news in that even in the midst of these silences, there is much room for the links, connections, and overlap…" (2011, p. 11). Seeking after this linkage requires reflection on how writing programs are designed and who has access to participation. Banks's examples of African American oral traditions in *Digital Griots* show how multimedia writing can honor "the traditions and thus the people who are still too often not present in our writing classrooms on our faculties, in our scholarship" (2011, p. 14).

Writing scholars, teachers, and administrators must not neglect the systematic barriers at play. Adding visual elements to a lesson or letting students participate in hands-on composing

will not solve the ugly and underlying beliefs that have led to what is deemed important and valuable and what is not, both within the writing classroom and beyond. However, by reflecting on the mediums used and systems in place, the writing classroom can be better equipped to highlight diverse perspectives and representations. While challenging the standards of writing curricula can promote change, it is important to recognize the voices of Banks and Angela Haas who remind us that Rhetoric/Composition's "tendency to fetishize "new" technologies problematically works to reinforce racist and colonialist narratives of progress" (Palmeri, 2012, p. 12). Banks shows how the "digital divide" must be considered alongside of African Americans seeking "transformative access" to technologies (2006, p. 45). Digital technology in particular can be rather exclusive through cost and lack of access, especially in a time such as the COVID global pandemic that was occurring while this study was performed and written. COVID created less access to on-campus resources and for many students added an extra layer of confirming reliability for Internet, power, and computers. In turn, this creates a digital divide, a widening of the literacy gap (Baron, 2009, p. xiv).

Incorporating multimodality within the classroom can provide benefits to students through many ways, from practical utility to accessibility. First, from a utilitarian perspective, multimodality is instrumental in providing students with useful skills for future careers. Many people, including policymakers, practitioners, administrators, and the public, complain that today's students graduate college without the necessary skills to meet employers' needs--from analysis to reasoning and writing (Arum & Roksa, 2011). In 2003, Ulmer noted the gap in knowledge regarding new media education and the teaching of "electracy"[2] (xii). This lack of

[2] Electracy is defined by Gregory L. Ulmer as being "to digital media what literacy is to print" (2002). Electracy is required for consuming digital writing and media. Electracy differs from digital literacy; digital literacy is more of a limited term, as it applies alphabetic writing literacy onto a new technology. Retrofitting our understanding of

knowledge ranged from necessary skills, available practices, and production of digital texts for a variety of purposes--from social use to political, personal to professional (xii). Ulmer provides his own pedagogical approach in a variety of courses, including freshman composition, prioritizing the process of invention for students. As Ulmer writes, "The internet as a medium of learning puts us in a new relation to writing" (2003, p. 1). Students leave college entering a new world from that of years past: one brimming with expectations on how to communicate, with what to communicate, and to whom to communicate. If writing classrooms ignore the technologies and tools students are expected to use outside of the classroom (and, for many, do use outside of the classroom), students are excluded from an important stage of learning about the writing process and its dependence on shifting technologies.

Ulmer discusses the belief that higher education must lead to a practical trade and skills that will contribute by adding something useful to society. Ulmer notes how from birth, our identities are classified into categories shaped by a set of institutional beliefs, including family, community, and entertainment (2003, p. 25). Too often, these categories of our lives are excluded from educational settings. In writing assignments, students are instructed to remove their own voice or home language, in order to meet academic conventions. This practice is not only devaluing students' own experiences and limiting their own perspective, but arguably is one that stems from systematic racism, as highlighted in the section below.

Multimodality can provide an avenue for these discussions regarding students' experiences, electracy, and even the practical side of preparing students for the world outside of the classroom, as employees and citizens. This argument is one useful in reaching certain stakeholders as well as the general public for how useful multimodality can be.

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alphabetic text literacy towards another digital technology is insufficient. Electracy allows new forms of delivery to be possible.

This Study's Exigence

Multimodality is not a one size fits all solution, especially to deeply systematic problems. This research seeks to capture how engaging students with multimodal curriculum, of accepting more than standard essays, can lead to future discussions and can contribute to utilitarian perspectives and anti-racist curriculum. Beginning within our own writing programs is crucial in order to ask how racism is affecting institutional programs, administrative agendas, and program outcomes (Perryman-Clark & Craig, 2019, p. 10). With Asao Inoue's recently released blogpost (April 2021) on why he is leaving the Council of Writing Program Administrators due to racism, this discussion is also timely. The teaching of multimodality has been pitched as a way to further develop students skills--to allow them to best adapt to expectations in their future careers and the workforce. Furthermore, multimodality arguably can help people bring in home voices.

While scholarship continues to develop about multimodality, its implementation into writing classrooms and programs is still less common. "Multimodality-so highly hailed in scholarship as the means of preparing the writers and communicators of the future—is largely ignored in most of writing classrooms" (Khadka & Lee, 2019, p. 4). Khadka and Lee note that multimodality is still far from being a standard component of writing instruction and programs (2019, p. 4). In addition to the need to develop pedagogical approaches regarding multimodality, we as writing scholars, administrators, and teachers must understand the fundamental differences between writing a standard essay versus writing for digital media or other modes (Skains, 2017). Little research has been conducted to understand these differences (DePalma & Alexander, 2015). This research will tap into the rationale behind curricular choices to include and/or support the implementation of multimodal assignments in first-year writing programs across the

United States. By hearing from the perspective of WPAs, the study captures how the WPAs' own positionality leads to their personal evaluation of multimodality, while going a step further and tracking how the overall first-year writing program values and implements multimodal elements.

My approach for continuing this discussion of multimodality is close to what Banks (2015) is advocating: can first-year writing be more open to assignment opportunities to make it more accessible to all students? As shown from the above scholarship, multimodality can have practical benefits as well as contribute to disrupting larger systematic flaws. Yes, as writing scholars want students to utilize tools for their own benefit, but most are more interested in making sure these classes are more open to all of the voices of students coming from their home languages and discourses. Arguably, having more multimodal pedagogies in the classroom will help affect those changes.

“This project taught me how to take a 1,000 word essay and compress it into a one-page visual document that holds the weight of the essay with less than a dozen words.” --Micah

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND METHODOLOGY

This study's design was influenced by the blending of theoretical frameworks of antiracism and utilitarianism. When these frameworks are paired, we can highlight the benefits and potential drawbacks of our programs. Utilitarianism and the focus on utility in terms of our curricula can be problematic. Practicality is a deeply-held value. David Hudson (2017) states about his field of Library Sciences, but pertains to other academic fields, including writing studies and FYW:

> It is rather that our very expectations and assumptions about the practical character and value of our field subtly police the work we end up doing and supporting, the kind of questions we ask and conversations we have, our sense of what useful and appropriate conferences, publications, and research look like, and indeed our sense, more generally, of what useful and appropriate political interventions look like from the standpoint of our profession. (p. 206)

Reflecting on how practicality influences our choices, we are left to consider: How is practicality in itself potentially racist? This rhetoric of pragmatism or practicality has an underlying sense of privilege.

The antiracist framework is implemented to heed to the call posed by Genevieve García de Müeller and Iris Ruiz (2017) who state the need for addressing how writing program administration and race intersect. This study's definition of antiracism is based on Ibram X. Kendi (2019)'s approach, stating:

> A racist policy is any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between racial groups. An antiracist policy is any measure that produces or sustains racial equity between racial groups. By policy, I mean written and unwritten laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines that govern people. There is no such thing as a nonracist or race-neutral policy. Every policy in every institution in every community in every nation is producing or sustaining either racial inequity or equity between racial groups. (p. 10)

Because writing programs are places that reach so many students, from a variety of backgrounds and majors, the curricula selected inherently informs students of what we value. The language

within our outcomes, programmatic goals, and assignments matters. Furthermore, the historically limited representation of people of color within the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) further calls for the necessary reflection of the field to address race.

Antiracism was incorporated in research design in order to prioritize people's voices sharing their own experiences. Questions that guided my study design included those found in work on decolonizing methodologies, such as: "Whose research it is? Whose interests does it serve? Who will benefit from it? Who will carry it out?" (2012, Smith, p. 10). My study design came from a goal of reaching those making curricular decisions within the field of first-year writing and with the long-term goal of better serving our students, especially those whose voices have been silenced in academia. In order to best meet these goals, design choices were based primarily off of the following theoretical frameworks.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical guidance for this project stems from both a utilitarian perspective and anti-racism, developing a focus on multimodal's importance from a practical side and an inclusion of voices who have systematically been oppressed. Multimodality provides opportunities for students to engage with communities outside of the standard academic realm, pushing boundaries and allowing for the sharing and interacting of new perspectives (DeJaynes & Curmi-Hall, 2019). These theories served as the starting point for selecting research methods, creating survey and interview questions and topics, incorporating participant voices, and analyzing data results, as described below.

Utilitarianism

The theoretical framework of utilitarianism led to the study design of using a survey. This study's survey was modeled after the 2006 study's initial survey, with several changes made and

a reduction from 141 questions to 67. Furthermore, the utility approach was utilized in designing survey and interview questions centered around practical implementation and logistics surrounding multimodality assignments and program curriculum choices, such as topics including training, available equipment, and types of assignments. This framework adds an opportunity to

> consider the ways in which the hegemonic insistence on practicality, including calls to clarity, that animates our field serves to extend white supremacy by implicitly valorizing shared professional languages, assumptions, and methodologies as neutral vehicles for intellectual work that transcend white supremacy; and by tacitly reducing racism to an uncomplicated and timeless phenomenon that can be addressed pragmatically with no departure from such frameworks. (Hudson, 2017, p. 221)

When a FYW program's is for students to write clearly and prioritizes Standard American English, we must also consider what deeper ideals this conveys as values.

Anti-Racism

The next primary theoretical framework this study draws on is that of anti-racism. This framework primarily draws from antiracist theories presented by Adam Banks (2016) and Asao Inoue that undergird this perspective. As Isoue (2015) describes, structural racism, the institutional kind: "reveals the ways that systems, like the ecology of the classroom, already work to create failure in particular places and associate it with particular bodies" (2015, p. 4). Inoue goes on to note that language "standards," even without explicitly mentioning race, reference race because "language is only used among groups of people who are racialized" (2019, 145). From the types of assignments to design of program outcomes to assessment practices, every choice invites certain voices and excludes others (Perryman-Clark & Craig, 2019, p. 20). Multimodality, through technological forms or other modes of representation (aural, visual, and others), creates a shift in literacy as we know it. Multimodality cannot solve the deep and systemic issues of racism that exist in the United States and in higher educational

settings, including the writing classroom. However, multimodality can provide space to address issues that our systems have largely ignored.

Anti-racism was enacted within this study's design first through the approach to gather data in multiple ways from as many perspectives as possible. Furthermore, a commitment to anti-racism led to the incorporation of phenomenological interviews and open-ended questions. I maintained participants' own language and vocabulary in questions by relying on survey responses such as open text boxes. My goal was to showcase each participant's context, from their institution at large to describing their student population and their FYW program, as well as their personal background and experiences, to provide meaning (Seidman, 2019). The use of open-ended questions calls forth participants to share experiences and incorporate their own views. As Seidman describes, good interviewing requires listening (Seidman, 2019, p. 149). Anti-racism provided a framework to allow participants to describe their own personal values and beliefs towards serving students and incorporating multimodality.

The recently-circulated Google document, "Anti-Racist Scholarly Reviewing Practices: A Heuristic for Editors, Reviewers, and Authors" (Cagle, Eble, Gonzales, Johnson, Johnson, Jones, Lane, Mckoy, Moore, Reynoso, Rose, Patterson, Sánchez, Shivers-McNair, Simmons, Stone, Tham, Walton, & Williams, 2021), focuses on addressing the questions:

> How might we dismantle the existing exclusionary and oppressive philosophies and practices of reviewing in the field of technical and professional communication and replace them with philosophies and practices that are explicitly anti-racist and inclusive? What would a system of inclusivity, rather than gatekeeping and disciplining, look like? In what follows, we imagine such a system as well as the process of building this system.

While their focus is not on FYW and more on a publishing perspective, the frameworks and discussions are applicable to this study and the connection of how we assess and value writing. It is important for FYW programs and WPAs to prioritize language justice and writers' rights to their own English, in light of decade-long research on the inherent racial biases in the way

academic English and writing are taught in academia. Chavez notes, “That’s how racism works, right? It’s systematic oppression that breeds behavioral norms” (2021, p. 10). Furthermore, “writing program administrators who want to include multimodality at the programmatic level can use outcomes to (re)examine their values, to initiate conversations about the possibility of aligning those values with disciplinary research, and to take the first steps in that process” (Bearden, 2019, p. 139).

Study Design

The leading research questions this study sought to answer include the following:

1. What outcomes related to multimodality are used in first-year writing programs? What do programmatic documents (missions statements, outcomes, other materials) say about the program goals?
2. What perceptions do WPAs have regarding the definition, usefulness, and value of multimodality? Do these perceptions shift based on the WPA’s institutional context (Doctoral Universities versus Associate’s Colleges-as named in the Carnegie classifications)?
3. What value do WPAs place on incorporating multimodal outcomes into their programs, and what does that incorporation look like on the ground level, including curriculum, training of staff, technological support and accessibility, evaluation, assessment?

To answer these research questions, I conducted data collection through surveys and interviews.

Mixed methods

The use of the mixed-methods study design is best used when to draw on both qualitative and quantitative data and provide a more complete understanding of answering research

questions. For this study, an important aspect of utilizing both surveys and interviews was to explain quantitative results with a qualitative follow-up data collection.

This study follows an Explanatory Sequential Core design, by collecting data in two distinct phases; for instance, survey responses were analyzed in order to determine interview questions for the qualitative phases. The goal for this order is to understand why the survey results occurred, what they mean, to help explain variations in outcome responses, and to assess how institutional context may influence outcomes. My rationale for incorporating both a survey and follow-up interviews is because of the data both methods will yield. Gaining information on WPAs' overall perceptions and values of multimodality through Likert scale questions highlights connections across participant responses. Furthermore, the qualitative collection allowed focus on the participant's background and experiences regarding this study's theme of multimodality and writing program administration. According to I.E. Seidman (2019), "At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (3).

Surveys are limited in providing a linear structure to these values, something that numerical evidence cannot fully capture. For this reason, I sought to include interviews as a key part of data collection, as "Qualitative inquiry provides richer opportunities for gathering and assessing, in language-based meanings, what the participant values, believes, thinks, and feels about social life" (Saldaña, 2015, p. 135). In interviews, participants are choosing what to share and how to share it, which highlights aspects they value as important or necessary to know.

Exigence

Scholarship surrounding multimodality has focused more on individual classrooms and what assignments instructors find useful, as well as larger trends and concerns within the field

(i.e. Sidler et al.'s 2008 *Computers in the Composition Classroom: A Critical Sourcebook* and Carolyn Handa's 2004 *Visual Rhetoric in a Digital World: A Critical Sourcebook*). Furthermore, texts, such as *Multimodal Composing: Strategies for 21st Century Writing Consultations* (Sabatino & Fallon, 2019), focus on best practices within writing centers. While these types of books provide crucial material on multimodality, I want to focus more on programmatic values and perceptions, beginning with the WPA and their individual perceptions and culminating to a view of how writing programs at differing levels value multimodality.

I also believe that a piece like this is important coming from a graduate student. Because of recent tensions with the WPA Listserv involving graduate students,[3] I want to bridge the two groups (graduate students and WPAs) in order to learn from those who are experienced in the field, while acknowledging my own positionality as a newcomer in the field. Because the future of WPA work lies in the hands of graduate students, it is important to connect these two groups in order to learn from the experience of WPAs while nodding to the newest research in the field and seeking inclusivity.

This project follows the same method of gathering data as the 2006 research project by utilizing surveys. However, a major difference in the two surveys, besides the exact questions asked and the regional locations, is type of respondent. The 2006 survey asked an array of instructors about their in-classroom experiences, while this research project focuses only on WPAs and their own rationale for program decisions. Some may ask: why limit responses to only WPAs? My rationale is because of the specific positionality of WPAs as "change agents" (McLeod, 1995). Because WPAs are at the center of decisions, changes, and tensions, "writing program administration is a particularly rich site for institutional change and the WPA as a

[3] In 2018, NextGen list serv was created to respond towards issues of audience and tone directed towards graduate students on the WPA-List serv, as detailed in this response: https://nextgen-listserv.org/how-we-began

catalyst of change" (Charlton et al., 2011, p. 10). My goal was to hear from WPAs in order to discover rationales for curricula and outcomes based, or not based, on multimodality.

Research Focus

My research incorporates data from WPAs working at a variety of institution types to help provide a clear picture of how first-year writing programs actually implement multimodality (if at all) and the steps taken in order to fulfill this implementation (curricular decisions, program outcomes and goals, training and use of resources).

As a term, "writing program," much like a WPA's duties, differs from institution to institution. For this project's focus, writing program refers to a program with one or more courses, with multiple sections, typically first-year courses, that share a set of objectives, curriculum, and common placement procedures (Schwalm, 2002, p. 11). With advice from my committee, I limited this project's scope to first-year writing programs, not extending into writing centers, WAC or WID, or other kinds of writing programs, in order to maintain my focus and keep responses as comparable as possible.

Within surveys and interviews, I wanted to receive background information on each writing program in order to have a better grasp of the first-year writing program's context, including topics such as student demographics, primary majors, location of first-year writing program (English department or other department), staffing, history of past WPAs, relationship to stakeholders and interdisciplinary departments, and resource availability, to name a few.

As Kelly Ritter notes,

> Location also controls other material conditions relevant to composition, such as budgeting, staffing, and physical space within the humanities or liberal arts buildings, as well as physical or intellectual space within the larger university itself. Thus, one cannot speak about composition at the first-year level as if it were always a static, universal course common to all institutional types and all institutional missions, or as if it were a

> compartmentalized product that can be moved from place to place without regard for deep and sometimes difficult pedagogical revision. (2009, p. 17)

Both the survey and interviews sought to capture not only the WPA's views towards the curriculum and multimodality but also capture their institutional context and key needs of that particular student body.

Procedure

Primary data collection

Primary data collection involved collection of writing programs' first-year writing outcomes, goals, curriculum, and mission statements, if available, mostly by participants sharing them initially in the survey or interview. Participants identified their name and institution voluntarily within the survey after uploading the documents. By analyzing these sources, I tracked how programs themselves identify and position their own goals and values through online texts.

People's values are shaped by their experiences and also time and age. For that reason, I am capturing participant's ages and length of time served in their current administrative position in order to see if there is any connection between certain values and time. As Seidman notes, "Individuals' consciousness gives access to the most complicated social and educational issues, because social and educational issues are abstractions based on the concrete experience of people" (2019, p. 7).

Participants

The participants of this study identify as writing program administrators of first-year writing programs at various institutions, ranging from doctoral granting to liberal arts to community colleges. A total of 74 people responded to the survey. 57 of those 76 participants

indicated they currently direct a first-year writing program.[4] Participants were compared using their responses to identifying institutional context based on the Carnegie classification. Connecting responses to these Carnegie categories ties back directly to the study's initial research question which hypothesized that responses would vary based on the institutional context. Carnegie classification includes the following categories:

- Doctoral institution
- Master's College and University
- Baccalaureate College
- Associate's College
- Special Focus Institution
- Tribal College

Out of 57 responses, the Carnegie classification included the following representations: 26 Doctoral Universities, 21 Master's College or Universities, 1 Baccalaureate, and 8 Associate's Colleges. Of these, 45 are Public and 12 are Private institutions. Categories were condensed into three for comparison: Doctoral, Master's, and a collapsed category of "Below Masters," including Baccalaureate and Associate's Colleges.

Institutional context

A distinct feature of WPA work is the importance of context (McLeod, 2007). For this reason, I sought to incorporate a wide-range of institution contexts based on size, ranging from large research institutions and flagship universities to liberal arts institutions and community colleges. The reason for this approach is to gain an understanding of how institutional contexts affect approaches to multimodal implementation. The size, in turn, affects the make-up of the

[4] The survey was opened by 74 total participants, but because 17 were not WPAs, they were removed from the survey).

faculty working in the department the WPA is in. For example, at a larger research institution, the WPA may be a part of a department with a combination of tenure-track staff, part-time faculty, adjuncts, and graduate students. This widens the scope of WPA work, from curricula, TA training, graduate courses, student complaints, plagiarism issues, staffing, hiring, and evaluating, budgeting, and working with university administrators (McLeod, 2007, p. 8). McLeod notes, "Although there are common administrative tasks and assignments among all WPA positions, the definition of a writing program administrator is very much site-specific, dependent on local history and the size and complexity of the institution" (9). Furthermore, it is important to note that WPAs have varying needs (Malenczyk, 2016, p. 5). Because the position varies from place to place, and from student body to administration, it is important to showcase these differences by incorporating data from WPAs at different types of institutions. WPA interdepartmental needs vary based on institution as well, including primary majors, WAC or WID development in working across campus, and staffing, such as drawing on graduate students from those programs offering graduate degrees.

In many cases, the work of WPAs at small colleges is often ignored or undervalued (Amrose, 2000). However, "Two-year colleges teach an estimated 50% of all college-level composition and an estimated 70% of all developmental composition courses" (Two Year College Association, Two-Year College Facts and Data Report, 2005, p. 8). The record of WPA work in community colleges is not widely shared either, due to many factors, such as the relatively short history of community colleges compared to universities. Public junior colleges were first established in 1901 and grew significantly after World War II with the GI Bill. Additionally, the work of community college writing programs can take on different names and forms (Holmsten, 2002, p. 760). Both small-school and community college WPAs must focus on

creating a public identity for their writing programs and working closely within the constraints of their institutional contexts. Hearing from two-year college WPAs became my goal throughout this process. Interviewing those who did respond enlightened me and led to reflection of my own training, which can be found in Chapter Four.

While the survey was anonymous, participants did have the option to volunteer their institution name and contact information in order to be contacted for a follow-up interview or to upload more materials. A total of 29 participants indicated they were willing to participate in a follow-up interview; 21 participants indicated they were willing to upload materials in the future (these overlapped with the first question regarding interviews); and 22 participants indicated they did not want to be contacts in the future, which thanked them for their time and kept the survey response anonymous. If interested in an interview or submitting follow-up materials, participants were then given the option to submit their name, email address, and institution name. A total of 35 institution names were listed, as shown in Table 3.1.

Survey

The survey was designed on Qualtrics and included 67 questions. These questions included primarily Likert scale or multiple choice, including a few open-ended questions. The survey is organized in two main parts: WPA individual perceptions/values followed by programmatic values and implementation, as shown by the outline below:

I. Study Description
II. Consent (approved by the University of Tennessee's Institutional Review Board and included in Appendix A)
III. Confirmation of WPA of a first-year writing program
IV. Background/Context

V. Individual WPA Perceptions

VI. Implementing Multimodal Assignments/Elements

VII. Confirming program-wide requirement of multimodality

VIII. Programmatic Implementation, Values, and Perceptions

IX. Invitation for interview and supplemental materials

X. Contact Information

Questions

The themes of this research include perception, value, and implementation. Perception includes the initial response participants have to statements regarding multimodality on their first-year writing program's goals. Value included the value placed on multimodality. Finally, implementation refers to the practical steps WPAs take to ensure their program's outcomes and goals are carried out, specifically in terms of multimodal implementation. These questions deal with available training and support that members of their department have in regards to utilizing multimodal composition.

Furthermore, survey questions included background on participants' own training in their graduate programs. This rationale comes from the question posed by Rita Malencyzk: "What is a WPA anyway?" (2016, p. 4). The goal by including a few questions regarding the WPA themself is to learn more about their prior experiences, exposure, and background, ranging in questions from their tenure status, amount of time at their current administrative job, gender, race, graduate training, and age. As shared by Collin Lamont Craig and Staci Maree Perryman-Clark, "Our racial and gendered perspectives informed our opportunities as we trained as WPAs" (2011, p. 38).

Table 3.1 Names of Institutions Provided in Surveys

Doctoral	Master's	Baccalaureate	Associate's Colleges
University of Alabama	University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	University of South Florida St. Petersburg	Central Arizona College
University of Alabama at Birmingham	SUNY Cortland		Chemeketa Community College
University of California, Davis	Samford University		Henry Ford College
University of Georgia	University of South Carolina Beaufort		Oakland Community College
University of Massachusetts, Lowell	University of Nebraska at Kearney		
University of Memphis	Seton Hill University		
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	Indiana University—Purdue University Columbus		
Kennesaw State University	Stony Brook University		
Lipscomb University	James Madison University		
Ohio State University	New Jersey City University		
Texas Tech	York College of Pennsylvania		
Ball State University	DePaul University		
Ashland University	Fairleigh Dickinson University		
Northern Illinois University	Eastern Michigan University		
Stockton University			
Youngstown State University			

Survey distribution

My original plan for survey distribution was to roll out my survey at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in late March 2020. My goal was to bring printed flyers with my survey's QR code and to network through mentorship opportunities and attend WPA-based talks and meetings in order to raise awareness and, in turn, participation. However, due to COVID-19, the conference was cancelled and many of my original methods were altered. Instead, I sent the survey link through the email listserv where I knew WPAs would frequent, Writing Program Administrators listserv, as well as the listserv where I could reach more administrators from two-year contexts, Teaching English in the Two Year College listserv. The survey was also shared on Twitter by posting the survey link to my own Twitter page, which was retweeted by the Writing Program Administrative Graduate Organization Twitter account and Rhetoric/Composition professors, and through Facebook groups such as Council of Writing Program Administrators and Issues in Rhetoric/Composition Pedagogy. My final method was to send emails directly to WPAs, which did not prove very effective. However, I learned if I could ask WPAs or colleagues who knew WPAs to copy my survey call and send the email directly to the potential participant, they were more likely to complete the survey. At the end of the survey, participants were asked to indicate their willingness to participate in follow-up interview(s) in order to give more elaboration to their responses (as shown as Appendix C).

Interview protocol

Follow-ups occurred based on participants indicating their willingness to participate through the end of the survey. The survey's ending asked participants if they: were willing to participate in a future follow-up interview; willing to send follow-up materials (assignment sheets, outcomes, and more) in the future; or did not want to be contacted again. I kept a running

spreadsheet of participants based on these responses, and sent out emails to each person who indicated their willingness for either an interview or to send follow-up materials. Interviews occurred via Zoom. The interviews lasted roughly an hour each. Participants indicated on the survey their willingness to be interviewed as well as a line to leave their email address, and I followed up with each one in order to schedule the interview.

In order to prepare for interviews, I read through the participant's survey response and made notes of responses that showed strong reactions (agreement and disagreement) to questions, as well as the textbox responses to understand the participant in their own words. I followed a standard template for the interviews (as shown in Appendix D), with certain questions repeated to all participants, as well as changing questions based on the participant responses and context.

In order to prepare for interviews, I downloaded and reviewed the participant's survey response, paying careful attention to particular questions up front such as "Does your program require multimodality at program-wide level?" and questions concerning the participant's own definition and view of multimodality. Interviews started with participants verbally agreeing to the informed consent approved by the University of Tennessee's Institutional Review Board (as shown in Appendix B). I used a fairly standard template to begin the interview by asking the participant to reflect broadly on their institutional context: "To begin, can you describe your student population at your institution?" Beginning the interview allowed me as the researcher to have a better understanding of who their institution serves, as well as how the WPA perceived their student body, and finally, to indicate that students' needs are the primary driving force behind this project. While I could easily identify certain information, such as student

demographics, institution location and primary majors/programs, I wanted to hear from the WPA their own view of the students they serve, and of what matters in their institution as a whole.

The second standard question was "What is your own definition of multimodality as a concept?" followed by, "Where did that understanding come from?" I purposely did not define multimodality in the survey in order to allow the participant to provide their own understanding without swaying from my own interpretation. While both the survey and interview includes a focus on the value WPAs place on multimodality, the survey includes questions regarding the practicality and decisions made, while the interview addresses the "why" and rationale for those choices. Interview questions are included in Appendix D.

This research collection occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic in Summer 2020. Consideration was made of the participants' time, since many were busy in designing online-based fall curriculum, meeting with administration, and other tasks demanding their attention. For that reason, the survey was streamlined and included questions that in many ways were current on WPAs' minds, in terms of training, software use, and considering stakeholders when making multimodal implementation.

The goal of the follow-up interview is to raise participants' awareness of their decisions and reflect on such choices. "By asking participants to reconstruct their experience and then reflect on its meaning, interviewers encourage participants to engage in that "act of attention" that then allows them to consider the meaning of a lived experienced" (Seidman, 2019, p. 19).

Plan for data

After receiving responses for surveys and conducting follow-up interviews, I had interviews transcribed through a free software called Otter and Rev.com using funding from the University of Tennessee English Department's graduate student research support fund. I then

created a codebook labeling the overarching themes and how I define those themes (included in Appendix E). After sifting through the interview transcriptions, I began marking the coding themes. Additionally, I used value coding (Saldana, 2016) in order to capture participants' values towards themes, from positive to neutral to negative.

Data Analysis Procedures

Survey analysis

Survey responses were analyzed using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) through SPSS statistical software platform. MANOVA allowed comparison of dependent variables in order to track significance among participants' responses.

Interview analysis

The process of analyzing qualitative data began by receiving transcripts from Rev.com, Otter, as well as personally transcribing interviews. Once transcriptions were completed, I read over them while listening to the original interview recordings. This process allowed me to be fully immersed in the data while listening for any major themes or patterns. After reading through the interviews three times, I began using NVIVO to code the data.

Coding

Coding is detailed in Appendix E. Once interviews were transcribed, open coding was used to develop roughly thirty categories and reduce them to six codes combined into the study's major themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Next axial coding was used to take the categories from open coding and identify linkages of data. My three research questions served as emergent codes and allowed a guide for narrowing the data and seeking after information hoped to gain from the study. Additional emergent codes were found outside of the research questions based on overlap

in responses and patterns. The five major themes or nodes used to organize data include: Definition, Implementation, Institutional context, Other, Value.

After classifying the themes based on content, I applied values coding, ranging in three categories of positive, negative, and neutral. “Values Coding assesses a participant’s integrated value, attitude, and belief systems at work” (Saldana, 2015, p. 124). In addition, Values Coding ties in the values, attitudes, and beliefs of a person in connection to their perspectives. I want to see if there is a correlation between the value placed on multimodality and the participant’s own institutional context, as well as briefly touching on their own background experiences and training. In some senses, the curriculum they experienced in their own graduate programs can emphasize whether that subject area matters in the field. A value is “the importance we attribute to ourselves, another person, thing or idea. They are the principles, moral codes, and situational norms people live by (Daiute, 2014, p. 69). As Saldana mentions, “Values Coding can explore the origins of the participant’s value, derived from many factors, including institutions (thread of institutional systems)” (2015, p. 135).

Values coding was used to organize levels of participants’ feelings towards multimodality. In order to determine what constituted positive perspectives related to multimodality, participants’ responses were coded based around language that evoked a sense of positive value. Language included terms like “good,” “great,” “helpful,” “like,” “enjoy, “satisfied,” and other terminology that associated positive feelings within participants’ responses. In addition to vocabulary, responses that included a positive meaning were also coded as positive values. In terms of what constituted a negative perspective, this was limited to responses that included negative associations and terminology. Terms included “nightmare,” “bad,” “resent,” and “against.” For determining what constituted a mixed perspective related to multimodality,

this involved responses that overlapped with both positive and negative valuing within the same sentiment. Values coding also approached using an antiracist framework to track values based on ideals stemmed antiracism.

The next step included interpretation and making sense of lessons learned (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). At this step I reflected on the data in order to take away a larger meaning from the data.

Research Positionality

I must take time to acknowledge my own positionality and system of values when it comes to writing scholarship and multimodality. I believe in the multimodality's use for engaging more voices that can be otherwise neglected or silenced in the field. By listening to the current leaders among first-year writing curriculum, I can learn and understand decisions in order to best make my own contributions for the field in the future.

My research adds to the work of multimodal scholarship and WPA scholarship by providing an overview of how WPAs at different institutional contexts, using Carnegie classifications, perceive, value, and implement multimodality. Furthermore, this study uses interview data in order to go into more depth about the "why" and where these differences stem from.

Chapter Four presents quantitative findings, while Chapter Five highlights qualitative findings. Chapter Four explains the process of running MANOVA and recognizing which questions were correlated and showed significant differences between Carnegie classification. Chapter Five, which focuses on interviews and case studies representing each institutional context, provides the "why" in order to best answer what factors contribute towards the different approaches between institutions and WPAs themselves. Chapter Six interprets the results,

discussing what they mean for first-year writing programs and multimodality and how they answer my original three leading research questions, while nodding to limitations. Chapter Seven serves as a final conclusion to discuss larger takeaways and connections to the future of our field.

"I learned that writing is not only shown through papers, articles, and books, but rather through all forms of genres to show what you are trying to portray to your audience." -Dee

CHAPTER FOUR: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to understand how writing program administrators perceived, defined, and valued multimodality as a concept within first-year writing programs. The study sought to answer three main research questions:

1. What outcomes related to multimodality are used in writing programs? What do programmatic documents (missions statements, outcomes, other materials) say about the program goals?
2. What perceptions do WPAs have regarding the definition, usefulness, and value of multimodality? Do these perceptions shift based on the WPA's institutional context (Doctoral Universities versus Associate's Colleges-as named in the Carnegie classifications)?
3. What value do WPAs place on incorporating multimodal outcomes into their programs, and what does that incorporation look like on the ground level, including curriculum, training of staff, technological support and accessibility, evaluation, assessment?

The survey data helps provide answers to the three leading research questions of this study. As this chapter reveals, there are significant differences in perceiving, implementing, and valuing multimodality from WPAs. Sample assignments and syllabi shared internally within writing programs had the most frequent references to multimodality. Program materials with the least references to multimodality included program websites. Participants are in agreement that multimodality strengthens and adds value to first-year writing programs, but participants are neutral in terms of multimodality being a priority in first-year writing programs. Significant differences do exist among WPAs in different institutional contexts for perceiving and implementing multimodality. Multimodality is less of a priority for Baccalaureate and

Associate's Colleges than Master's and Doctoral-granting institutions. Furthermore, multimodality is not as high of a teaching priority for Baccalaureate and Associate's Colleges than it is for Doctoral and Masters programs. The most frequently discussed theme across all contexts in regards to limiting multimodal implementation is training of staff. Ultimately more on-campus support for multimodal projects is needed and improves both faculty and students' responses towards multimodal curriculum.

Answers to Support Research Questions

Participants

A total of 74 people responded to the survey. 57 of those 74 participants indicated they currently direct a first-year writing program.[5] Participants were compared using their responses to identifying institutional context based on the Carnegie classification. Connecting responses to these Carnegie categories ties back directly to the study's initial research question which hypothesized that responses would vary based on the institutional context. Carnegie classification includes the following categories:

- Doctoral institution
- Master's College and University
- Baccalaureate College
- Associate's College
- Special Focus Institution
- Tribal College

Out of 57 responses, the Carnegie classification included the following representations: 26 Doctoral Universities, 21 Master's College or Universities, 1 Baccalaureate, and 8

[5] The survey was opened by 74 total participants, but because 17 were not WPAs, they were removed from the survey.

Associate's Colleges. Of these, 45 are Public and 12 are Private institutions. Categories were condensed into three for comparison: Doctoral, Master's, and a collapsed category of "Below Master's," including Baccalaureate and Associate's Colleges.

According to the survey data, materials that had the most reference to multimodality were those shared internally in the writing program, including sample assignments and syllabi. However, program websites, which reach more external stakeholders such as parents or potential students, had the least reference to multimodality. Overall participants agree that multimodality strengthens and adds value to first-year writing programs, but are neutral in terms of multimodality being a priority in first-year writing programs. However, significant differences exist among WPAs perceiving and implementing multimodality across institutional contexts. Multimodality is less of a priority for Baccalaureate and Associate's Colleges than Master's and Doctoral-granting institutions. Furthermore, multimodality is not as high of a teaching priority for Baccalaureate and Associate's Colleges as it is for Doctoral and Masters programs. The most frequently discussed theme in regards to limiting multimodal implementation is training of staff. Doctoral programs held the most support for faculty training through departmental training, on-campus resources, and paid professional development. Ultimately more on-campus support for multimodal projects is needed and improves both faculty and students' responses towards multimodal curriculum. Answers to the leading research questions will be addressed in order, beginning programmatic outcomes and assignments.

WPAs' Perception of the Prominence of Multimodality in Outcomes and Programmatic Documents

In order to answer the first research question regarding program outcomes and documents, I analyzed the documents submitted by participants completing the survey

Participants could voluntarily share materials ranging from syllabi, assignment sheets, training materials, or samples to illustrate their programmatic outcomes and larger goals. Of the 25 people who indicated they do require multimodality program-wide, ten people uploaded materials directly to the survey attachment link, while nine people submitted materials later through email after indicating on the survey they were willing to send them in the future. Almost all of the submissions were sample assignments currently used in their first-year writing program, as well as programmatic outcomes.

A word cloud, as displayed in Figure 4.1, was generated from all documents voluntarily shared by participants, either uploaded directly to the survey attachment option or shared via email post-survey, in order to discover most frequently used labeling within programmatic documents. As shown in the word cloud, the five most frequently used words include "writing," "students," "project", "class", and "research." The word "multimodal" is used a total of 85 times, a weighted percentage of 0.16%. For comparison, the word "writing" (the top frequently used word) is used a total of 634 times, with a weighted percentage of 1.20%. This word cloud provides an overall illustration of what terminology is most frequently found within FYW programmatic documents, which also reveals a connection to what participants and programs overall value in their curricula. This word cloud also sought to capture terminology that may overlap with multimodality's meaning, since the term is so varied in definitions and interpretations. Related terminology revealed in the 4.1 Shared Document Word Cloud shows terms such as "media", "composing", and "composition," which are still much more general and do not directly connect with the term "multimodal" itself.

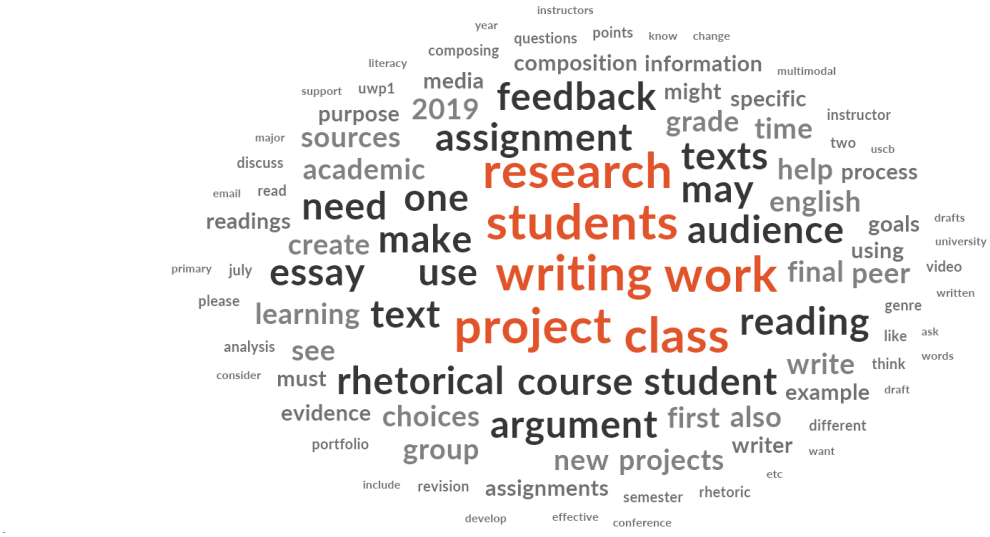

Figure 4.1 Shared Program Documents Word Cloud

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Multimodal's Significance in Programmatic Documents

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How significant is multimodality in the following programmatic documents? - Sample assignments	57	1	5	2.93	1.147
Sample syllabi materials	57	1	5	2.86	1.217
Course outcomes	56	1	5	2.64	1.285
Professional development materials	57	1	5	2.60	1.178
Instructor training materials	57	1	5	2.49	1.283
First-year writing program mission statement	11	1	4	2.27	1.191
Program website	57	1	5	1.93	1.193
Valid N (listwise)	10				

Table 4.2 Means of Multimodality's Significance in Programmatic Documents

	Carnegie	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
How significant is multimodality in the following programmatic documents? - Course outcomes	Doctoral	2.73	1.185	26
	Master's	2.86	1.424	21
	Below Master's	1.89	1.054	9
	Total	2.64	1.285	56
Instructor training materials	Doctoral	2.58	1.270	26
	Master's	2.71	1.347	21
	Below Master's	1.56	.726	9
	Total	2.46	1.279	56
Sample syllabi materials	Doctoral	3.00	1.058	26
	Master's	3.05	1.396	21
	Below Master's	1.89	.782	9
	Total	2.84	1.218	56
Sample assignments	Doctoral	3.12	1.071	26
	Master's	3.00	1.304	21
	Below Master's	2.11	.601	9
	Total	2.91	1.149	56
Professional development materials	Doctoral	2.69	1.087	26
	Master's	2.90	1.261	21
	Below Master's	1.56	.726	9
	Total	2.59	1.187	56
Program website	Doctoral	2.12	1.071	26
	Master's	1.95	1.465	21
	Below Master's	1.33	.707	9
	Total	1.93	1.204	56

As illustrated by Table 4.2, there was no significant difference based on Carnegie classification in the significance of multimodality within programmatic documents, as MANOVA showed no significance between Carnegie classifications, $F(12, 96)=1.222$, $p=0.280$. The above tables and results from survey responses reveal that institutional context did not affect the amount of references to multimodality within programmatic documents. Materials that had the most reference to multimodality were those shared internally in the writing program, including sample assignments and syllabi. However, program websites, which reach more external stakeholders such as parents or potential students, had the least reference to multimodality.

Participants' Associations With Multimodality

The survey asked participants to identify which terms they associate with multimodality in order to seek answers to the study's second research question, involving WPAs' perceptions towards the definition, usefulness, and value of multimodality. Multimodality's definition was purposefully excluded from the survey in order to allow participants to indicate their own perception of the term. The statement "When I hear multimodality, I think of…" included a list of eight options: New media; Social media; Digital media; Material rhetorics; Visual rhetorics; Digital rhetoric; Multiliteracies; and Modes. Response types consisted of Likert scale, with 1 indicating Strongly Disagree and 5 indicating Strongly Agree. Overall the terms' means included: Visual Rhetoric (4.64), Digital Media (4.59), Digital Rhetoric (4.51), Modes (4.21), New Media (4.16), Multiliteracies (4.12), Material Rhetorics (3.89), and Social Media (3.81). Table 4.3 highlights the differences in responses between Carnegie classifications.

Table 4.3 Means of Participants' Associations with Multimodality Across Institutions

	Carnegie	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
When I hear multimodality, I think of... - New media	Doctoral	4.58	.578	26
	Master's	4.00	.894	21
	Below Master's	3.44	1.236	9
	Total	4.18	.917	56
Social media	Doctoral	3.88	1.071	26
	Master's	3.86	.910	21
	Below Master's	3.44	1.130	9
	Total	3.80	1.017	56
Digital media	Doctoral	4.77	.430	26
	Master's	4.57	.598	21
	Below Master's	4.11	.782	9
	Total	4.59	.596	56
Material rhetorics	Doctoral	4.00	1.200	26
	Master's	4.05	.973	21
	Below Master's	3.22	.833	9
	Total	3.89	1.090	56
Visual rhetoric	Doctoral	4.81	.402	26
	Master's	4.62	.669	21
	Below Master's	4.22	.972	9
	Total	4.64	.645	56
Digital rhetoric	Doctoral	4.81	.491	26
	Master's	4.48	.602	21
	Below Master's	3.78	.833	9
	Total	4.52	.687	56

Table 4.3 Continued

	Carnegie	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Multiliteracies	Doctoral	4.35	.977	26
	Master's	4.00	1.225	21
	Below Master's	3.67	1.323	9
	Total	4.11	1.139	56
Modes (aural, visual, gestural, spatial)	Doctoral	4.23	1.177	26
	Master's	4.48	.873	21
	Below Master's	3.44	1.590	9
	Total	4.20	1.182	56

MANOVA was run to determine if multimodal associations differed by Carnegie classification, and revealed responses differing between Carnegie classification were significant. Results of MANOVA are: $F(16, 92)=2.262$, $p=0.008$. Individual ANOVAs were run to figure out which of the terms significantly differ. The three terms that were different were: Digital Rhetoric ($p<.001$), Digital Media ($p=.014$), and New Media ($p=.002$). Tukey's post hoc comparisons were run on the three terms that were significant to determine how the Carnegie classifications differed. Below Master's are less likely to associate New Media with multimodality than Doctoral institutions ($p=.002$) but not Master's institutions ($p=.223$). There is no significant difference between Master's and Doctoral ($p=.055$). Below Master's are less likely to associate Digital Media with multimodality than Doctoral institutions ($p=.010$) but not Master's institutions ($p=.108$). There is no difference between Master's and Doctoral ($p=.457$). For Digital Rhetoric, there is no difference between Master's and Doctoral ($p=.150$), but Below Master's are less likely to associate Digital Rhetoric with multimodality than both Master's ($p=.013$) and Doctoral ($p<.001$).

Participants were also provided a textbox to list any other additional terms they associated with multimodality. These responses included the following disciplinary terms:

- Rhetorical circulation, delivery, design-thinking, emerging genres
- Remediation, rhetorical velocity, repurposing
- Artifacts, materiality, makerspaces
- Rhetorical ecologies; circulation
- Material (including digital) and processually aware making/composing.
- Kinesthetic learning
- Design

- Multimedia

Further textbox responses included participants view of multimodality in terms of application, including:

- "I think of multi-modal in terms of interactive, electronic-based course work or the creation of projects using different media. I think of multiple-modalities as options between online, synchronous online, hybrid, f2f, etc."
- "Combining multiple modes to create a form of communication that meets the author's purpose and communicates to the audience on a number of levels."

One response stood out from the others because it did not incorporate disciplinary terms or application of multimodality. Instead the response included the WPAs' valuing of multimodality as a concept, noting: "Waste of time. Someone else's job. Distraction. Imposition. Fad. Exasperating." The open textbox responses on the survey further revealed participants' broad views of multimodality in terms of samples as well as value associations.

Priority

Three statements specifically asked about the priority, value, and strength of multimodality within the WPAs' view:

- Multimodality is a priority in our first-year writing program.
- Multimodality adds value to our first-year writing program's goals.
- Multimodality strengthens our first-year writing program's outcomes.

Overall, participants agree that multimodality strengthens (mean=4.14) and adds value (mean=4.12) to first-year writing programs, but are neutral in terms of multimodality being a priority in first-year writing programs (mean=3.12). Overall mean and standard deviation is highlighted in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Value of Multimodality

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Multimodality... - strengthens our first-year writing program's outcomes.	51	1	5	4.14	1.059
Multimodality... - adds value to our first-year writing program's goals.	51	1	5	4.12	1.089
Multimodality... - is a priority in our first-year writing program.	51	1	5	3.08	1.508
Valid N (listwise)	51				

Table 4.5 Means of perception and value by Carnegie classification

Descriptive Statistics

	Classification	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Multimodality... - is a priority in our first-year writing program.	Doctoral University	3.42	1.501	24
	Master's College and University	3.15	1.461	20
	Below Masters	1.71	.951	7
	Total	3.08	1.508	51
Multimodality... - adds value to our first-year writing program's goals.	Doctoral University	4.13	1.035	24
	Master's College and University	4.55	.686	20
	Below Masters	2.86	1.345	7
	Total	4.12	1.089	51
Multimodality... - strengthens our first-year writing program's outcomes.	Doctoral University	4.13	1.076	24
	Master's College and University	4.50	.761	20
	Below Masters	3.14	1.215	7
	Total	4.14	1.059	51

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Table 4.6 Multiple Comparisons by Carnegie classification

Tukey HSD

Dependent Variable	(I) Carnegie	(J) Carnegie	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Multimodality... - is a priority in our first-year writing program.	Doctoral	Master's	.21	.410	.870
		Below Master's	1.56*	.543	.016
	Master's	Doctoral	-.21	.410	.870
		Below Master's	1.35	.562	.051
	Below Master's	Doctoral	-1.56*	.543	.016
		Master's	-1.35	.562	.051
Multimodality... - adds value to our first-year writing program’s goals.	Doctoral	Master's	-.42	.276	.283
		Below Master's	1.15*	.365	.007
	Master's	Doctoral	.42	.276	.283
		Below Master's	1.57*	.378	.000
	Below Master's	Doctoral	-1.15*	.365	.007
		Master's	-1.57*	.378	.000
Multimodality... - strengthens our first-year writing program’s outcomes.	Doctoral	Master's	-.38	.281	.380
		Below Master's	.93*	.371	.041
	Master's	Doctoral	.38	.281	.380
		Below Master's	1.30*	.384	.004
	Below Master's	Doctoral	-.93*	.371	.041
		Master's	-1.30*	.384	.004

MANOVA was run to determine if perceptions differed by Carnegie classification. The results of MANOVA are: $F(6, 104)=3.477$, $p=0.004$, indicating that at least one of these perception statements differ by Carnegie classification. Individual ANOVAs found that all three perceptions significantly differ by Carnegie classification: priority ($p=0.020$), value ($p=0.001$), strengthens ($p=0.005$).

In order to determine how participants differ in terms of Carnegie classification, Tukey's post hoc comparisons were run comparing all groups to each other, as shown in Table 4.6. These results from the Tukey post hoc test reveal that multimodality is less of a priority for "Below Master's" institutions than Doctoral programs ($p=.016$), with no differences with Master's programs ($p=.051$). There is no difference between Master's and Doctoral ($p=.870$). Tukey's post hoc comparisons additionally revealed that the value of multimodality is lower for "Below Master's" institutions than Doctoral programs ($p=.007$) or Master's programs. ($p<.001$). There is no significant difference between Master's and Doctoral programs ($p=.283$).

Finally, the belief that "Multimodality strengthens outcomes" is less of a priority for Below Master's than Master's (.004) and Doctoral (.041). There is no significant difference between Doctoral and Master's programs ($p=.380$). These results reveal significant differences exist among WPAs across different institutional contexts regarding prioritizing and valuing multimodality, as well as seeing multimodality as a way to strengthen programmatic outcomes. Multimodality is less of a priority for Baccalaureate and Associate's Colleges than Master's and Doctoral-granting institutions. Furthermore, multimodality is not as high of a teaching priority for Baccalaureate and Associate's Colleges than it is for Doctoral and Masters programs.

Participants' Values Towards Incorporating Multimodal Assignments

After establishing how participants defined and perceived multimodality, the survey asked questions to understand WPAs' values towards incorporating multimodality. A statement included, "As a WPA I believe…" with six options, as included in Table 4.7. Response types consisted of Likert scale, with 1 indicating Strongly Disagree and 5 indicating Strongly Agree. Overall, participants agree that adding multimodality is beneficial, with a mean of 4.44; multimodality enhances students' composing skills (mean=4.44), and multimodal composition is well-received by students (mean=4.12), but are neutral in terms of multimodality being a priority for their own teaching (mean=3.68), and multimodality being well-received by instructors (mean= 3.09), and disagree with the association that multimodality detracts from time spent on alphabetic text (mean= 2.26). Overall mean and standard deviation is highlighted in Table 4.8.

I ran a MANOVA to determine if beliefs differed by Carnegie classification. Results of MANOVA are: $F(12, 98)=2.208$, $p=.017$, indicating that at least one of these belief statements differ by Carnegie classification. Individual ANOVAs found that all but two beliefs differed by classification; adding a multimodal component for first-year writing is beneficial overall ($p=.001$), multimodality enhances composing skills ($p=.009$), multimodality is well-received by students ($p=.015$), and multimodality is a top priority for my teaching ($p=.006$). No differences were found with multimodality is well-received by instructors ($p=.504$) or with the statement multimodality is valuable as long as it does not detract from alphabetic text ($p=.062$).

The means by Carnegie classification are displayed in Table 4.8: Beliefs of Multimodality Based on Carnegie Classification.

Table 4.7 Overall Mean and Standard Deviation for Multimodality's Benefits

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
As a WPA, I believe... - adding a multimodal component to first-year writing is beneficial overall.	51	1	5	4.43	.831
As a WPA, I believe... - multimodality enhances students' composing skills.	51	1	5	4.39	.874
As a WPA, I believe... - multimodal composition is well-received by our students.	51	2	5	4.12	.887
As a WPA, I believe... - teaching multimodality is a top priority for my goals as a teacher.	51	1	5	3.69	1.225
As a WPA, I believe... - multimodality is well-received by our instructors.	51	1	5	3.10	1.082
As a WPA, I believe... - multimodality is valuable as long as it does not detract from time spent on alphabetic text.	51	1	5	2.27	1.021
Valid N (listwise)	51				

Table 4.8 Beliefs of Multimodality Based on Carnegie Classifications

	Classification	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
As a WPA, I believe... - adding a multimodal component to first-year writing is beneficial overall.	Doctoral University	4.50	.722	24
	Master's College and University	4.65	.587	20
	Below Master's	3.57	1.272	7
	Total	4.43	.831	51
As a WPA, I believe... - multimodality enhances students' composing skills.	Doctoral University	4.50	.722	24
	Master's College and University	4.60	.598	20
	Below Master's	3.43	1.397	7
	Total	4.39	.874	51
As a WPA, I believe... - multimodal composition is well-received by our students.	Doctoral University	4.46	.779	24
	Master's College and University	3.75	.910	20
	Below Master's	4.00	.816	7
	Total	4.12	.887	51
As a WPA, I believe... - multimodality is well-received by our instructors.	Doctoral University	3.33	1.129	24
	Master's College and University	2.85	1.089	20
	Below Master's	3.00	.816	7
	Total	3.10	1.082	51
As a WPA, I believe... - multimodality is valuable as long as it does not detract from time spent on alphabetic text.	Doctoral University	2.46	.833	24
	Master's College and University	1.90	1.021	20
	Below Master's	2.71	1.380	7
	Total	2.27	1.021	51
As a WPA, I believe... - teaching multimodality is a top priority for my goals as a teacher.	Doctoral University	3.79	1.215	24
	Master's College and University	3.95	1.099	20
	Below Master's	2.57	1.134	7
	Total	3.69	1.225	51

In order to figure out how they differ, Tukey's post hoc comparisons were run comparing all groups. For "adding multimodality is beneficial overall" statement, "Below Master's" is significantly lower than Doctoral (p=.003) or Master's (p=.001). Doctoral did not differ from Master's (p=.864). For "multimodality enhances students' composing" statement, "Below Master's" is significantly lower than Doctoral (p=.014) or Master's (p=.010). Doctoral did not differ from Master's (p=.959). Multimodality is better received by students in Doctoral programs than by students in Master's programs (p=.025). Below Master's did not differ from Doctoral (p=.092) or Master's (p=.995). For "teaching multimodality is a top priority" statement, Below Master's is significantly lower than Doctoral (p=.014) or Master's (p=.006). Doctoral did not differ from Master's (p=.839).

An additional question included five statements used to measure understanding and value of multimodality:

- Our first-year writing program seeks new ways to incorporate more multimodal approaches to composing.
- My personal value of multimodality and the value placed by our overall writing program closely align.
- My department values multimodality.
- The stakeholders of my institution see the value of multimodality.
- My department generally understands multimodality as a concept.

Response types consisted of Likert scale, with 1 indicating Strongly Disagree and 5 indicating Strongly Agree. Overall, participants slightly agree with the statements "our first-year writing program seeks new ways to incorporate more multimodal approaches to composing" (mean=3.42).

Table 4.9 Overall Mean and Standard Deviation of Program Value of Multimodality

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our first-year writing program seeks new ways to incorporate more multimodal approaches to composing.	51	1	5	3.45	1.286
My personal value of multimodality and the value placed by our overall writing program closely align.	51	1	5	3.43	1.300
My department values multimodality.	51	1	5	3.22	1.064
The stakeholders of my institution see the value of multimodality.	51	1	5	3.06	1.139
My department generally understands multimodality as a concept.	51	1	5	3.00	1.095
Valid N (listwise)	51				

Participants continue to slightly agree with statements "My personal value of multimodality and the value placed by our overall writing program closely align" (3.42); and "My department values multimodality" (3.23). They are neutral to the remaining two statements: "My department generally understands multimodality as a concept" (2.98) and "The stakeholders of my institution see the value of multimodality" (3.04). Overall mean and standard deviation is shown in Table 4.9. I also ran MANOVA to determine if Carnegie classifications differed. The results indicated no differences between categories $F(10, 100)=1.491$, $p=0.154$.

Participants' Perception of Needs to Implement Multimodality in the Future

In order to seek answers for the third research question regarding implementation strategies for multimodality, participants were asked to indicate if multimodality was a program-wide requirement at their institution. A total of 25 people said "Yes," while 32 respondents said "No." Out of those 32 who indicated they do not have a program requirement for multimodality, 100% said that multimodality is optional and implemented by some instructors in their department.

In discovering the rationale behind not incorporating multimodality as a requirement, a survey question asked participants to indicate the factors that contributed to this decision, providing five options: Time, Resources, Training, Funding, and Departmental interest. Response types consisted of Likert scale, with 1 indicating Strongly Disagree and 5 indicating Strongly Agree.

The survey revealed the following means: Time (3.39), Resources (3.58), Training (4.10), Funding (3.58), and Departmental interest (4.0). A MANOVA was run to determine if there were Carnegie class differences in regards to program-wide needs that must be met in order to implement multimodality. No significant differences were found $F(10,48)=1.093$, $p=.387$.

Therefore, the results showed that institutional context did not play a role in the range of program needs.

An additional question asked participants who indicated multimodality was not required in their program, "How helpful would the following be to your program in incorporating multimodal assignments?". Participants could choose from six responses: More knowledge of multimodal practices; More experience with multimodal assignments; More trained staff; More access to resources (software, technology, textbooks, etc.); More supportive sources that highlight multimodality's benefits; More exposure to multimodal sample assignments. Response types consisted of Likert scale, with 1 indicating Strongly Disagree and 5 indicating Strongly Agree. The greatest need indicated was more trained staff, with a mean of 4.34, with the second greatest need being more exposure to sample multimodal assignments with a mean of 4.12. Overall participants indicated a need for more training and preparation before multimodality can be implemented within their programs.

Additional Analyses

This study's original three research questions did not specifically reference participants' backgrounds, specializations, or years of experience in their WPA position. However, once I started to see correlations between Carnegie classifications, I pursued correlations between a few other options asked by the survey.

Participants' backgrounds

One question asked about participants' background and graduate school training. This question included three statements:

- When I was a graduate student my coursework included issues in writing program administration (mean-3.10).

- When I was a graduate student my coursework included topics on multimodality (mean-3.24)
- When I was a graduate student I created projects using multimodality (mean-3.12).

MANOVA was run to determine if experiences differed by Carnegie classification. Results of MANOVA are: $F(6, 104)= 1.003$, $p=.428$, showing that participants' training and background did not influence their own value of multimodality.

An additional question asked participants for their doctoral degree specialization, including the responses Rhetoric/Composition, Creative Writing, Literature, Linguistics, and Other. When checking the correlation between responses regarding value of multimodality, there was no significant correlation in respondents' specialization and value placed on multimodality.

Another question sought to see if the years of experience correlated to a value of multimodality. There was no significant correlation between the amount of years in the position and the value assigned to multimodality.

Chapter Five will provide results from the qualitative research of this study, through data from 26 interviews, providing more of the "why" behind these differences. Furthermore, Six provides discussion of both the survey and interview results, leading to more answers and what this means in terms of the state of first-year writing programs and multimodality.

"The multimodal project overall was my favorite because I was able to express myself in an area that I love and I had the opportunity to open my eyes to new information that I didn't know." - Hannah

CHAPTER FIVE: QUALITATIVE RESULTS

As highlighted in Chapters two and three, while 57 participants completed the survey, a total of 26 participants voluntarily participated in follow-up interviews. This is important to note when comparing responses between both surveys and interviews, since the interview's goal was to explore themes revealed in surveys. These interviews were conducted with WPAs from varying institutional contexts. Out of the total number of interviews conducted, 13 identified as working in a Doctoral program, 9 in Master's program, and 4 in Associate's Colleges. More details about the participant's institutional contexts, including the program's department and size and institutional context, is displayed in the table below.

The interviews sought further clarification from survey responses, while also seeking out answers to the study's original three research questions:

1. What outcomes related to multimodality are used in writing programs? What do programmatic documents (missions statements, outcomes, other materials) say about the program goals?
2. What perceptions do WPAs have regarding the definition, usefulness, and value of multimodality? Do these perceptions shift based on the WPA's institutional context (Doctoral Universities versus Associate's Colleges-as named in the Carnegie classifications)?
3. What value do WPAs place on incorporating multimodal outcomes into their programs, and what does that incorporation look like on the ground level, including curriculum, training of staff, technological support and accessibility, evaluation, assessment?

The following sections are organized around the six themes that emerged from participants when seeking answers to these research questions.

Table 5.1 Pseudonym Institutional Chart

Doctoral				
Pseudonym	**Institution type**	**Multimodality required?**	**Number of students first-year writing programs serves in typical Fall semester**	**First-year writing program location**
Alan	Public	Yes	750	University Writing Program
Amanda	Public	No	7,000	English
Helen	Public	No	1,500	First-Year Studies/General Studies
Liam	Public	No	5,000	English
Nick	Public	No	2,500	English
Kourtney	Public	Yes	2,800	English
Becca	Private	No	350	English
Roy	Public	Yes	2,700	English
Larry	Public	No	3,000	Program in Writing and Rhetoric
Greg	Public	Yes	2,200	English
Vickie	Public	No	2,200	English
Ken	Public	Yes	4,000	English
Peyton	Public	No	1,500	English
Master's				
Elizabeth	Public	No	1,000	English
Emma	Public	Yes	150	English
Sarai	Private	No	700	English
Jennie	Private	Yes	1,780	Writing, Rhetoric, and Discourse

Table 5.1 Pseudonym Institutional Chart Continued

Addie	Private	Yes	800	Communication and Writing
Keith	Private	Yes	900	General Education
Linda	Public	No	400	English
Mindy	Public	Yes	1,100	English
Bill	Public	No	3,000	School of Writing, Rhetoric, and Technical Communication
Associate's				
Bob	Public, Hispanic-serving	No	1,750	English
Ben	Public	No	9,000	English
Shelia	Public	No	3,500	English
Kim	Public, Hispanic-serving	No	1,900	English

Results Supporting Research Questions

Interviews revealed that while participants are largely in agreement that multimodality promotes a new form of learning, WPAs believe that multimodal assignments increase faculty's preparation efforts and push them outside of what they have been trained and feel comfortable doing in the classroom. Many participants reported that instructors within their programs feel unprepared or behind students in terms of technological literacy and familiarity/comfort with technology. Interview data showed that overall participants agree that adding multimodality to first-year writing is beneficial. Yet as administrators of their respective first-year writing programs, they recognize the labor constraints and ethical dilemmas of asking their faculty members to learn new multimodal assignments, as they believe faculty are hindered by the amount of other topics expected to be covered in first-year writing. Furthermore, WPAs believe that first-year writing programs' reliance on contingent, underpaid staff presents problems when they cannot be compensated for the extra training required to implement multimodality.

Six themes emerged from the interview data. The first theme shares participants' associations, interpretations, and anxieties towards multimodality as a term, and the problems that emerge from its labeling. This understanding of multimodality leads to the second theme, participants' use of multimodality within programmatic outcomes and program goals. In this section participants share their feelings towards including or not including multimodality in larger programmatic goals as well as their rationale. The third theme presents the spectrum of values WPAs hold towards multimodality, from positive to negative and mixed responses. Based on the participants' value associations towards multimodality, the fourth theme discusses institutional context and how that context affects choices of multimodal implementation. includes steps for implementing multimodality, as well as hindrances in terms of support

structures. The fifth theme includes steps for implementing multimodality, as well as hindrances in terms of support structures The final theme centers around the responsibilities of FYW.

WPAs' Approaches to the Term Multimodality

While conversations on multimodality have taken place for many years, interviews revealed that WPAs are still grappling with defining the term. The exigence and timing for this study is summed up from Roy, a WPA at a public doctoral institution serving 2,700 students in FYW:

> We're still, I think, a decade, actually maybe more than a decade, it might be 15 years, after the ascendance of multimodality. I think that we're still wrangling with it. We're still a little bit like, "Well, what do we do with this?" And how do we do something with it that makes it more tangible, more accessible, more practical?

In some instances, WPAs indicated that the term's vagueness inhibited them from working towards a clear implementation goal. As Kim, an associate's college WPA at a Hispanic-serving institution, noted:

> I think because it is such a nebulous definition, or there's so many options of what someone can do, it is also harder to say, "This is why we're moving to multimodal; this is what I want you to do for multimodal." So that may actually be a reason why we're not doing as much either.

As mentioned, WPAs say that multimodality's "nebulous definition," it prevents conversations from occurring regarding its implementation because their energy is focused on explaining multimodality's meaning.

The interviews further revealed how terminology in itself can offer opportunities for growth or limitations. This call for clarification was echoed among WPAs. For instance, several participants offered their initial responses towards "multimodality" as a term, as Emma, a WPA of a public Master's granting institution serving 150 FYW students per semester, stated: "I feel like my definition is always in flux. What does multimodality actually mean and is that the right

term or is that the right way to describe what we're trying to do with writing at this particular time?"

Multimodality as a term is like many used in academia that shift and reinvent previous concepts. While for some WPAs this can be a negative that adds to multimodal's vague interpretation, Ben, an associate's college WPA serving over 9,000 FYW students per semester, mentioned that multimodality as a term is no different than other terminology used within writing studies:

> Multimodality is like many of the terms in research about writing. It's kind of a reinvention of a concept that we've always used. And it's what we do with these terms, particularly in the world of Composition Studies, is we try to come up with new ways to talk about it in order to raise the topic again, and to get everybody focused on it. I'm not dismissive of that because I think that actually helps us. You know, it's just like changing your seat in a, in a theater, that gives you a different perspective on what's going on. And that's always good. So multimodality I would just say is the ability to think about the processes of creation, and particularly the processes of writing, but within different types of outcomes of that writing. So it's its own awareness that we are always engaged in this process of thinking rhetorically and thinking about production, even if that happens in something that doesn't look like writing at all.

This WPA highlighted that by labeling different forms "multimodal," it can shift our own perspectives and understandings of modes of composing that have been around for centuries.

Further complications involving the terminology and labeling of different groups across campus makes approaching implementing multimodality even more uncertain. Bob, an associate's college WPA, described the lack of connection among different campus units, from the technology support not understanding the writing faculty's goals for the incorporation of software. Bob explained: "It just shows me the disconnect between ...on one hand there's composition people, on one hand there's writing people, and on another hand there's technology people. And multimodality is sort of a weird interzone I think between those three communities." Based on this WPAs' perception, the terminology of multimodality creates even more

uncertainty because it overlaps with many other groups on campus. Without knowing where to turn, WPAs and instructors feel a sense of isolation in terms of approaching multimodality.

Overall, the most frequently used terms when defining multimodality in interview responses included: “multimodality,” “rhetorics,” “writing,” “students,” “know,” and “kind” (as in “kind” or type of assignments). Terms that were less frequent but stood out in terms of specific associations included “material,” “genres,” “multiple,” “technology,” “circulation,” and “literacies.”

It is also noted that some participant responses included hedging as they were nervous or uncertain of how to define the term, and they indicated a worry about how they would be perceived if they were not experts on multimodality, shown through common use of words above including “guess,” “see,” and “might” in Figure 5.1. When asked “How do you define multimodality?” some initial responses included the following phrases: “I guess I’ve never thought about actually defining it,” “Ah, oh God, uh…,” “I was nervous about you asking this,” “I have no idea whether I'm thinking about this right,” and “To be honest, I feel like a pretender,” and following up their response with “Is that how you would define it?” This showed that conversations regarding multimodality are still laden with uncertainty, and the term itself may be anxiety-provoking and discourage productive conversations.

Some WPAs showed frustration with the terminology of multimodality. As Addie, a WPA of a private Master-granting institution, clarified: “I kind of hate the term, because the idea of mode is one of those terms that, in our field anyway, I thought we didn't use the modes. So I'm sort of like, "Why are we using this term?" Other WPAs understood multimodality’s definition in relation to rhetorical history, as referenced by Greg, administrator of a public doctoral university with approximately 2,200 FYW students per semester. Greg states:

> I see it like as a rhetorician. I see multimodality as having a long history not as simply a new thing. So for me multimodality is, is one more extension of rhetorical performance. So I see it as doing what rhetoric has always done in terms of using space and using gesture and using and using text, whether oral or written.

Mindy, who runs the FYW program of a public Master's-granting institution, also associated the term multimodality in relation to classical rhetoric. They explained the association between multimodality and Aristotle:

> Multimodality is using, I mean I go all the way back to the Aristotelian all the available means of persuasion. So really seeing composition as a holistic design act. And multimodality means that you're not just limiting yourself to alphabetical text, or an eight and a half by 11 piece of paper in order to compose something for a particular audience and purpose..

Other WPAs connected multimodality with the idea of process, as highlighted by Ben:

> Multimodality I would just say is the ability to think about the processes of creation, and particularly the processes of writing, but within different types of outcomes of that writing. So it's its own awareness that we are always engaged in this process of thinking rhetorically and thinking about production, even if that happens in something that doesn't look like writing at all.

Multiple WPAs noted multimodality as centered around numerous modes, and used examples of what multimodality looks like to illustrate their definitions. Becca, the WPA of a private doctoral-granting institution serving 350 FYW students per semester, explained:

> It's anything that has more than one mode. So it could be something as simple as a typewritten essay with images in it. I mean, technically, that's multimodal, but usually you see things that people consider a little bit more technical than that. Like it might be an audio essay or a video essay or I don't know, it could be it could be a variety of things. But it has to have multiple modes, more than one mode of communication in it.

Bill highlighted different tools utilized in the scope of multimodal communication:

> Writing would be a modality, and maybe writing within digital spaces. And it could be a pen, it could be a pencil, it could be a computer. It's all kind of one modality, it seems to me, but you're using different media to do that. Whereas speaking, again, would be a different modality, but you would use different mediums to achieve that...And then I suppose something like movement would be another modality. I mean, I would say all of these are either modes of communication or expression, and it's difficult for me to really separate those two.

This WPA highlighted that modes of communication or expression can take the form of composing as well as speaking and moving. Furthermore, Vickie, who serves 2,200 FYW students a semester at a public doctoral university, explained, **"**I guess I associate medium, I think of medium with multimodality so I think of composing that includes visual and our role and moving picture." This WPA's association primarily connected to visual elements, even movement in images.

As referenced in Chapter One, sometimes multimodality can be conflated with digital modes. Some WPAs primarily associated multimodality with a digital focus, primarily due to their own background. As Amanda, who runs a public doctoral FYW program serving 7,000 students per semester, explained, "For me personally, multimodality is primarily composing a text, in a very general sense of the word, in a digital space. I really think about multimodality as digital, based on how I learned it when I was in grad school." Elizabeth, at a public Master's-granting institution, noted, "I guess what I'm usually thinking is that it's anything that's not just the written texts that we usually think of for college writing. It'd be something that's digital, but it doesn't have to be." For this WPA, multimodality extends the typical expectations of a college-level writing classroom, whether in digital forms or not. Some WPAs illustrate within their interpretation of multimodality an opportunity to expand what constitutes literacy and what is included in a writing course. As Alan, director of a public doctoral-granting institution's University Writing Program, noted, "The key idea behind multimodality is that literacy happens in more than just print. Part of multi-modality for me is thinking in terms of how current literacies combine, remix, synthesize, integrate different modes just beyond print literacies." Echoing the same terminology of "remix," Linda, in the context of a public Master's-granting institution, who previously worked as a middle school teacher noted their experience, "When I

think of multimodal writing, I really think about having students bring in and either synthesize or incorporate or remix."

As shown by these definitions included above, overall WPAs are in agreement that multimodality involves multiple modes and extends beyond our typical expectations of writing and composing. However, participants do not agree on what is meant by "mode." Furthermore, participants differ in feelings of how useful the term is and how the term multimodal can be a challenge to articulate to fellow colleagues.

How WPAs Feel Towards Including Multimodality in Program Outcomes

Gaining an understanding first of how these participants define and comprehend multimodality as a term is critical in further addressing this study's research questions, especially in terms of the participant's perceptions of how multimodality shapes the larger programmatic goals. How WPAs choose to frame their first-year writing programs is crucial in understanding their larger mission. Participant responses towards outcomes include those who feel strongly about building off of recommended outcomes from larger organizations such as the Council of Writing Program Administrators, their beliefs towards recognizing faculty experience, and openness to expand on multimodal language outcomes in the future. Outcomes provide insight into the overall values shared by a program (Bearden, 2019).

Outcomes are also a place where many WPAs begin identifying changes and growth the program needs, especially by using models within our field such as the WPA Outcomes. Several participants felt it was important to use the WPAs Outcome Statement as a model and starting place for their own programmatic outcomes. These organizational outcomes serve as a starting point for many WPAs and help create a guide concerning priorities. Liam, WPA at a public doctoral university, explained, "I help people develop the talents they already have in service to a

set of outcomes, and that's the WPA outcome statement. We basically have some form of that on our website and those are our concerns." Relying on an outcomes statement created by leaders in the field allows WPAs a guide for prioritizing topics and approaches.

Mindy discussed how the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) outcomes are reflected within their Master's-granting institution's program outcomes:

> One of the components of the remix assignment is they create this multimodal composition but then they have to reflect on it, and our outcomes are the CWPA outcomes and so in it, they have to talk about like, what rhetorical strategies did you use? What's your rhetorical knowledge and how is it reflected? What processes did you use? What conventions did you use? You know, all those things are keyed right to those outcomes, and to students, I think, it really does help quite a bit.

This quote highlights the importance the WPA places on using the CWPA outcomes as a model to guide students towards effective use of programmatic assignments and connect them with learning outcomes and reflection.

Emma noted that naming multimodality within the outcomes allows students and teachers to tangibly see and progress towards more opportunities in new genres that would typically be limited by standard alphabetic text:

> One of our key outcomes is that students will write in multiple genres for different audiences with different purposes in multiple contexts and I think that multimodality both serves as a vehicle for doing that and as an aide for doing that. If we were limiting ourselves to alphabetic text and only dealing with the words on the page in the classroom then we wouldn't have as many opportunities as we do when we start thinking about how using the internet enables us to send out Email, for example, and get that information out to a particular audience. Or working with a community partner to build some urban garden and we want to create a pamphlet for them and so having the multimodality to be able to do that. I think all of those pieces really do help us meet that number one goal, which is to communicate effectively to multiple audiences in multiple genres.

From this administrator's perspective, multimodal implementation meets a significant outcome and ultimately the program's top goal of communicating with multiple audiences.

Acknowledgement of multimodality within program outcomes allows administrators to work towards meeting key programmatic goals otherwise not addressed by non-multimodal

assignments. This similar idea of outlining the process of guiding students towards appropriate intentional choices within outcomes was also mentioned by Kourtney, whose public doctoral FYW program includes 2,800 students: “I think it gives students an ability to think about, ‘Oh, well what's appropriate in this medium that wouldn't be in my academic one?’ So even that traditional learning outcome can be supported by multimodal instruction.”

WPAs’ rationale for not including multimodal language in outcomes

Sixteen participants shared their rationale for not including multimodality within program-wide outcomes. Participants shared their beliefs towards outcomes in connection to teacher comfort and experience. Some WPAs discussed their feelings towards the lack of language that refers to multimodality within their outcomes as a way to allow teachers to feel autonomy in their own pedagogical approaches. By not naming multimodality specifically within the language of programmatic outcomes, some WPAs perceive this as a way to allow instructors to have the freedom to explore implementing multimodality without feeling forced to make such a decision. Alan explained: “I'd like to make that a more robust multimodal requirement, but I feel like I can't because my specific teacher population is very mixed when it comes to their comfort with multimodality.” Adding multimodal requirements to outcomes can be seen as a devaluing of the experiences of current faculty, faculty who have taught for many years, as highlighted by Larry in the context of a public doctoral university serving 3,000 FYW students per semester: “If you’re asking someone who has taught a certain way for 30 years, to fundamentally rethink their work, there’s no reason to pretend that’s not going to be hard. It’s deeply personal and a threat to the reality of that person.”

Many WPAs say they do not include references to multimodality in their outcomes statements for financial and ethical reasons--they do not feel it is right to require the necessary

training if it is not compensated. As Shelia, WPA of an associate's college FYW program serving 3,500 students per semester, noted:

> My colleagues are busy and they don't always feel like they have time to develop new strategies. They don't think they have time in the classroom to actually teach students to use the technology required. I feel most of my colleagues are pretty resistant, not all of them are, but many of them are. And that makes it much harder for me to get to expand the availability of these projects for students. I'm the department chair, but I'm only one faculty member, and I do not mandate curriculum and pedagogy because adjuncts have enough trouble already without having to, you know, do something else.

Becca summed up their reasoning for not requiring multimodality program-wide: "It's simply the fact I am the only tenure track person who teaches writing consistently, so I don't feel I can impose that upon a group of adjuncts. Because their training varies, their experience varies, and I can't pay them." This discussion of payment led into a major theme that will be heavily discussed in Chapter Five regarding labor and ethical concerns surrounding the field of first-year writing, which heavily relies on contingent labor. Multimodality lends itself to one more area of training, learning, and more work for already overworked staff. Naming multimodality within programmatic outcomes is seen to several WPAs as asking faculty to complete another task they are not paid to do.

One administrator's perspective stood out because of their approach to condensing a current outcome naming multimodality based on faculty's interest in returning to more focus on alphabetic text. While most "works in progress" outcomes addressed implementing more multimodality, this program is considering removing the one outcome that does highlight multimodal work, as explained by Bill, WPA of a public doctoral-granting institution:

> We have this one outcome that talks about composing in different environments including digital. I don't know whether we're going to keep that outcome. We want for faculty to be able to follow some of their own interests; that's part of the character of our program. And if I had my way probably in a few years that wouldn't be a program outcome. It would be something that some faculty do. And if some faculty really want to add on to genre awareness ideas about different media and modalities, I think that's wonderful, but I have a feeling it's not going to be a common outcome. Some faculty

> have asked, “Should we have some department discussions about returning to alphabetic text and having students focus on writing?”

From this perspective, the removal of an outcome which echoes composing in multiple modes is encouraged by faculty in order to prioritize writing of alphabetic text.

WPAs’ goals for addressing multimodality in outcomes in the future

While most programs did not include key outcomes involving multimodality, some WPAs say their programmatic outcome language nods to multimodality, with hopes to specifically include more references to multimodality in the future. Larry noted:

> Nothing specifically that addresses multimodality, but there are words in some of the learning outcomes that say, "Including multimodal," or, "For digital audiences." So we do that, but we don't specifically have a learning outcome that is just addressing multimodality. The idea with the learning outcomes was to make them general enough so that people could align different assignments to them understanding that this was the first iteration and that we were probably going to need to go back within a year or two and make them a little bit more specific.

Although some programs do not include multimodality within their outcomes currently, the WPAs still find value in multimodality and show willingness to incorporate multimodality as an outcome in the future. Kim, WPA at a Hispanic-serving associate’s college, noted:

> I think that the multimodal component is becoming more and more important. So I could see that sometime in the future, being something that we put in. We really think people should do this. Let's work more towards that, until it almost becomes something that's ubiquitous.

Furthermore, outcomes can become overlooked with the wide amount of demands required of a program and WPA. For some the lack of language that refers to multimodality within outcomes stemmed from time constraints and faculty experience. Helen, who directs a FYW of 1,500 students per semester at a public doctoral university, explained the process of growing:

> I was on the team of people who helped develop the objectives 12 years ago, and at that time frankly, we didn't have enough faculty members who felt like they had the skills to teach multimodal writing. So it was impossible to put them into the goals because it

> would have been something that a quarter of us felt like we could do when everybody else would have not felt like they could do. Now, I think, as we revise them, we'll probably add some multimodal objectives. But we'll probably make sure that they don't seem like they would have to require a lot of teaching of technology or technology skills. Some of those things have gotten simpler to do. So I think the faculty would be more likely to think they can do it.

As mentioned above, ensuring faculty response is an important step in moving forward with outlining multimodal requirements in outcomes; however, by including examples, reducing complexity, and focusing on simple processes, the program is open to incorporating objectives specifically referencing multimodality. Outcomes can also serve as the starting point for discussions on changing programmatic goals and focus areas. As illustrated by Sarai, who serves at a private Master's granting institution:

> We just finally started to shift our outcomes to talk about genre. And I think now that we are transitioning to that place. Now that's a good space to be talking about multimodality as a way of understanding genre, as a way of understanding audience and purpose and voice and context and kairos and all of those things. Whereas up until now we've been very traditional thesis-driven essay, correct grammar, that kind of thing. I think now we're starting to pivot in a better direction.

This first-year writing program was more traditional in their approaches to conversations surrounding composing, but is beginning to transition to discussions on genre, which can lead to conversations on multimodality in outcomes, too.

WPAs' Value of Multimodality

Interview data revealed that participants are in agreement about the value multimodality brings to first-year writing programs. In interviews, participants spent more time discussing the positive value of multimodality over negative value or mixed value associations towards multimodality. Overall, more positive value associations among all topics were provided primarily by Master's universities, followed by doctoral, and finally associate's colleges. More negative values were discussed among associate's colleges. These results connect back to previous answers regarding institutional context differences. Ultimately WPAs from doctoral and

Master's-granting institutions have more positive associations with multimodality than associate's colleges. Participant responses were labeled by content coding as well as values coding, with three categories: positive, mixed, or negative. Table 5.1 shows the values coding among the three major institutional categories. Interview data were coded based on participants' references to positive, negative, or mixed (positive and negative) views towards multimodality. To be coded as a positive value, responses included content that held positive associations and language such as "good" and "great." Responses coded as a negative value included content involving words like "disapprove," "dislike," and "bad." Mixed value responses included a mixture of positive and negative language. While all participants' experiences and backgrounds differed, it appears the significant difference between valuing multimodality positively, mixed, and negatively stems from the exposure and conversations surrounding multimodality in graduate school.

Positive value

For most WPAs, their graduate experiences shaped both their administrative approach and level of openness to multimodality. Mentors, graduate courses, and scholarship are all factors participants mentioned as leading them to their understanding of multimodality. As Alan stated:

> Definitely a combination of primarily my experiences in graduate school as a writing teacher and studying scholarship, and then my own experiences as I was there at the beginning of the internet. In terms of my own graduate studies, I took a digital literacies class that really influenced my thinking because we were reading folks like Cynthia Self and Gale Hawisher and James Paul Gee. Those computers and writing scholars all really influenced my thinking about how to define multimodal literacies.

While some participants had courses specifically dedicated to digital literacies, others learned mostly through exposure to mentors and personalized feedback. Emma began their graduate career in 1991 and reflected on the influence of computer technologies:

Table 5.2 Overall Values Coding

Value	A : Doctoral	B : Master's	C : Associate's Colleges
1 : Mixed	29.95%	18.63%	27.63%
2 : Negative	22.78%	29.77%	48.84%
3 : Positive	47.28%	51.6%	28.53%

> At that time, my program had just received a grant from AT&T to create a computer assisted classroom and so my second semester teaching I introduced portfolios and I introduced working with computers. So I've always had this idea that the technology plays a role in terms of what students are able to create. And so having that definition of what a writing class is, what writing is and can be, has just continued to evolve over time and so it's always been a part of the way I've talked about writing with my students.

Others mentioned conferences, such as Peyton, who now directs a program serving 1,500 FYW students at a public doctoral university:

> As someone who got involved in computers and writing in the early 90s, I would have to say that first, you know, going to that conference, I think that was the thing, even then, that people were talking about the ways that computers could afford students different ways of presenting their arguments and their essays and their writing.

Connection to others--whether through graduate mentors and classmates, students, scholars, and conferences--as well as the importance of early experiences created room for new approaches to composing practices that still remain for these WPAs. Peyton continues to remain active in conferences and organizations supporting multimodality: " I wouldn't be involved in computers and writing and digital rhetoric, if I didn't care about the affordances of multimodality and the importance of students being able to remediate and remix arguments from one mode or media to another." Based on this administrator's involvement and exposure to multimodality, it seems reasonable to conclude they want to incorporate opportunities for student application.

Most WPAs noted they positively valued multimodality within first-year writing programs. The reasons behind the "Why?" ranged from transferability of skills enhanced by multimodal assignments into other contexts, real-life application, community engagement, serving student needs, student empowerment, and student expression. WPAs value multimodality because it integrates skills that students can transfer into future academic situations. As Keith, WPA at a private Master's-granting institution, noted, "Replicability is really big...when you get an assignment next class, are you starting from scratch or you going to remember what happens in first-year writing? That meta-cognition, whether it's with an essay or

with a multimedia assignment, that's important." Multimodality can serve as an avenue to support metacognition and assist students as they transfer to new rhetorical situations.

In terms of real-life application, participants from this study feel that multimodal assignments allow students experience communicating with audiences beyond academic ones, as well as create opportunities that involve raising questions. As Becca stated:

> It's great if you can sit down and write an essay for a professor, but you're never going to be asked to do that, again outside of college. So you need to be able to determine who is my audience? And what, what fulfills their need. What is it? Is it a report? Is it an email? Does it need graphics? Does it need images? And so, to me, that being able to figure out you know, audience purpose and context, that's what they've got to leave that class taking. So we have to expose them in this class to what, what it's like to figure out your audience and what your audience needs. Multimodal assignments, adding images and making more design choices, enhances that experience of considering audience.

Participants explained the belief that providing first-year writing students with assignments that expose them to visual elements, such as graphics and images as listed above, gives students practice in directing their message to their intended audience, an audience beyond a professor. Kourtney explained the value of multimodality in connecting with the public:

> A big thing for me is that we can't just speak to one another as academics, and I think multimodality is probably one way that we can better speak to and with the public, and try to share knowledge and learn from and with the public. And I also just think it's 2020, and as much as academics might continue to converse via long academic journal articles for a while, I think that's changing for the rest of the country or the world really. And so if we want to continue to educate students to be persuasive and to communicate in a digital world, then we have to educate them about multimodality.

The quote above suggests that WPAs feel that multimodal assignments serve as a bridge to connecting with public audiences and giving students opportunities for further connection in other areas of their lives. Mindy says:

> I see what we do as preparing students with rhetorical strategies that are going to serve them as writers throughout their lifetime, in their academic classes but also in the public sphere in how they engage with communities around them. Multimodality's definition has always resonated with me as not just forms of writing but ways to analyze all rhetoric.

Linda noted that their program originally avoided multimodality, but came to value multimodality because of what it offers students:

> What I've realized in teaching those things is not actually that they're sexy or shiny but that if I can get a student to make a snapshot argument in an infographic using a piece of data that can communicate to the general public without losing the nuance or complexity, that's really hard to do. That's a level of sophistication that my traditional papers never got from students. And I get it from them more frequently when they're engaging with texts in ways that are more similar to the ways that we all engage with texts outside of artificial classroom environments.

Participants also believed multimodality provided opportunities to empower students and provide opportunities to connect their experiences both outside and inside the classroom. As Alan explained:

> My students were doing all of these multimodal compositions before class. They'd be messing around in social media and with their websites, and then in class I was giving them print literacy assignments, and I started to see this big disconnect between composing they were actually doing for pleasure and outside of school versus the composing they were doing in my class. That really bothered me. I wanted to tap into that motivation that they had.

Another important aspect of multimodality in the first-year writing classroom is giving students a new approach of expression, especially for students whose skills have typically been neglected by traditional essays. As Kourtney stated:

> Multimodal assignments challenge them and give students who maybe struggle with alphabetic writing a chance to shine. And they often do, and then they feel empowered. They realize, "Oh, I am rhetorically skilled. And now I can go back and apply what I learned in a digital space or other kinds of multimodal spaces or projects." It gives students an opportunity to see their strengths in a different way, in a way that maybe they're more likely to recognize them, because they don't have the same baggage that a lot of them have with writing. And they haven't been told lies that they're bad at multimodal.

As expressed by this WPA, multimodality provides an avenue for students to connect their background with the classroom. While many students may have anxieties tied to writing essays, from previous criticism of their writing, multimodality can provide a fresh opportunity to showcase skills that have traditionally been less valued within academic settings, such as

connecting with public audiences. Kourtney continued by noting that when students feel empowered, they are more inclined to circulate their work, whether through social media platforms, directly with their families, or even through activism and community organizations: "And sometimes those same students, sometimes others, they get excited because they get to see their writing really interacted with in a way that they're not going to see with their final research paper." Multimodality can promote circulation and student pride in their work that they may not have previously felt. Furthermore, as Ben summed up regarding the large FYW program at an associate's college, "I think we're just always looking for ways to engage students about what they're doing and multimodal composition that allows us to do that." According to these WPAs, multimodality increases opportunities for student engagement.

Mixed or negative value of multimodality

This study also sought to hear a range of perceptions of multimodality, not only the positive values, in order to better understand from where those perceptions stem. These perceptions connected to participants' own experiences and comfort levels with addressing multimodal. While more WPAs in this study positively valued multimodality, a total of five participants shared a mixed value--a combination of positive and negative responses--towards multimodality, either from personal experiences or from prioritizing more pressing concerns within their first-year writing programs or a more negative valuing of multimodality. Not all WPAs experienced exposure to conversations surrounding digital literacies, technology's effects on writing, or multimodality. As revealed by participants' reflection on their graduate training, when multimodal work is valued as part of graduate coursework, it translates into future administrative perspectives. Bob, who is entering his position at a WPA of a public associate's college, explained: "Graduate school had zero comp theory at all, it was creative writing and

literature classes, that's the only kind of course I ever took." Some discussed what their program prioritized in other areas. Kim described:

> Literature was prioritized. There was very little focus on instruction of any sort. I had one class on preparation for teaching writing. And it was a good class but it was only one. We read Cross Talk in Comp Theory, which is like, you know, the seminal times I guess for grad students. So I was exposed to a number of different composition theorists, and that was it. That was my only training for teaching writing. So I figured it out.

Others were fully immersed in multimodality, which they fully supported at the time of their graduate work, but now a few years later as a WPA of a public doctoral program, they do have some questions in terms of prioritization of curriculum, as explained by Nick, WPA of a public doctoral university:

> The digital writing and research lab is a really unique thing where it's a lab space where graduate students work on helping students on multimodal projects, but also doing their own multimodal research. And it's like a writing center. But for multimodality, and it's very innovative, they do a lot of work.

Larry highlighted their mixed valuing of multimodality because of their unfamiliarity with multimodality. When asked if they value multimodality, they responded:

> No, I don't think it'd be fair. It's not that I'm opposed but I think it'd be an unfair representation to say I value it. I think it's a thing I don't engage with much to be able to say in any meaningful way what it is, where we stand.

When multimodality is not the WPA's own area of expertise, the WPA may feel less comfortable in proclaiming they value it as a concept. As Bill noted, "Yeah, I see value in it. I'm not sure that I do much. I write a ton, but I'm not sure as a communicator that I consider myself a very skilled or frequent multimodal communicator, but that's just me." Because they do not consider themselves experienced with multimodality, it holds less value for them.

Nick explained reconciling with his own view of multimodality's authenticity for promoting student learning:

> To be really honest, I'm questioning the importance of multimodality, at a personal level. Is multimodality just us being obsessed with cool stuff? And trying to feel relevant,

> because it makes us seem more relevant, because it makes us seem more with it, because it's able to kind of dress up the drudgery to students and dress up the drudgery to ourselves? Like, is it a sell out; is it a cop out?

This WPA continued by highlighting they are open to different discussions and that their perspective is not the only correct response, further revealing their mixed perspective of multimodality:

> And I might be wrong, because if you look at how students use genres that they're really comfortable with and media that they're really comfortable with, they're really effective, without much training from us. So maybe I'm totally wrong...But I definitely find myself now circling back and just saying, "If my student can't write, you know, a really well-crafted sentence, am I doing them a disservice by not focusing on that?"

As highlighted in the quote above, a shift to focusing on multimodality can seem as performing a disservice to other areas of curriculum, especially when the WPA is balancing so many expectations.

Furthermore, WPAs did address the negative value they feel their colleagues have expressed regarding multimodality: Elizabeth explained:

> My colleagues are not comfortable and when I say colleagues, I don't mean adjuncts at this point. I mean, full time faculty who are tenured or are not comfortable teaching multimodal and don't really see it as English, you know, they kind of see it as like a fun little project, but not as a substantial thing you need to bring into your program.

The overall valuing of multimodality by all members of first-year writing, from the WPA to faculty, matters in terms of prioritization and openness to multimodality.

Antiracist Layering to Values Coding

In addition to the general values coding, I also overlayed the antiracist framework to see if there was a correlation between negative evaluations and the assumption that students are deficient in language. The idea of recognizing and supporting students' connection to their own communities is antiracist. Mindy says:

> I see what we do as preparing students with rhetorical strategies that are going to serve them as writers throughout their lifetime, in their academic classes but also in the public sphere in how they engage with communities around them.

What do we mean by writing a "good sentence" and therefore a "good writer"? What do WPAs' envision in terms of describing those best practices?

Bob, who serves as WPA of a newly minted Hispanic-serving institution, explains his limitations to implementing multimodality within FYW curricula because of their perception of what students need. He states: "I mock them by saying they're teaching their students how to make memes, but some sort of visual text integrated stuff."

Student need

When interpreting these responses, the theoretical lens of antiracism reveals questions about the privileging of standard alphabetic text, as in the phrasing of "If my student can't write, you know, a really well-crafted sentence, am I doing them a disservice by not focusing on that?" Furthermore, another interpretation emerged through the lens of analyzing data on an antiracist framework highlights viewing students as in need of exposure to literature, as highlighted in the word choices below. Sharing a negative value of multimodality, Bob stated:

> Our students can barely write. They're barely literate. They don't read. They don't put sentences together. And I think of myself and of our mission as teaching writing. Writing. I even make my students hand write every day. All the tests are handwritten. I'd make them use like goose feather quills if I thought I could get away with it. Just because I feel like too much of our life is images and virtuality. Our students come to us so impoverished in words, in language. I really resent a curricular imposition that makes us de-emphasize that even more.

When applying the layer of antiracism to this statement, language such as "barely literate" and "impoverished" are highlighted in terms of providing students with knowledge they do not already have. Bob continued by stating the following:

> I just want to really emphasize, I don't want to take that instructional time away from our students that they already don't know words. They already are struggling with what I would consider basic literacy. I guess. I don't know, whatever. I think they need that from us. They need it. It's important for their education.

I interviewed Bob a few months after their transition to the role of WPA for the first time. Bob noted the negative value of multimodality may change after gaining more administrative experience; however, they still do not feel that multimodality has a high value within writing courses.

Student enjoyment

Another theme surrounding antiracism is students own dislike or negative perception of school or academia. As some WPAs shared, as well as reflected in some of the openings of each chapter of this dissertation taken from student reflections on multimodal assignments, students felt that when opening up assignments to multimodality, they became more engaged, interested, and could involve audiences not typically included in academic work. Chavez states, "I couldn't yet differentiate my love of learning from the hatred of a white supremacist educational system" (2021, p. 1). Greg, who directs a public doctoral-granting university's FYW program serving 2,200 students per semester, states:

> Overall students really like multimodal projects. I mean, the student surveys that we've conducted, which have been about, about the students' experience in the overall course, those projects are I mean, the the, they often talk about it in terms of feeling as though they were able to be more creative in our classes than they've ever been.

Student empowerment

In addition to multimodality providing students opportunities to enjoy their FYW coursework, multimodality also gives students a sense of empowerment and recognizing their own strengths. Because assessment in most academic settings is embedded in racism and

standardized English, multimodal assignments give students opportunities to engage in a new way. Kourtney noted:

> Multimodality also gives students who maybe struggle with alphabetic writing a chance to shine and they often do, and then they feel empowered. They realize, "Oh, I am rhetorically skilled. And now I can go back and apply what I learned in a digital space or other kinds of multimodal spaces or projects. And I can take what I now know where my strengths there and think about how to make them my strengths when I'm writing an essay or writing a blog or something like that." So I think it's necessary because that's the future and really the present, but also because it gives students an opportunity to see their strengths in a different way, in a way that maybe they're more likely to recognize them, because they don't have the same baggage that a lot of them have with writing. And they haven't been told that they're bad at multimodal.

Written English conveys for many students negative associations of evaluation and overall experiences. Multimodality can provide opportunities of student empowerment to recognize their strengths through a new composing practice.

Student population

Another participant, Nick, described their public doctoral-granting institution's student population. When adding the lens of antiracism to analyze this response, a focus is on the way the WPA evaluates student preparation while recognizing the institution's own neglect of diverse students:

> I would describe it as high achieving. Students have done well in high school by the standards of their high school, which means, you know, in this era, they're good at taking tests. They're good at getting their work done. They're, they're diligent folks, um, we're less diverse than our state. And that's true, pretty much across every demographic we're not as socioeconomically diverse as the state, we're not as ethnically or racially diverse as the state. So it's a pretty white institution. get some, you know, they've all been high achieving in their high school, some of them continue with that sort of work ethic.

Nick continued by comparing their current institution's student population with their form institution's student population.

> One thing that I was really struck by is pretty overwhelmingly standard written/standard white English, in terms of their own background. So at my previous institution, I definitely encountered a lot more sort of outside of the norm of standard written English

> issues in writing, because that's the demographic we drew upon for students. So again, you know, anybody who's familiar with these things will know that that doesn't mean they're bad writers, it means they're writing in very non-standard ways. And so you have those tough issues of how much are you going to push people towards the standard? How much do you honor their home? dialect if you can call it a dialect? And, you know, how do we how do we balance those tensions?

Language in this response highlighted by the lens of antiracism includes "standard White English," "outside of the norm of standard written English issues," even the use of the verb "push people towards the standard" and the noticing of that tension between pushing and honoring. Kourtney, WPA of a public doctoral-granting university in the southeastern U.S., stated:

> I guess probably by United States standards, we're fairly diverse, but for our institution it's almost like a flip of the actual population of the city. So all the city it's a majority black city, I think about 68% is black. But our student population is closer I think to 30% black, so that's problematic in a lot of ways.

This WPA recognizes the problematic demographics of their institution; although on paper the university may seem to have a diverse student population, the total numbers are problematic considering the city's population. Reflections like this raise further reveal the lack of systemic change in academia overall.

Connecting with communities outside of academia

Further participants shared how multimodality has provided ways to explore more activism within the classroom setting. Greg states:

> Looking at it, though at the sort of digital, the larger conversation about digital activism, and digital civic participation has also kind of informed how I see this. We have reshaped our entire composition program around local community. For us, I mean, the community and the multimodality are just sort of inseparable. And so as a rhetorician that opens you up to teach all this great stuff, for instance. So when students all of a sudden are putting images of people or video of people from the community, for instance, it not only enables us to teach them about informed consent, but it enables us to teach them about rhetorical ethics, how are you representing that person in a frame? And what are the composing choices that you're making that make that person be shown in a light that they may not want to be shown?

Multimodality provides avenues for students to connect with communities they are a part of and connect the typically isolated academic focus into other contexts within local communities.

Risk

Some participants shared that multimodality provides an avenue for not only students but faculty members to take risks. The ability to provide an environment where students of all backgrounds feel comfortable in taking risks is antiracist because of the commitment to giving space for vulnerability. Before racist policies begin, racist ideas are put in place (Kendi, 2019). Asking some students to be vulnerable by bringing in their home communities while students who have experience with Standard American English can choose to opt out of vulnerability contributes to the larger idea of racial inequities. This idea of risk taking extends beyond students and also into faculty. Because FYW faculty are already in vulnerable positions with contingent contracts and overwhelming workloads, welcoming risk in a way where they feel supported is also antiracist. As one participant, Linda, who works at a public Master's-granting institution serving 400 students in FYW per semester, shared:

> That's been my big thing talking about risk with faculty, if we say we want them to take risks, what we have to recognize is that means they're not going to do it well. And we can't grade them based...my department chair, she wants them to take risks, she loves risks, when the risks pay off. And you have to grade the risk that the student takes that flops with just as much excitement and encouragement as we do as the student whose risk happens to pay off.

Assessment

In addition to providing opportunities for students and faculty to choose to take risks, the way we as writing instructors respond to these risks is also crucial. Linda explained:

> Students have been given very narrow constraints that they think are acceptable for writing and they've been beaten with grade sticks every time they veer outside of those constraints. And so, they're good people, they're good students, they want to please. And so they do the things they think will please the teacher, little do they know that's the opposite of what I want. And so it takes a lot of coaxing to get them to try..a lot of completion grades, I do course contracts.

Encouraging students to step outside of traditional academic norms and expectations of "good writing" allows another opportunity to implement more antiracist policies and approaches within the FYW classroom.

Overall values coding results

Results from interviews revealed a pattern that separates the positive value and negative value associations with multimodality. Participants who have experience with multimodal assignments and have seen them play out in classrooms, even if not their own, feel more positively towards multimodal learning. The negative and mixed values stem from resisting and questioning the role of multimodality within writing classes. Participants feel there are so many constraints already within first-year writing, including faculty perceptions and student need, therefore, multimodality cannot be prioritized within programmatic curricula.

Analyzing responses based on antiracism revealed themes of student need, student enjoyment, student population, community engagement, and vulnerability. When using language surrounding the idea of empowering students instead of resolving student approaches, antiracism is involved. The approaches to evaluating, creating, and workshopping writing all have roots in silencing minority students (Chavez, 2021, p. 10).

How Participants' Institutional Context Influenced Their Valuing of Multimodality

Institutional context did play a role in the differing responses, specifically in the values and implementation between WPAs from doctoral universities and associate's colleges. The original research question asked if institutional context did play a significant role in WPA perceptions towards the "definition, value, and usefulness" or multimodality. The responses from the four interviews with WPAs from associate's colleges revealed insight into the context where the majority of first-year writing occurs. The strains of limited resources and labor conditions led

to less implementation of multimodality within first-year writing programs at associate's colleges. As Kim responded,

> I think that we are incredibly adept at community colleges of adapting and being flexible. The negative with that is that there are so many things we're constantly adapting to. Most faculty at larger institutions don't have the load that we do, in addition to the fact that we still have committee responsibilities and departments and a number of people are working on advanced degrees or still trying to do some writing as well. So I think that at a bigger institution you can say, "Okay this is what we are going to do." And with us at our school we are working at putting out all kinds of fires and so forth, and so maybe there's less time and energy to saying, "Okay, this is one issue that we all can get around with and that we all should move towards with multimodality."

Multimodality is not a top priority for many associate's colleges because there is already so much work to be done, according to these WPAs. As Bob noted of their own associate's college context:

> Two-year schools are inherently less political than four-year schools. It's like the difference between mayors and presidents. We have a lot of work to do. We have to fill potholes and make sure the garbage gets picked up. I can't spend my energy arguing with my colleagues about composition theory. We all have too much to do.

The perception from this WPA is that associate's colleges have an abundance of daily tasks and cannot stop to reflect on the larger theoretical possibilities, including multimodality.

Ben, also at an associate's college context, summed up the difference between associate's college and four-year universities in terms of student background, especially in terms of what assignments they typically follow:

> Their (students at larger universities) exposure to multimodalities and writing, and the creation of their own voice is so much more different than students who come to the community college, and I really don't want to give the impression that our students aren't any less literate, or ready. It's just that their exposure to what it means to write in college or what it means to write in school has often been in this very confined restrained space of, write a paper.

Previous experiences differ among students of associate's colleges and four-year universities, and can limit students' interpretation of what "writing" includes.

When asked about the variations in response between those at associate's colleges versus other institutional contexts, Ben explained that in order to make sweeping programmatic changes, time is needed for faculty to reflect on their pedagogical approaches. For associate's colleges especially, that time is limited:

> If I think about my colleagues and what they're trying to teach, we are so busy. It's about the ability to think critically about what you're teaching, and the time to reflect on that while you're also doing all the shared governance work and all the other work and of course teaching a very heavy load...We don't have a lot of ability to think creatively about changing up our curriculum.

A further thread that came up in some interviews with associate's college WPAs was the lack of disconnect and understanding regarding first-year writing programs within associate's college. While the amount of sections of first-year writing are offered more at two-year colleges than any other context, the associate's college WPAs shared a feeling of their institutional context being neglected by the writing field at large. The perspectives of these associate's college WPAs highlighted the differences between their programs and those at larger research institutions, beginning with Ben: "It is so much easier at research one institutions to do that work. Money does play a role there." In contrast, WPAs at a doctoral granting institution noted the difficulty in making programmatic changes at a larger institution. Peyton, whose public doctoral university serves 1,500 FYW students per semester stated: "In a large program, there are limits to what you can accomplish." Liam, WPA at a public doctoral university serving 5,000 FYW students per semester, explained: "This is where we get into political stuff; I've always told people, being a writing administrator is gonna be a hell of a lot easier at a smaller school than a larger school."

Based off of these interviews, there is a stark comparison among WPAs regarding levels of difficulty in making programmatic changes, including multimodality, based on institutional context. And, interestingly enough, WPAs feel that it is easier to make changes in program sizes

differing from their own. Institutional context was discussed 30.92% out of all interviews among participants representing associate's college, whereas institutional context was only mentioned 2.78% and 8.73% by participants representing doctoral and master's universities, respectively. The awareness of one's own context, and the limitations that brings, is on the forefront of the minds of associate's college WPAs. Discussions on changes made since taking on the WPA role were primarily within Master's universities at 34.8% and doctoral universities at 22.77%. This shows opportunities to reflect and address changes within the Master's and doctoral universities. Faculty make-up, including who comprises the first-year writing program, was more frequently addressed within doctoral universities at 27.76% and Master's universities at 14.76%, with 6.23% of associate's colleges.

How Participants Feel Towards Multimodal Implementation

Interview questions regarding the implementation of multimodality within first-year writing programs centered on the benefits and challenges of implementing multimodality, including topics such as student response, faculty response, support structures in place, and types of multimodal assignments included within the programs or individual classrooms. The overarching goal of this section is to highlight participants' feelings towards the integration of multimodality (or lack thereof). Participants in all three Carnegie classification categories--doctoral, Master's, and associate's colleges, shared the feeling that assessment was not a major concern or reason behind not including multimodality within programs.

Sample multimodal projects

The original research question sought to discover tangible examples of what multimodal projects looked like. One first-year writing program housed at a public doctoral university with a

large public health major, requires programmatic multimodal implementation. One project example is a media campaign, as explained by Greg:

> I will have them conduct academic research for an audience that they target here in the community. So an example would be, have a group of students working on a case study that's on undocumented immigrant healthcare. So, A. Hospital used to treat people without citizenship documents, but they no longer do that. So a group might for instance, look at the history of that. So every project is individual, but they bring it together as part of an overall argument designed to persuade that audience. Then as they're doing that, they are working together to create a media campaign that is designed to target A. Hospital.

Greg views this project as a way to connect students with the communities around them. Through this media campaign, students make choices from design of advertisements and social media postings, while working on rhetorical strategies to best reach their target audience.

A further example of a non-digital approach comes from another doctoral university whose first-year writing program also requires multimodality as a program-wide implementation. Alan stated: "If you want to think of multimodality a little broader than just digital literacies, there are quite a few teachers who do literacy narratives and give students the option of doing a graphic novel kind of thing, cartoons."

Another public doctoral first-year writing program that requires multimodality includes an oral element of presentation, based on the Japanese method of storytelling called Pecha Kucha, which gives presenters 20 seconds for each slide, as explained by Ken:

> Students create a presentation that purposefully blends text with images. That takes for an assumption that the audience doesn't know anything about the topic, whatever it is that you're going to be talking about, which of course, changes your expectations for the purpose of a lot of your writing because it's like, you not only need to make the point that you want to make, but you also need to sort of convince an audience that the whole thing is worthwhile.

The program creates a public event where students can showcase their skills to a real audience.

Even for programs that do not require multimodal assignments, WPAs shared some examples they have incorporated in their own classrooms or have heard of fellow faculty

incorporating. Helen, who directs a program housed in First-Year/General Studies, shared examples such as mixed tapes, children's books, paintings, digital poems, and podcasts that engaged community members.

One program, which does not require programmatic multimodal implementation, mentioned limits to what is acceptable for multimodal projects. Bob explained:

> This is our joke we always come back to, because somebody showed it to us at a presentation where somebody in some composition class had knitted a purse. So it was a knit purse and it said, "Bitch," in cursive letters with glitter and that was her end of term composition about gender. So that always becomes our straw man for like no purses or knitting.

This same program does offer a multimodal component:

> We have an art gallery on campus, small, one-room art gallery. So every term, we make our developmental students go to the art gallery, photograph the work, and then write a review of the current show, and they have to integrate the pictures

Bob reveals feelings, both personal as well as programmatic, for what approaches are relevant to multimodal projects for students.

Student response to multimodal assignments

For those programs who do implement some form of multimodal assignments, whether as a program requirement or based on individual instructor choices, the interview asked how students responded to multimodal assignments. Greg stated:

> Overall students really like multimodal projects. I mean, the student surveys that we've conducted, which have been about the students' experience in the overall course, those projects are I mean, the the, they often talk about it in terms of feeling as though they were able to be more creative in our classes than they've ever been.

Of course student response has variation, and some of their dispositions towards multimodality are from previous experiences, as exemplified by Jennie, WPA of a private Master's granting institution serving 1,780 FYW students a semester:

> So sometimes it's like, "Wow, I have freedom to choose how I'm creating, like what I'm creating and how I'm creating it. This is scary, just tell me what to do." And then on the

> other hand, there are students who are like, "Yes, I get to make a video, this is what I love to do." And I would say there tend to be more students in the positive side

Some of the variation in student reception comes from the way the multimodal project is framed by the instructor. As explained by Ben:

> If you ask students to do some sort of creative production, and you just ask them to do it without any kind of guidance or support within that space then you know they are going to be very resistant. But if they are doing it under conditions where they feel empowered, and they feel they have agency within that moment to actually create something, and not be judged on the value of their creation, I think they're very responsive.

While answers were mostly positive regarding student response, some answers highlighted students struggling with these assignments or doubting their validity. As Alan stated:

> They're not motivated enough to try it, and in my discussions about students about it, what they've always told me is, "Yeah, I'd like to do this and I find it very appealing, but it seemed more time consuming than the print option, and in my other classes all I do is write essays, so I felt like the academic research article option, the print literacy genre option, would be more practical for what I need to learn right now.

Another factor regarding student response to multimodal assignments is access. As Sarai noted:

> We have a very large population of students who placed into developmental writing, and the students in the lower levels responded, pretty consistently, that they had a lot less experience using technology that would require them to create things or to edit things. The threshold for kind of working through those difficulties combined with not a lot of really robust resources on campus in terms of students who might have a technical question that got a lot of pushback.

Lack of support, or even the feeling of a possible lack of support, can lead to student and faculty stress regarding multimodal assignments. Because first-year writing faculty are already so overworked with high course loads, they are not able to individually teach each student the specific software or technological requirements asked of them by multimodal projects. Therefore, participant responses show on-campus support structures are crucial in making sure students and faculty do not feel overwhelmed or discouraged.

WPAs' Perception of Support Regarding Multimodal Projects

Programs with the most support for faculty come from doctoral granting institutions. As Greg stated:

> We're going to have to find ways to support faculty that offer them incentives, given how that they're overworked already and underpaid, to engage. So we for instance, like we have a group of four faculty members who are Adobe Creative craft cloud fellows, and they will be running a paid training for our instructors over the summer. So we have a permit, we have a grant from the university that gives them a stipend.

Because this program prioritizes multimodality and requires it within program outcomes, they are more able to encourage faculty buy-in and use resources to financially support faculty who invest in learning new programs.

Even without financial resources, Helen highlights how their faculty can find support through sample assignments and an on-campus learning design center.

> Our program has several different places where faculty can go and look at assignments. So sharing the assignments is pretty easy, and we have a very good center for learning design that would help faculty learn how to design an assignment or how to do that kind of work themselves.

When requiring faculty to incorporate multimodality, support is a key aspect of assuring positive faculty response.

Lack of support with multimodal projects

While some institutions have supportive measures in place for faculty incorporating multimodality, others do not. As Kim stated, "They (faculty) have nowhere to turn for support other than me and the internet." Other WPAs, such as Sarai located at a private Master's granting institution, discuss how the lack of support structures available inhibits faculty from pursuing multimodal assignments: "I've seen instructors who have tried to experiment with multimodality, and it's been a problem, not because people don't value multimodality, but because there's not enough professional development, to really get into how to do it as well."

While universities are expanding resources available in terms of teaching online, especially through the COVID-19 pandemic, there is still a lack of resources available for multimodal curriculum. As Greg stated: “There's a lot out there about teaching online, but teaching in kind of emerging genres, teaching multimodality..I'm always struck by the fact that there's very little out there in terms of faculty development on a lot of campuses.” This lack of support can lead faculty to feel isolated and uncomfortable trying new multimodal assignments.

Rationale behind non-required multimodal implementation

Reasons behind not requiring a programmatic implementation of multimodality include asking the question: Where does the responsibility of teaching multimodality fall? Bill, whose FYW is housed in in School of Writing, Rhetoric, and Technical Communication, explained, “The issue for me is we have yet another department called media arts and design that does that as well. So, to me too it's sort of an issue of who covers it, and I don't have expertise in it.” Personal training and experiences come into play when administrators themselves may not feel qualified to require or train faculty on multimodality, especially when another department can. The question these administrators seem to ask is: If first-year writing is already dealing with issues of labor and prioritization of curriculum to cover, when many programs do not have WAC or WID, how can first-year writing add on multimodality?

An additional reason as to why program-wide implementation of multimodality is not required comes from the balancing of faculty within first-year writing, who bring a variety of experiences, backgrounds, and interests. Moving into conversations on multimodality is seen as a jump when WPAs already have such a diverse faculty with wide-ranging needs.

How Conversations Surrounding Multimodality Influence Participants' View of the Field of Writing Studies

Conversations regarding multimodality highlight the doubts that those within the field of first-year writing carry. Alan summed up the root of first-year writing's problems:

> I feel like almost every problem that has to do with first year composition, almost every problem about, "What should first year composition be? What should we teach? What should be the focus? What kind of assignments should we give? What should be our learning outcomes?" So much of our problems and our struggles boil down to this absolute dumb thing.

Pairing the conditions of our field overall along with institutional context serves to be a further concern, as explained by Shelia of their associate's college context, "That's the issue for so many in our field, especially two-year colleges. Labor conditions are crap for many instructors and to get them to do anything, you're asking them to donate time and energy and that's not something many have available."

Keith, whose FYW is housed in General Education, explained the need for stability in order to make sufficient changes to curriculum and assignments:

> So program-wide, it's partly that older sector but it's also just the constant turn-over with the part-time employees. One person Master's it and gets a great assignment going and they're gone. And then here comes a new person. It's not bad, I enjoy teaching it, but it would be nice to have some stability.

As with most issues within first-year writing, money and time create limitations. One participant, who has now served as the WPA for five years, is their institution's first writing specialist and WPA. Their program does not rely heavily on adjunct labor, typically having one-two sections each semester taught by an adjunct. Linda, whose program is housed in English, explained:

> We need more money and more time. That's what we need. Our faculty teach either 4:4 or 5:5. Our department chair teaches a 3:3, I teach a 3:3. We need course releases. If we had a round of course releases for the team, then I think we could do all kinds of things. It's not that my faculty are unwilling, it's that they are overwhelmed.

On top of these lack of resources, there is already a misconception of what the field of first-year writing does, serves, and includes. For some, these doubts begin to become absorbed by the WPA's own beliefs. As Nick stated:

> I worry about multimodality being perceived as trendy... whether they are the public or other members of the university community. I worry that in focusing on it, we are not finding the most concrete ways to identify what it is we do for students. So I worry 1. Is it effective? And I worry...if it's effective..if it is, can we communicate that to other people outside of our discipline in ways that they will appreciate. So I think we need a much better way of explaining the value of multimodality. Because if I'm not totally convinced, what chance do we have of convincing the people who decide how we live and die?

Nick reflects a feeling of doubt for first-year writing's purpose and how multimodality will be perceived by others as unnecessary.

Summary

First-year writing programs that do specifically reference multimodality within their programmatic outcomes typically build off the WPA program outcomes as a model. Those who do not reference multimodality within outcomes primarily do so because of retaining teacher agency and empowerment in choice. Furthermore, interviews highlighted the range of definitions and interpretations of the term "multimodality." Most WPAs saw a positive value in multimodality, so their own value of multimodality was not typically a reason for the lack of multimodal implementation in their programs. Rather, limitations such as the theme of ethical labor emerged, highlighting discrepancies among institutional contexts. These limitations revealed larger issues involved in first-year writing, such as lack of time (one or two course sequence), lack of connection to outside courses, and the labor conditions of faculty primary working within first-year writing (made up largely of contingent faculty). Furthermore, WPAs were united in addressing that more on-campus support for multimodal projects is needed and improves both faculty and students' responses towards multimodal curriculum.

Chapter Six delves further into these concepts, connecting the survey and interview results in order to better answer the original research questions in the context of this study.

"One huge thing that I learned about writing was that you can convey a point in many different ways. Whether it be a paper or a multimedia presentation like this, either way can be effective, it just depends on the audience that you are trying to reach with the information that you have." - Zeke

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to understand WPAs' perceptions, value, and implementation strategies involving multimodality. This research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What outcomes related to multimodality are used in writing programs? What do programmatic documents (missions statements, outcomes, other materials) say about the program goals?
2. What perceptions do WPAs have regarding the definition, usefulness, and value of multimodality? Do these perceptions shift based on the WPA's institutional context (Doctoral Universities versus Associate's Colleges-as named in the Carnegie classifications)?
3. What value do WPAs place on incorporating multimodal outcomes into their programs, and what does that incorporation look like on the ground level, including curriculum, training of staff, technological support and accessibility, evaluation, assessment?

The following sections will provide an overview of why conversations surrounding multimodality and first-year writing deserve attention, as well as analyze survey data, interview data using the theoretical frameworks of antiracism and utilitarianism as lenses, compare surveys and interview results, and finally compare the approaches and results of this study with the 2006 study.

Findings

The findings of this study revealed that WPAs positively value multimodal composition. They perceive it as a concept that is relevant to the 21st century, incorporating students' backgrounds and experiences outside of the classroom while meeting the demands for

technological literacy and rhetorical knowledge required by future coursework and non-academic settings, such as the workforce, community, and civic engagement. They find multimodality to encourage student adaptability, audience and genre awareness, creativity, critical thinking, flexibility, metacognition, student empowerment, engagement, and freedom, transfer, and risk-taking.

Based on WPAs' own observations and measures such as follow-up interviews and surveys, students' response to multimodal assignments is mixed to positive. Students show apprehension, resistance, or lack of motivation at first, since most students have associated traditional essays as the most valued and expected form of expression in academic settings. However, with proper assignment framing and resource support, students respond well, feeling more creative, engaged, and passionate.

WPAs find the most challenging aspects of multimodal integration to stem from being overwhelmed by so many topics already expected to be covered within first-year writing curriculum, all while working with underpaid, overworked, primarily contingent faculty with little stability in retention from year to year. The findings suggest that there is such a range of first-year writing curriculum and multimodality, with 25 out of 57 survey respondents answering that their program did not require programmatic implementation of multimodality. All 25 of those participants indicated that teachers are allowed to incorporate multimodality on an individual basis. However, because of limited resources, support structures, and training or exposure to multimodal composition, many teachers are limited in their ability to incorporate such multimodal features.

Although WPAs primarily value multimodality, they think fellow colleagues do not highly value multimodality and view its implementation as a threat to writing, while also

showing discomfort in learning new assignments and softwares. Further challenges include problems that have remained at the root of first-year writing since its creation, including outside perception of first-year writing as a service course, with the expectation from institutional stakeholders and other departments to "fix" student writing. In most cases, the challenges of multimodal implementation overtake the benefits and discourage multimodal implementation.

WPAs also feel unconfident with their own interpretations of multimodality as a definition, and feel the term "multimodal" is nebulous. While scholarly discussions on multimodality have occurred for over two decades, there is still confusion and doubt as to how to define and explain it to fellow faculty.

Incorporating Antiracist and Utilitarianism Frameworks

To further analyze participants' qualitative responses, this section will move from not only answering the research questions this study sought after but also applying the lenses of antiracism and utilitarianism to discover even deeper implications. These two frameworks can be used to interpret programmatic outcomes and goals. These frameworks further reveal the need to deconstruct our own biases to create a cultural shift in FYW programs in terms of standards that are accepted and valued.

Antiracism leads to a broadening of classroom participation from all members, not only those typically included in academia. Assessment practices are inherently racist, focusing on this Standard American English (Kendi, 2019). Multimodality works as a partnership to committing to antiracist assessment practices by giving students a voice to work with the instructor in evaluating the work through the use of contract grading and other reflective components. Multimodality also allows more opportunity for community engagement, giving students the space to incorporate their home communities, home languages, and backgrounds into academic

assignments featuring multimodality. Multimodality allows students to direct their focus to more diverse audiences outside of traditional academic or formal audience members. Students can shift their use of language, tone, incorporation of images and layering of other modes outside of standard alphabetic text to consider their audience more fully, and in turn, diversify their audience. As some participants noted, while students can be leery about multimodal assignments initially, once they begin approaching them, they find more enjoyment in terms of reaching a wider array of audience and expanding their readership to "real audience members" outside of only their instructor or academic readers.

The additional theoretical framework utilized in this study, utilitarianism, is more problematic in terms of inherent goal of practically meeting certain needs. While most FYW programs have needs addressing students' needs in the future, such as future academic courses and their careers, this model of utility can be used to force racist policy because it neglects minority students.

Multimodality also serves as an avenue to incorporate knowledge excluded or devalued within the field of academia and Western culture at large, including storytelling, maker spaces, and more. According to Lockett, Ruiz, Sanchez, & Carter (2021) "a significant body of antiracist scholarship has emerged in our discipline that opens up the possibility for researchers to resist academic discourses and education policies that normalize whiteness by excluding knowledge created by diasporic and/or indigenous communities" (p. 11).

Situating the Multimodal Conversation

To many in our field, conversations on multimodality are stale. Multimodal practices have existed for thousands of years, through indigenous rhetorics, material rhetorics, and cultural rhetorics (Arola & Wysocki, 2012). For Rhetoric/Composition, the shift of the notion of literacy

changed through the New London Group over two decades ago, and so entered the buzzword "multimodality." Since then, numerous articles, book chapters, and complete works have been released and conferences have centered around the theme of multimodality. The idea of creating a dissertation in 2020-2021 centering around multimodality, for some, may be dated, stale, or unnecessary. However, this study sought to fill a gap between the scholarly discussions on multimodality and the practical implementation specifically within the context of first-year writing.

While recent scholarship has focused on writing instructors' beliefs and pedagogies of multimodality (Tan & Matsuda, 2020), this is the first study, to my knowledge, that specifically focuses on the views and experiences of multimodality from the perspective of strictly writing program administrators in order to discover the "Why" behind the lack of program-wide implementation of multimodality. This was the leading exigence for the creation of the study's research questions, with the prospectus confirmed in February 2020. Yet another unexpected reason for this discussion revealed itself a month later, with the widespread knowledge of the COVID-19 pandemic, shifting classes to online platforms as we stayed at home to flatten the curve. The survey was released in May 2020 and interviews conducted from June-August 2020. Suddenly, multimodality's already lenient definition shifted once more to encompass a new pedagogical approach. As one participant described in an open text-box survey response: "Multimodality was an important term ten years ago when we were still trying to make people aware that rhetorics and writing were happening in multiple spaces of communication. Now, multimodality is just writing in a digital age--especially now with quarantine." Multimodality took on a new meaning, as discussions shifted to preparing faculty and students to online learning and digital writing. Language more prevalent through COVID-induced discussions was

echoed in other responses: “I think of multi-modal in terms of interactive, electronic-based course work or the creation of projects using different media. I think of multiple-modalities as options between online, synchronous online, hybrid, f2f, etc.”

This research incorporates the discussion of multimodality along with the position of the WPA, as it varies based on institutional context and resources. The position of a WPA is unique in that they are balancing the needs of multiple groups: students, parents, faculty, including graduate students, non-tenure track faculty, tenure-track faculty, adjuncts, institutional administrators, organizations such as the Council of Writing Program Administrators, and more. Many participants indicated the pressures of balancing expectations from all groups, while using a position of authority to build up others instead of creating demands. As Liam stated: “You've got this power and authority as a WPA; usually the power comes from helping leverage your authority, so people are empowered to do the work they do best. You have to be really careful about how you challenge people.” While WPAs are in administrative positions posed to make decisions for a wide range of people, empowerment rather than stating orders is a more useful approach. This mindset is a factor regarding the choice to require program implementation of multimodality. This quote showing the experience of one WPA is reflective of the overall themes in responses from all participants during this study.

I entered this study expecting the reason behind programs not requiring programmatic multimodality implementation to be primarily from the WPAs’ own value or personal experiences with multimodality. However, participants reflected this tension between the ideal writing program curriculum and balancing practical concerns. The WPA’s own disposition and approach is a factor influencing all aspects of the program, as mentioned by Roy:

> WPA's disposition with regard to this stuff, ends up having a domino effect. It plays out through the curriculum even through the curriculum materials. It especially plays out

> through TA training, TA education. How much does it influence instructors I think is mixed, but depends on how long and how attached they are.

While the dispositional approach of the WPA does play a role, this study reveals that many more factors prevent or lead to the implementation of multimodality, outweighing the WPAs' personal valuing of multimodality, as discussed in the following sections.

Discussion of Survey Results

Definition and associations

One of the goals of this study was to discover how WPAs perceive multimodality, through the definitions and associations they have towards multimodality as a concept. The survey allowed respondents to mark their level of agreement to a list of eight terms to record which ones had higher associations with multimodality. The responses showed associations for the following terms and total means of association agreements, in order of most associated to least associated: Visual Rhetoric (4.64), Digital Media (4.59), Digital Rhetoric (4.51), Modes (4.21), New Media (4.16), Multiliteracies (4.12), Material Rhetorics (3.89), and Social Media (3.81). This ranking of associations reveals that many WPAs still associate multimodality largely with digital media or digital rhetoric. Since 2009, Jody Shipka has warned about not conflating multimodal with digital---encouraging a more inclusive view of "texts" outside of computers. However, as referenced earlier, with COVID-19 changing the approaches to teaching and composing, this could also enhance the association with more digital media and digital rhetoric. Further associations participants included in the textbox include: multidisciplinary, interactive, electronic coursework, transfer, genre, rhetorical situations, kairos, fair use, civic, remediation, rhetorical velocity, repurposing, materiality, makerspaces, artifacts, rhetorical ecologies, circulation, kinesthetic learning, and design.

Associations did not differ between Master's and doctoral programs. The most significant differences in associations of terms came from Below Master's and doctoral, specifically with the terms New Media and Digital Media. For Digital Rhetoric, participants representing Below Master's institutions are less likely to associate the term with multimodality than both groups of doctoral and Master's. All three of these associations, New Media, Digital Media, and Digital Rhetoric, center around digital technologies. Out of the eight Below Master's survey participants, 75% hold a PhD or Master's degree in Literature, with the remaining two participants holding a PhD in Philosophy of Education and a PhD in Rhetoric/Composition. Additionally, 81% of doctoral participants hold a PhD in Rhetoric/Composition, with remaining participants holding degrees in Technical Writing, Linguistics, and Literature. This difference may stem from more beyond the WPA's own specialization and background, and more from the current environment that surrounds them; for instance, faculty make-up, student needs, and available resources.

Outcomes and programmatic documents

One of the study's primary research questions sought to discover how first-year writing programs positioned themselves in terms of priorities, especially in regards to multimodal use, for all stakeholders: faculty members within the program, students, university administrators, and parents. Based on responses from the surveys, the materials that had the most reference to multimodality were those shared internally in the writing program, including sample assignments and syllabi. Program websites, which reach more external stakeholders such as parents or potential students, had the least reference to multimodality. This approach makes sense in terms of engaging the audience members. Multimodality as a term itself has brought about confusion within members of our field, including WPA participants from this study. Referencing the term without much description or context or more public-facing materials, such as websites, could

lead to further confusion. For example Kourtney included explicit reference to multimodality within program assignment documents: “Many arguments in the public discourse are presented in multimodal formats—a mixture of linguistic text, photos, graphs, sound, and videos.” However, the first-year writing program website did not explicitly use the term “multimodal” but instead broke down aspects of multimodality by illustrating course outcomes, using terms such as “composing practices” and “digital writing technologies,” referring to the concept of multimodal composing.

One of the final survey questions asked participants to upload first-year writing program sample materials that utilize multimodality in some form, including assignments, first-year writing program training or workshop materials, or individual instructor samples. The question sought to allow freedom of choice for the participant to include what materials they found relevant. Some documents did not specifically reference “multimodality” but instead address terms such as: “genre”; “medium”; “new media”; “remixed project” and “multimedia.” One project example entitled “Radical Revision Assignment” did not use the term multimodal, but included examples of assignments.

Other sample assignments did explicitly reference the term multimodal, some even in the title of the assignment itself, for example “Multimodal Campaign Project.” Others included blurbs that defined or provided examples referencing multimodality. Others gave instructions on shifting mindsets to include a multimodal framework: “You should think about how you could use multimodal composing strategies (i.e. videos, visuals, audio, websites) and digital technologies to create a Remix project.” Some even went so far as to include a relevant definition: “Students will learn how to apply rhetorical knowledge to create, interpret, and evaluate multimodal texts. Multimodal texts are defined as those that use multiple modes of

expression like writing, image, gesture, speech, movement, sound and are typically facilitated by digital technology." These responses help answer the study's initial question of addressing what programmatic documents say about multimodality. Ultimately the incorporation of the term multimodality within assignments varies but is primarily referencing examples of what multimodal assignments may look like.

Difference in Needs Based on Carnegie Classification of Institution

The survey asked for factors that contributed to the program decision behind not incorporating multimodality program-wide: including choices: time, resources, training, funding, and departmental interest. Based on survey responses, there was no difference in needs for multimodal implementation based on the institutional context. However, perceptions of multimodality, including priority, value, and ability to strengthen programs, differ by Carnegie classification. Responses from Below Master's institutions revealed that multimodality is less of a priority, multimodality's value is lower, and the belief that "multimodality strengthens course outcomes" is lower. While overall participants value multimodality, responses indicate the value is not as high for stakeholders or departments of their institutions, thus limiting decisions and changes made. WPAs perceive that other members of their institutions do not value multimodality as much as WPAs do or would like.

Overall Value of Multimodality

Overall, participants agree that multimodality strengthens and adds value to first-year writing programs. Participants overall agree that multimodality enhances students' composing skills and is well-received by students. However, participants indicate less agreement with the statements that multimodality is a priority for their own teaching and multimodality is well-received by instructors.

As this chapter has shown, there are significant differences in perceiving, implementing, and valuing multimodality from WPAs. These responses reveal a stark contrast between WPAs' beliefs and values versus actual implementation and curriculum changes reflecting those beliefs. This comes back to discussions surrounding the field of first-year writing as a whole, that expectations for first-year writing are too numbered, with expectations from stakeholders to introduce students to the academic discourse community and improve their research and writing skills. While expectations are increasing, resources and support for first-year writing is dwindling, with increased reliance on non-contingent staff and less funding.

Discussion of Interview Results

The interviews revealed six major themes highlighted by participants. The first theme focuses on programmatic outcomes and program goals, and how multimodality is a strong foundation for outcomes or not included at all. The second theme is on defining multimodality as a term, and the problems that emerge from its labeling. The third theme centers on the WPAs' valuing of multimodality. The fourth theme includes steps for implementing multimodality, as well as hindrances in terms of support structures. The fifth theme discusses institutional context and how that context affects choices of multimodal implementation. The final theme centers around larger field concerns that this study resulted in, in terms of the responsibilities of first-year writing.

Definition of multimodality

Perhaps one of the most striking aspects of asking participants to define multimodality at the beginning of the survey was the immediate response of uncertainty, doubt, or fear that they would be "wrong." Many participants shared feelings of nervousness or uncertainty when discussing how they interpret multimodality, revealing a lack of discussion about multimodality

form this population in particular. The multiple meanings and interpretations shared by WPAs connects to the different multimodal literacy approaches shared in Tan & Matsuda's piece (2020). I could not help but reflect on how if instructors and WPAs felt nervous discussing the term's meaning, how could we expect students or fellow instructors to feel comfortable creating multimodal assignments? Based on these participant responses, more discussion is needed surrounding the term multimodality and its wide-range of interpretations and application.

While survey responses indicated a difference of multimodal associations based on institutional context, interviews highlighted participants discussing the impact their own backgrounds made on the associations. Overall WPAs agree multimodality involves multiple modes and extends beyond our typical expectations of writing and composing. The perception that WPAs have regarding multimodal's definition is that the term can be confusing and difficult to articulate a common theme for fellow colleagues. Already so much energy is poured into creating a clear perception of what first-year writing is, across the university and among other stakeholders. Adding the layer of multimodal's nebulous definition only further complicates other perceptions of what first-year writing does. It seems that while scholarship and conferences have continued to incorporate multimodality within conversations, the field of first-year writing would do well to begin at a more foundational level with defining the term: what is it? What is included under the umbrella of *multimodal?* The feeling I took away from many interviews is that WPAs, from newly minted to seasoned veterans, felt almost ashamed in asking for clarification about the term and feel almost a sense of pressure to be much further along in their interpretation as well as implementation level than is actually realistic.

Outcomes and programmatic documents

In order to answer the leading research question, "What outcomes related to multimodality are used in writing programs?", interviews revealed that outcomes involving multimodality addressed levels of the writing/composing process and targeting audience members. As discussed in Chapter Five, programmatic outcomes involving multimodality had three basic approaches: directly incorporating multimodal-intentional outcomes, having no multimodal language, and finally outcomes that did explicitly address multimodality but that acknowledge aspects of multimodality, such as composing process, showing the program's implementation of multimodality as a works-in-progress. Participants varied in feelings towards specifically referencing multimodality in outcome statements; some WPAs felt that including a multimodal reference in programmatic outcomes created a common goal for instructors to work towards. Other WPAs felt that naming multimodality in outcomes added an additional labor concern for already overworked faculty, especially contingent faculty, and created a further topic to cover when first-year writing is already limited in addressing all priorities. These feelings reveal the importance of removing pressure on first-year writing contexts to cover all areas of writing and to encourage writing across the curriculum and continued exposure to writing/composing across disciplines and courses.

Overall Value of Multimodality

The leading research questions of this study sought answers to three areas: perception, value, and implementation of multimodality. Entering the study, I hypothesized that the problem would lie in the overall valuing of multimodality. From anecdotal experience, I thought many WPAs might find multimodality to be a distraction away from "real writing work." However, I was surprised to discover this was not the case. Overwhelmingly participants placed a positive

value on multimodality, for preparing students to integrate into society as citizens and our workforce, for building skills that transfer into other academic contexts and courses, and for making English classes relevant and creative in a fresh approach.

Of the three Carnegie classifications labeled in this study: Doctoral, Master's, and Below Master's, Below Master's participants held the most negative value with multimodality. This stemmed mostly from discussions of how neglected associate college faculty feel regarding basic support. All first-year writing programs deal with prioritizing curriculum, as there are so many options of what to cover, and so many outside voices shouting what they find more important (typically very different than what actual faculty and administrators in first-year writing find--for example, “fixing” students’ grammatical errors). However, associate college administrators feel this pressure at an even higher level. Out of 26 interview participants, 21 indicated they had a positive association with multimodality, four shared mixed responses to the value of multimodality, and one participant claimed more negative value of multimodality. This participant represents the Below Master's category, and noted they feel squeezing in multimodality, another area to cover in first-year writing, de-emphasizes the focus on writing even more.

In terms of reasons behind more of a mixed response to the value of multimodality, most participants highlighted their own unfamiliarity or discomfort, as they have not had many personal experiences with multimodality.

Institutional Context Differences

Institutional context did play a role in the differing responses, specifically in the values and implementation between WPAs from doctoral universities and associate’s colleges. Implementing multimodality was hindered specifically by labor conditions and availability of

resources to support not only students but faculty creating new curriculum. Associate college participants indicated that because their faculty are so entrenched in teaching, multiple sections across multiple institutions typically, they do not have time to reflect on the bigger picture, on curriculum changes or theoretical developments.

These responses revealed a tension between associate college administrators and other programs, such as Master's and doctoral institutions. Associate college participants indicated that doctoral institutions have more resources, money, graduate students, and more to draw on in order to provide an incentive to stay up-to-date on curriculum and try new changes. These conversations revealed a thread I did not anticipate finding but want to continue pursuing: forming authentic connections among members of all first-year writing programs. With associate colleges holding such a large percentage of students in first-year writing courses, the field cannot neglect the important work they are doing and seek to understand their problems. Although I was purposeful from the beginning to include a variety of contexts, including Below Master's institutions, these disparities were shown in minor parts of my survey that came across as neglecting this context, such as indicating participants mark their area of specialization for their doctoral degree (not needed for faculty at associate's colleges). As one participant indicated, if I as a graduate student am not aware of associate's college writing programs while at Tennessee, the state which first launched the Tennessee Promise to create free community college tuition for all residents, then there is not a lot of hope for other graduate students to be trained in these issues either.

Multimodal Implementation

The final leading research question of the study asked: "What does multimodal incorporation look like on the ground level, including curriculum, training of staff, technological

support and accessibility, evaluation, assessment?" My initial thoughts were that there would be more discussion on evaluation and assessment of multimodal projects as a limiting factor. However, this was not the case, as participants in all three Carnegie classification categories--doctoral, Master's, and associate's colleges, held more positive associations of assessment than negative or mixed responses.

Training of staff was the most frequently discussed theme in regards to limiting implementation. Doctoral programs held the most support for faculty, through departmental trainings, on-campus resources such as technology center, and even opportunities for paid professional development opportunities. This discussion brought about the problem that while most administrators do value multimodality, programs do not have the room or money to compensate instructors for learning new forms of teaching, which therefore limits administrators in implementing a multimodal curriculum requirement program-wide. It becomes an ethical dilemma, as many WPAs referenced in their interviews. They are caught between the tension of improving their curriculum while balancing faculty labor constraints.

Responsibilities of First-Year Writing

Perhaps the most overwhelming yet enriching aspect of this research was listening to administrators discuss some of their own doubts about an identity crisis the participants perceive within our field. Because we must pour so much energy into proving our relevancy, among those in our own institutions, as well as parents and students, we have inadvertently started to doubt our purpose, and even our importance, as well. What is it that we do so well? The last few months have revealed even more reasons why learning critical thinking and research skills are crucial for our democracy, but it can be easy to forget when you are constantly being pulled from different directions.

Comparing Survey and Interview Results

A total of 57 participants completed the survey, and a total of 26 participants voluntarily participated in follow-up interviews. Comparing data from both methods of collection reveals larger trends and patterns. The survey results revealed there was no significant difference between WPAs' perceived resource needs (time, resources, training, funding, and departmental interest) between Carnegie classifications. The overall greatest needs stated by WPAs from all Carnegie classifications included training staff and more examples of multimodal assignments. However, interviews revealed that institutional context did play a role in the differing responses, specifically in the values and implementation between WPAs from doctoral universities and associate's colleges, more negatively affecting those from associate's colleges. Surveys revealed that multimodality was less of a priority for WPAs at associate's colleges, which remained true in interviews with four associate college WPAs.

Connection to 2006 Study

Differences between the 2006 study and this study

The exigence for this study stemmed from the amount of time that had passed between a study in 2006 that sought how multimodality was being implemented in writing programs. My study had several differences in structure, research questions, and participants. While the original 2006 study asked a variety of participants, from graduate students to instructors to administrators, this study focuses solely from the perspective of writing program administrators. Because WPAs manage so many expectations and roles within their programs, they can elaborate more on the program-wide choices and what contributed towards those. However, I find it important to redirect attention back to the 2006 study in order to compare and find areas of overlap.

While the 2006 study sought to discover how respondents define multimodality, this study moves beyond definition to discover how WPAs value multimodality and implement it within their respective programs. In 2006, 7% of respondents stated that multimodality is solely reliant on digital technology, while this study found that a 64% of respondents "strongly agree" with the association of digital media with multimodality.

The 2006 study was designed to identify how individual teachers and Composition programs were integrating multimodality in writing classes. This survey consisted of 141 total questions and sought responses from a range of participants—66% indicating they were tenure or tenure-track faculty, 11% indicating they were graduate students, and 2% indicating they were non-tenure track. In total, 5% of respondents taught at four-year institutions, 77% in programs granting Master's or doctoral degrees, and 5% at two-year institutions.

For this current study, a survey was conducted in addition to voluntary interviews. The survey consisted of 67 questions, mostly Likert scale. Participants had to identify as writing program administrators in order to complete the survey, differing from the 2006 study which included graduate students and instructors as well as administrators. 68% of participants indicated they have tenure, while 32% do not. 93% of participants currently teach within the first-year writing program.

Importance of labels and naming

One theme revealed in data analysis is the importance of labels. Some participants shared their perceptions of the problematic nature in the label "multimodality." Since the term is more vague and broad, the word "multimodality" can be even more confusing and difficult to understand. In a similar vein, the theoretical approach of antiracism is important to note when it

comes to labeling the priorities and goals of our program, as well as naming where many curricula decisions are rooted. Ibram X. Kendi (2019) states:

> Racist policies have been described by other terms: "institutional racism," "structural racism," and "systemic racism," for instance. But those are vaguer terms than "racist policy." When I use them I find myself having to immediately explain what they mean. "Racist policy" is more tangible and exacting, and more likely to be immediately understood by people, including its victims, who may not have the benefit of extensive fluency in racial terms. "Racist policy" says exactly what the problem is and where the problem is. "Institutional racism" and "structural racism" and "systemic racism" are redundant. Racism itself is institutional, structural, and systemic. (p. 10)

It is important to not only note the varying perceptions shared by participants surrounding multimodality, but to also reflect on the ways racism can be named and enacted within FYW and academia at large. Just as "multimodality" requires more specific labeling, antiracism can shift from broader labels of our systems, such as systematic racism, that are more vague and instead begin to reflect on our choices using the term "racist policy."

Defining multimodality

The 2006 study sought to understand how participants defined multimodality. The 2006 discovered that 62% of respondents considered multimodal composition to include texts that "refer to a range of communicative modes including media such as audio, video, animation, words, images, and others" (Anderson et al., 2006, p. 69) while 7% indicated multimodality as digital and 15% had no specific definition in mind. Respondents also listed specific theoretical sources they drew from. The top five most-mentioned scholars include: Wysocki and/or *Writing New Media* by Wysocki, Selfe, Sire, and Johnson-Eilola, Kress and/or van Leeuwen, including *Literacy in a New Media Age* and *Multimodal Discourse and Reading Images*, Manovich and/or *Language of New Media*, Bolter and/or Bolter and Grusin's *Remediation*, and New London Group and/or Cope and Kalantzis' *Multiliteracies*. Participants from this current study referenced scholars for inspiration and direction regarding multimodality, overlapping with scholars

mentioned in the 2006 study: Cope/Kalantzis' book *Multiliteracies* and Jody Shipka, *Writing New Media* by Wysocki, Selfe, Sire, and Johnson-Eilola.

Program-wide implementation of multimodality

In 2006, the majority of multimodal implementation was brought about by individual teachers, similar to the results from this current study. The 2006 study revealed that 84% of respondents indicated that multimodality was taught on an "individual teacher basis." Based on responses from the current study, of 57 programs, 25 implement multimodality program-wide and of the 32 programs that do not implement multimodality program-wide, 100% of those programs indicate multimodality is taught on an individual basis.

Labor

The 2006 study indicated that 100% of participants responded to how they learned the technologies needed for multimodal composition were primarily self-taught. Going further, participants indicated what other resources supported their learning, including: institutional workshops, friends/family, professional development workshops at other institutions, colleagues at other institutions/listservs, lab staff, undergraduates/in-class assistance, graduate students, and finally departmental workshops. Only 36% of survey respondents indicated their department conducted "somewhat effective" technology training sessions. When it came to compensation, 78% of respondents indicated there was no institutional reward for learning/attending these sessions, and instead they chose to learn because it was "important," "cool," "professional," and "useful on CVs." However, 16% noted they were paid to learn these technologies. For the current survey, when asked if their department offered workshops on multimodality, 57% said yes, while 43% said no. 90% of participants indicated the workshops are not mandatory.

Comparing multimodal assignment types

Examples of multimodal assignment types from the 2006 study included: images like graphics, advertisements, flyers, Quicktime movies, video blogs, soundscapes, hypertext essays, technology autobiographies, and audio documentaries. Examples of multimodal projects mentioned as being currently used within programmatic curriculum include infographics, websites, PowerPoints, videos, podcasts, documentaries, media campaigns for organizations, graphic novels, the Japanese method of storytelling called Pecha Kucha, paintings, children's books, mixed tapes, photographing art galleries, E-portfolios with student reflection on their own work and lead to the creation of websites, virtual campus maps, radically revising essays following IMRAD with charts and graphs into visual presentations, and oral history recordings.

The conclusion of the 2006 study focuses more on improvements for conducting the study using a survey, discussing implications for changing the survey audience and targeting instructors currently teaching Composition classes versus Technical Communication classes, as well as how writing centers function in supporting multimodal assignments, and finally the impact of online surveys and web design. These concerns were not carried over to the current study, and instead attention shifted to larger issues connected to the field of Rhetoric/Composition, including labor, technological access, and WPAs' personal experiences and beliefs.

The final paragraph of the 2006 study's article conclusion states: "It is our hope that other scholars can use this data as a starting point for their own research questions, to improve upon the results we offer above, as well as for administrators and teachers to draw from to support multimodal composition programs at their own institutions" (81). My study stemmed from that

mindset; without the 2006 study, I would not have had the opportunity to continue this conversation or frame such research questions the way I have.

Unexpected Findings

Risk-taking

The heart of this work is summed up by recognizing that WPAs believe multimodality requires risk taking, from students but from faculty as well. Multimodal composing requires risk, even more so than what students are used to within the constraints of an academic essay. As Linda noted: "I think traditional essays...the risk comes in the ideas, students can sometimes play with risky or surprising ideas. When I do multimodal, there's the risk of the ideas, but also the risk of execution that's sometimes unfamiliar with them."

Multimodality, like many new concepts, requires actively participating in what one participant entitled "productive discomfort."

> But I prefer to see learning as that space where you're really truly human, and you're working with someone, and there is a sense of vulnerability and their sense of risk. If you see something that makes you uncomfortable, move in the direction of that, because that's where learning is really starting place. But you need to because you need to meet that sense of productive discomfort in your work.

The problem, according to WPAs, is first that some faculty (and students) are inhibited by their discomfort in approaching multimodality. But the most overwhelming problem WPAs see is that faculty do not have the space for and cannot take these risks when they are not supported or valued by academia, in terms of labor, salary, retention, on-campus forms of support for learning technology, training, and more. As Linda reflects:

> This is the biggest thing, and I think this is the place a lot of my colleagues trip up. They still want student work to be really clean. And you can't expect multimodal composition, especially from first-year students, to be clean. I expect them to be messy as hell. And this was the thing we baked into our outcomes: risk. That was the step I got them to take, rather than baking in genres or particular kinds of writing, we baked in risk. And when I talk about risk I always use different kinds of digital composition, because they're gonna

> be messy. And they're not gonna know how to do it. If all you're looking for is skills and mastery of skills, then multimodal composition is never going to feel good.

As Nancy Sommers and Laura Saltz (2004) note, embracing the novice role in the writing classroom is a crucial step for students. Mirroring for students the fact that composing in any medium is messy and non-linear is perhaps one of the greatest contributions we can make for them. As a beginner writer, a beginner to a new academic discourse community, a beginner to new forms of research, it can be difficult to take risks that lead to possible failure. Yet revealing this connected idea that we all share when entering a new situation is valuable. Adam Banks touches on this idea (2015):

> My hope for us is that as we worry a little less about being neat and clean, a little less about respectability inside our departments, programs and universities, that as we embrace boldness, complexity and even a little irreverence and messiness that we will be able to take flight into intellectual, pedagogical and programmatic places that we might partially see, but cannot yet fully know. This is a time for exploration, for experimentation. This is a time when we can create and risk. This is a time when we don't have to have it all figured out just yet.

Recognizing that the composing process is messy, especially when adapting to new mediums with multimodal assignments, allows faculty members and students more opportunity to adapt growth mindsets. Furthermore, involving multimodality in FYW shows a commitment to antiracism by promoting the classroom as a collaborative space for all members to contribute and voice their ideas equally. While WPAs revealed in this study their faculty's feelings of inadequacy and concern in terms of learning multimodality, multimodality allows that space for vulnerability that can lead to connection with students. Multimodality can be used as an avenue to dialogue with students instead of dominating over them (Chavez, 2021, p. 11).

Outcomes

The language used to form outcomes speaks volumes about what programs prioritize in subtle ways. The programmatic document identified as having the least reference to

multimodality was the program website. Many first-year writing program websites did not include statements directly addressing multimodality. One possibility is that WPAs perceive multimodality as existing within programmatic outcomes, even without being explicitly mentioned, as referenced in this comment: "Multimodality is just what many of us do; it's not a necessary component of program design." Other survey textbox responses indicated that while multimodality was not a significant aspect of the program outcomes currently, it would be in the future: "We're currently rewriting course outcomes and likely to include multi-modality in the new outcomes."

Items from the survey open textbox responses showed further explanation as to why multimodality not program-wide or a main focus of learning outcomes, including ideas of teacher autonomy, lack of resources to adequately pay faculty to train in new multimodal approaches, and balancing multiple areas within an already limited curriculum of one or two semester courses.

Perception of multimodality

In terms of definitions or associations with multimodality, responses did vary by Carnegie classification. Out of the list of eight possible associations, three showed significant differences based on Carnegie classifications: New Media, Digital Media, and Digital Rhetoric. The higher the level of Carnegie classification (doctoral), the more participants associate these terms with multimodality. As qualitative data reveals, these associations primarily come from doctoral program WPAs having more training, mentorship, or personal experience with multimodality as a concept, specifically in the realms of digital media/rhetoric.

Context

One area that I did not anticipate this study revealing is the disconnect between associate colleges and Master's or doctoral programs. First-year writing is more heavily taught within the context of community colleges than any other context. Community colleges reach high numbers of students from all backgrounds. As noted in the most recent publication of the *Journal of the Council of Writing Program Administrators,* "So, what we do and who we serve make the stakes of two-year college writing programs high—we would argue essential—to American higher education. In addition to the essential nature of first-year writing" (Spiegel, Jensen, & Johnson, 2020, p. 8). The disconnect between institutional contexts, specifically associate's colleges, was striking. Blaauw-Hara and Spiegel (2018) note how the community college is its own environment and encourage WPAs to reach out and connect in order to provide "practical and emotional support that will lead to stronger writing programs and sustainable WPA working conditions" (258). As one participant representing this population mentioned, placing the effort on community college faculty to reach out and seek connection can be even more exhausting.

Community colleges represent the most first-year writing courses out of all institutional contexts. As Siegal and Gilliland note, "Despite many campuses' ongoing struggle to fulfill their missions, U.S. community colleges continue to be places of personal transformation and, ultimately, societal transformation" (2020, p. 6). Among the 1,047 public community colleges in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2017), the focus is on equity through retention and transfer (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015), and FYC plays a key role in that effort, as changing the face of FYC is a way to improve student retention rates. (8-9). Based on responses shared from associate college's WPAs, multimodal implementation is even less prioritized and overall less present than in other institutional contexts such as doctoral and Master's-granting

institutions. Perhaps if multimodal's implementation could be discussed as more of a partnership and way of connecting with students, taking the pressure off of the most pressing issue shared in this study of training faculty and faculty workload, more WPAs would be open to beginning these discussions surrounding multimodality's implementation.

Looking Forward

The results of this study seem daunting as a graduate student entering this field. In many ways the themes shown in this study's results mirror the current state of our country: broken, tired, uncertain. I expected the problem to lie more in the perspective of individuals within programs, which is one area that can be improved through more open discussion of multimodality, what it is, what it can be, who it serves. But beyond that, this study revealed the larger issues our field faces: budget cuts, reliance on contingent, underpaid labor, and an overwhelming lack of knowledge regarding what we actually do. However, as Adam Banks mentions in his 2015 CCCC Convention address, this is nothing new:

> And I want us to realize that even the respectability of bigger budgets will not save us. As real as our struggles are, we act like being broke is new. We always been underfunded. We always been figuring it out as we go along. We always been dismissed, disregarded, disrespected. But we served anyhow. We took care of our students anyhow. We transformed one discipline and created our own anyhow. And it was women who did that work. It was people of color who did that work. It was Queer folk who did that work. It was first generation students in New York City and across the country demanding open admissions who did that work. It was people of all backgrounds building and running programs while they taught and theorized.

This study did not reveal a new problem; our field has dealt with being underpaid since its origin. As Banks echoes, this does not lessen the importance of work; rather it highlights its significance for all those before us to lead us to this point.

Beginning this process, I hypothesized that multimodality would not be widely implemented in first-year writing programs due to: 1. the WPA's personal view and value placed on multimodality and 2. the WPA's own background and experiences. However, the survey

results showed these factors were not a significant contribution to the overall programmatic decision. Instead, the differences and limitations came back to the labor issues and defining the larger goals of first-year writing. Are we meant to teach students "good writing"? Are we meant to prepare students to emerge within their own communities as well as the academic community? In order to bridge the gap between the valuing and use of multimodality, there are opportunities for discussion and sharing of ideas. Overall 25 out of 57 survey participants' programs do not require multimodal implementation.

While multimodality has been a discussion and in some realms is considered stale for our field, there is still a need for a new approach to its conversations. Above all, labor conditions must be improved. Labor and wellness are bound. The roles we ask those in our field to take are, quite frankly, debilitating, to their own mental health, but also to the students we are so committed to serving, through a limitation to new ideas and fresh approaches and curriculum. Conversations surrounding the demystifying of multimodality and comfort level of the term itself are important. More support structures are needed, and it works when it can be teams of fellow faculty in training as well as models. Direct focus on antiracism and what antiracism looks like in a FYW is necessary to implement real, systematic change. As WPAs and members of FYW reflect on our own perceptions and values, we can begin "deconstructing our bias to achieve a cultural shift in perspective; design democratic learning spaces for creative concentration; recruit, nourish, and fortify students of color to best empower them to exercise voice; and embolden every student to self-advocate as a responsible citizen in a globalized community" (Chavez, 2021, p. 10).

Connection for Larger First-Year Writing/Composition Field

First-year writing curriculum matters. Because of the typical limits of student enrollment per class, first-year writing becomes a place where the instructor can connect with students on a more individual basis. As Beaufort illustrates of the role of first-year writing…

> if taught with an eye toward transfer of learning and with an explicit acknowledgment of the context of freshman writing itself as a social practice, can set students on a course of life-long learning so that they know how to learn to become better and better writers in a variety of social contexts (Beaufort, 2007, p.7)

When entering this research, I anticipated a more individual reasoning as to why first-year writing programs did not include programmatic multimodal implementation. I anticipated WPAs' personal backgrounds and beliefs to serve as a barrier or gateway to programmatic conversations surrounding multimodality. But interview after interview, I quickly realized the reasons were much more systematic. Kim explained, "It (encouragement of English programs to implement multimodality) seems to me indicative of a deeper problem that we don't know in our educational system how to adapt our curriculum to a fast changing world." This research became a focused view of our field's much larger, deep-seated problems: labor, access, race, responsibility of first-year writing, and the echoing crisis of arguing our worth and place in higher education that in some ways, we ourselves have started to doubt. As Sarai explains,

> It's very easy to make a case for why we want, or we might want to do this why it's good ethically and good in 1000 different ways. But the on-campus implementation is so much more complicated. On my campus, writing is largely viewed as a service course. And we're still in that space where we're supposed to be fixing writing problems and I think once we start dipping our toe into maybe have you make a video or a podcast, that is a slow process like that kind of change takes years not semesters, to really work in there. And it's a bigger hurdle than I think people might think about.

For decades, the field has carried conversations on working conditions of contingent faculty in writing programs. However, Fedukovich, Miller-Cochran, Simonequx, and Snead note that discussions have not led to practical solutions, and the problem continues to worsen (2017,

p. 126). This dissertation does not present solutions to improve such conditions, yet reveals the problem of labor conditions that still exists-from a variety of programs at a range of institutions, locations, and departmental locations (inside English departments and housed outside) while emphasizing the limitations regarding curriculum and programmatic changes brought about by these conditions.

"From the multimodal project I learned that there are ways to get your point across without having to write a 3-4 page paper explaining your point." -Nina

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

Overall this study reveals that WPAs do highly value multimodality and see its relevance, following the pattern from previous studies involving Composition instructors (Anderson et al. 2006; Lutkewitte, 2010; Tan & Matsuda, 2020), yet most do not incorporate multimodality directly into their first-year writing program curriculum due to several factors. WPAs who do not require multimodality as the program level allow individual instructor choice on using multimodal assignments. However, this is limited by a lack of training and professional development available to faculty wanting to implement multimodal assignments on an individual basis.

The study reveals a general uncertainty surrounding defining the term "multimodality." Interviews data especially highlighted participants sharing initial worry about misrepresenting multimodality. Programmatic materials participants chose to upload through the survey included a range of documents referencing a variety of terms. Results highlighted the importance and need for more open discussion in the greater field of Rhetoric/Composition, especially in writing program teaching and administration, so that members will have more clarity and assurance about the term and feel more comfortable in taking preliminary steps to incorporate multimodal assignments in their programs and classrooms.

This research revealed the larger systematic problems within our field at large: labor conditions, relying heavily on contingent instructors, misperceptions across campus of first-year writing, the challenges of navigating administrative decisions while balancing a spectrum of student needs, and a need to answer the call for antiracist FYW curricula and composing practices. First-year writing provides a unique set of challenges, as faculty come from a variety

of background specialties and graduate training, some experiencing multimodality within their curriculum and others having no personal experience with multimodal writing.

This study discovered that a number of first-year writing programs that do not implement multimodality on a program-wide level, as 25 programs out of 57 responses noted they do not require multimodality; however, of the remaining 32, all noted they give instructors the option of incorporating multimodality on an individual basis. In terms of the reasons behind not including multimodality program-wide, the top selection marked was training, which to these participants includes workshops, professional development opportunities, and preliminary programmatic trainings for new faculty. While the survey revealed no significant difference in need based on Carnegie classification, interviews included more discussion from associate's colleges' administrators on many needs that prevent curricular changes from occurring.

Overall participants agree that adding multimodality to first-year writing is beneficial, yet are hindered by the amount of other topics expected to be covered in first-year writing, while relying on so many contingent, overworked, and underpaid staff members who cannot be compensated for the extra training required to implement multimodality. Multimodality is not as high of a teaching priority for programs in Below Master's institutions as it is for programs in Doctoral and Master's institutions. The value of multimodality is lower for Below Master's institutions than Doctoral or Master's programs, but there is no significant difference in its value between Doctoral and Master's.

Limitations

The theoretical frameworks, anti-racism and utilitarianism, that guided this study's design and approach provided opportunities for insight on participants' beliefs and created a guide for ways to approach framing the study. The framework of utilitarianism allowed the study to build

off of the 2006 study's survey design and focus on the utility of multimodality in the lives of students and within program curriculum. The theoretical framework of anti-racism allowed an enriching opportunity to highlight the real and lived experiences of participants through their own words while also providing a lens to interpret participants' responses and inherent values of academia and writing.

From the beginning, this study sought to be inclusive of all institutional contexts, spending much energy on seeking responses from institutions that are typically overlooked. One limitation is the lack of balance of institutional contexts, as there is a larger number of doctoral university participants and a smaller number of associate's colleges participants. Furthermore, not all institutional types are represented. Although purposeful recruitment was directed towards WPAs of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), this study did not hear from any HBCUs, or enough minority-serving institutions (a total of 2 respondents work at Hispanic-serving institutions). Because this study started at the beginning of the pandemic, I recognize that certain institutions were impacted more severely than others, which could contribute to the overall responses across institutions.

Furthermore, the survey responses from participants about identifying their race indicated overwhelmingly almost all participants were White. This further highlights a gap in my study of reaching and hearing from diverse WPAs, but also points towards larger concerns within the field of writing program administration. A total of 88% CWPA members self-identify as White (Inoue, 2021). Inoue recently shared his choice to leave the Council of Writing Program Administrators after fifteen years of involvement. As he describes,

> Up until recently I've been proud to be a member…despite my concerns about the culture of White supremacy. Why stay in the CWPA so long? My sense was to stay in the antiracist fight. The CWPA is worth fighting for…But recent events have made me

> realize that I cannot stay in the fight, even as I continue in the war against White language supremacy.

Another limitation based on feedback from an associate's college participant was that the survey questions were not directed for all participants, especially those at two-year colleges. One example is the survey asked for participants' doctoral degree specialization. I should have altered the wording to be inclusive to all levels of degrees; I received feedback in the open comments that several participants did not have doctorate degrees. One associate college's administrator who participated in my study saw the survey link shared by a fellow two-year college colleague on Twitter and replied:

> Just took it. Grad programs should insist that students doing field work have a TYC faculty member on their committees. The survey is ok, but doesn't show much awareness of TYC, um, modalities. (Please don't read this as a crit of the survey author; it's a crit of grad studies.).

The tweet received two "likes" by fellow TYC faculty. Thankfully this participant agreed to participate in an interview with me and I was able to gain even more insight into this frustration with the field at large. I was able to reflect on how my survey language could turn away some TYC faculty simply because it appeared to be more focused on WPAs at research-focused institutions in terms. After sharing in interviews with four TYC administrators, I was able to learn how to acknowledge their contexts from a researcher-perspective, in terms of incorporating more questions on awareness of the backgrounds, degree requirements, and high teaching loads of TYC faculty more generally.

I limited this project's scope to first-year writing programs, not extending into writing centers, WAC or WID, or other kinds of writing programs, in order to maintain my focus and keep responses as comparable as possible. As survey responses started coming in, I realized that I did miss an opportunity to still utilize participants with other titles, based on the second survey

question, “Do you currently direct or coordinate a first-year writing program? For this project’s focus, a writing program refers to a program with one or more courses, with multiple sections of first-year courses, that share a set of objectives, curriculum, and common placement procedures (Schwalm, 2002, p. 11)”? Out of 73 total survey responses, 17 answered “No” to the second question. Looking back, I would have added the option for respondents to indicate if they worked in another writing program context, as well as the option to indicate if they previously served in the position while not current. However, I do feel that out of the 56 usable responses, I can feel confident in comparing them across current positions and first-year writing context.

Key Takeaways

This study opened up larger questions that were not initially expected. These questions include: what is first-year writing’s purpose? Whose responsibility is it to teach students multimodality? How can we work towards equitable labor conditions for first-year writing faculty? How can our deeply-embedded and systematic views of what is important in a writing classroom incorporate a purposeful commitment to antiracism? How can we acknowledge students’ futures and provide them with useful knowledge they can implement in not only their academic and career-centered lives, but in their personal and civic engagements?

In terms of defining first-year writing’s purpose, I believe this is always in flux depending on our students’ needs at that time and the context of many other societal factors. Participants noted in a survey open textbox response a variety of responses in terms of their program’s priority. Some focused specifically on how a student responds and consumes information: “We help students identify as writers”; and “improve student’s critical thinking and writing skills”. In these responses I notice verbs of the program sharing knowledge and providing the student with a change: “help” and “improve.” Other responses addressed a broader

focus beyond the classroom, including: “synthesizing information to respond to the needs of diverse audiences”; providing “Rhetorical Education that empowers students to see opportunities to use academic and rhetorical knowledge for public good and justice”; “To help prepare students for academic writing and engagement in civic and public issues as ethical rhetors”. These types of responses also include actions the program will provide for students, including “help” but paired with “prepare”, as well as “empower.” The way WPAs’ position their programs and the language used also ties back to the theoretical frameworks of antiracism and utilitarianism. Antiracism especially is part of the solution of welcoming in more multimodality to the context of FYW. The goal of maintaining utilitarianism—through the practical preparation of students for the workforce and as clear communicators—can also lead to more conversations on why there is a gap between its value and implementation within FYW.

Some participants indicated their uncertainty with where multimodality should be housed on campus. Once again, labels and naming are of importance in answering this question. In terms of positioning as a program, if remaining focused on “writing,” some participants perceived multimodality as falling on another department’s responsibility, such as Communications, Graphic Design, or other similar fields. However, when programs position themselves as more rhetoric-focused, they are more likely to see the responsibility as FYW (Bearden, 2019). When implemented as a design choice to influence audience members and consider the rhetorical situation, multimodality is a part of FYW’s responsibility. This belief of multimodality enhancing students’ rhetorical awareness is also shared in Tan & Matsuda’s (2020) study.

Until labor conditions can improve among FYW faculty, integrating of newer approaches to multimodality and other curricula changes are limited. While overall WPAs in this study saw a value with multimodality for their students and programmatic goals, there are still very real and

pressing concerns for these WPAs to navigate, especially when considering their contingent faculty.

In terms of answering the call to focus on antiracism within FYW and in using multimodality to do so, I think this involves a closer look at what we inherently value, both in terms of how we position our programs and list our goals, outcomes, and assignments, as well as how we describe our student body, and really in how we illustrate student need. If we view students as those needing to be "fixed," just as so many outside of FYW perceive, we are not remaining committed to antiracism, and in turn, normalizing racial inequities of promoting Standard American English and Western ideals.

The study also revealed the stark differences between doctoral, Master's and associate's institutions. Scholarship discussing the influence of multimodality on associate's colleges exists and the two-year college context is highlighted as a place where multimodality can enhance students' experiences, such as Cheryl Hogue Smith's (2019) piece on academic inclusion and multimodality. Smith's study reveals how implementing multimodal assignments can assist struggling students become more confident in their abilities, extending not only in multimodal assignments but also "traditional" academic assignments. Even this distinction of selling TYC faculty on implementing multimodality to "succeed on subsequent more traditional (and extraordinarily complex) academic papers (2019, p. 20) speaks to the larger institutional values of ensuring students can produce the types of assignments inherently labeled as important in academia. As Hassell and Giordano note, "Failing to acknowledge the centrality of teaching and learning first-year writing in two-year institutions means that we as a profession have an inaccurate understanding of what postsecondary writing teachers face in their classrooms and workplace" (2017, p. 151). While there is scholarship focused on teaching in the two-year

college, such as the National Council of Teachers of English's journal *Teaching English in the Two-Year College,* the participants from this study representing these contexts still shared their perceptions of a lack of disconnect on their institutional contexts and the challenges faced in terms of teaching loads, lack of time to reflect on new scholarship, or adjunct curricula. As this study reveals, the gap still exists between two-year college scholarship including multimodality and the implementation of multimodality within two-year college curricula.

In addition to the differences between institutional contexts, there is also a need for connection within our own institutions across disciplines. Adam Banks calls for this connection:

> It's time for us to travel across campus, across programs, and into more strategic relationship building by doing more with affiliate faculty and cross disciplinary courses and certificates. We need deeper connections with the disciplines that get lumped into area studies. We need to build deep and long term relationships with university libraries and iSchools that go beyond the first year comp trip to the library to learn about source use. What can we do to build long-term relationships with Hispanic Serving Institutions and Tribal Colleges and HBCUs? We need greater connection and collaboration across programs and organizations because even the most brilliant faculty, even the largest writing and rhetoric programs, even the best organizations like CCCC, cannot do this futuristic work alone.

Without connection and collaboration, our goals cannot be met. Echoing from voices in all institutional contexts is the repeating pattern of being overworked and without energy to expand on larger goals and improvement. A lot of that energy is poured into creating one identity for first-year writing and clearing up outside perceptions of what we do.

The shifting nature of learning, literacy, as well as constantly changing possibilities and constraints for communication presents challenges and opportunities within our writing classrooms. Students are composing in multiple mediums for multiple situations. The rethinking of literacy presents ways to meet students where they are and build on their skills to connect in and outside academic contexts—including within communities, workplaces, and at home:

> This marks a shift in focus from the idea of literacy as an autonomous neutral set of skills or competencies that people acquire through schooling and can deploy universally to a

> view of literacies as local and situated. This shift underlines the variable ideological character of school literacy practices, that is, how the official institutional construction of literacy may or may not dovetail with emergent practices in homes and communities. Furthermore, this perspective enables an analysis of how the social practices of literacy in schools realize social structures through the formation of specific power relations, forms of knowledge, and identities (A. Luke & Carrington, 2002, p. 240)

This point returns to the study's initial theoretical framework of anti-racism and the construction of not only the study's design but content regarding multimodality in order to discuss and hear about student empowerment and identities as being supported instead of pruned.

Overall it is apparent that the idea of literacy has significantly shifted over time and continues to change (New London Group, 1996). Scholars across the field, from Banks to Yancy to Selber to Wyksocki to Shipka and more have called for a change in writing curriculum to acknowledge these new mediums. Scholarship provides in-depth discussions on multimodal theory, yet actual implementation of multimodal practices still remains low. The ultimate goal of this work is much deeper than providing sample assignments or arguing for multimodality's place in first-year writing curriculum, tasks I thought would emerge from participants. But after listening to participants, reading curriculum, hearing about student needs, and more, the goal of this work shifted to fostering a dialogue among all first-year writing faculty: administrators to graduate students. We must push for real, systematic change in the way first-year writing is perceived, valued, and yes, implemented in our institutions. We must push for our labor to be compensated. We must model for our students risk-taking, so that it extends from our classrooms and into their daily, civic lives.

Meeting students where they are

This research and work reveals that even more so first-year writing programs need to bridge the gap between students and teachers. Multimodality allows an avenue for teachers to showcase rhetorical situations and analysis in a more engaging way than standard academic

essays provide. This partnership creates a more democratic classroom where all members can learn from one another. This collaboration also welcomes an antiracist commitment instead of a dominant relationship.

Additionally, students' experiences with technology can be welcomed in the writing classroom. In order to make multimodality more effective in the writing classroom, students and faculty must meet in the middle, valuing the unique experiences, backgrounds, and knowledge all parties bring. Students' voices and methods of expression should be valued instead of seen as something for a first-year writing program to "fix" or "resolve." As Jacqueline Preston notes, "These histories are brushed aside, treated as obstacles to overcome versus an essential and fertile resource from which to draw" (2017, p. 89). One step in working towards this mindset is to eliminate the idea that students are "in need of being fixed" (Villanueva, 2013). The writing classroom must be a place inclusive of all composing experiences students bring, valuing those that occurred within academia and those within students own home communities.

Unexpected Findings

As I explained to one participant when describing the framework of the study, I have been drawn to this study's subject areas for five years now, ever since I first heard the term multimodal in a Composition class as a first-year Master's student. The conversations shared through interviews with participants highlighted the heart of why I am drawn to this research topic. Conversations surrounding teaching and multimodality reflect our tendencies as humans. We naturally drift towards staying within our comfort levels and familiarity. In leaping into these multimodal projects, it invites a sense of risk-taking and vulnerability, for both the student and faculty. The faculty member has to stand up at the front of the class and say, "I don't know everything about this software" and show that it is okay to feel a sense of discomfort, which can

lead to new connections. This type of feeling was revealed in the dozen or so responses in interviews with WPAs about their own anxieties and uncertainties of what multimodality means.

A large factor this study has shed light on is the ethical labor concerns regarding first-year writing, as faculty do not have the time, money, or energy to invest in learning a new set of skills for multimodal projects. But as the researcher, I sensed a deeper human reaction to multimodality through the framework of risk-taking. It is our innate sense of avoiding failure, something that first-year writing students also feel (Wardle, 2009). Risk-taking is something we invite students to try as they navigate a new discourse community through first-year writing. We ask them to set aside their preconceived notions and structures and jump into a new world of sources and vocabulary. If faculty can mirror this risk-taking mindset through the form of multimodal assignments, an opportunity to grow closer to our students is available, prompting even further opportunities for collaborative learning. Multimodality can lead to opening up walls of academia and bringing in students' own communities.

Implications for Future Scholarly Research

This study reveals gaps within the scholarship and praxis of our field, extending beyond multimodal's implementation. While overall WPA participants in this study agree that multimodality is valuable for first-year writing, they are unable to implement it because of larger issues within our field. Many of these feel daunting and outside of our control, as academic budgets and tenure-track positions continue to dwindle. But there are some tangible steps to working towards implementing multimodality and ultimately, improving first-year writing for both faculty and students.

First, conversations are needed that allow all members to begin feeling more comfortable and receptive about multimodality. As shown in interviews shared with participants, there is a

general anxiety towards defining multimodality and what it encompasses. Claire Lauer highlights the importance of defining terms collectively as a field, stating, "Defining terms is a situated activity that involves determining the collective interests and values of the community for which the definition matters" (2009, p. 225). As revealed in this study, multimodality is highly valued among members of its field, in particular the writing program administrators of first-year writing programs. However, unless a foundational definition for the term is shared, the isolation and lack of discussion can only worsen. Ultimately this study reveals that this lack of a shared definition leads to general anxiety and isolation between members discussing the definition and application of multimodality.

Conversations are needed between institutions, not only institutions that are similar to our own workplaces, but those that are extremely different. Associate's colleges feel isolated. As shown in qualitative responses, there are differing perceptions of how easily certain contexts can implement changes. Doctoral programs feel their changes are inherently more difficult to achieve because of working with so many moving factors and policies, and that the process is easier at smaller contexts. Associate's colleges, on the other hand, feel that they are overworked in the daily tasks, there is no way to implement larger curriculum changes, and that because of doctoral programs having more access to resources and money, the changes can be more readily made in those contexts.

While this study provides an overview of institutional contexts, future work could spend more time looking at each individual context and comparing through even more examples and diverse contexts. This study was not able to hear from administrators of HBCUs or Tribal Colleges. Future work could move past understanding WPAs' perceptions towards

multimodality and instead work towards compiling a reservoir of sample multimodal projects, trainings, or professional development workshops to share with others.

Kairos of COVID-19 Pandemic

While this study emerged prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection, including surveys and interviews, and writing were all carried out during the pandemic and quarantine. Survey questions did not specifically address the pandemic, however, some participants did make the connection between multimodality and how COVID-19 disrupted typical learning environments. Future research could also investigate how COVID-19 either quickened or slowed down the process of implementing more multimodal assignments among first-year writing programs and the impact COVID-19 had on views towards multimodality. With the quick and unexpected transition to new modalities during the Spring 2020 semester, discussions on multimodality are even more necessary, especially in terms of supporting faculty and providing necessary resources to alleviate stress from unfamiliar modalities.

While previous studies have mentioned defining multimodality, classroom application and theory, this study differs in offering an additional element: capturing WPAs' perceptions and values of multimodality from their own administrative perspective. Future research can continue capturing the perception from WPAs and see how their perspectives shift after navigating COVID-19's abrupt transition to online learning and how years later faculty respond to multimodal assignments.

Looking Forward

When comparing the 2006 study to now, not much has changed in terms of multimodality. If anything, situations have continued to decline: first-year writing misconceptions have deepened, labor conditions have worsened, tenure lines have decreased and

more reliance on contingent labor has increased. The necessary shift in online learning formats due to the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed many faculty members to new roles and revealed for many administrators the gaps within their programs in terms of comfort and familiarity with digital technologies.

As a new member of the field of Rhetoric/Composition and an aspiring writing program administrator, I do hope for a shift in our field's future in terms of approaching conversations surrounding labor as well as discussions across institutional contexts, particularly including the voices of those at associate's colleges who feel neglected from the greater field of writing studies. When we fail to support our faculty, we do a disservice to our students who need us the most. As I started this research project, I expected to find more resistance from WPAs in terms of curriculum changes and implementing multimodality. I found the resistance not to be there. Instead, WPAs expressed their concern and the ethical dilemma with requiring their staff to take on another learning curve when they could not be compensated. I expected to conclude this research with suggestions gleaned from WPAs in terms of how to make program-wide changes or advice based on experiences. However, the conversations remained focused mostly on the need for larger, systemic changes.

This study was driven by two initial theoretical frameworks—utilitarianism and antiracism. This study allowed me to reflect on the field I am entering, specifically writing program administration, and the ways we have grown and also remained stagnant. I am driven by the question posed by Inoue in a recent blog sharing his decision to leave CWPA. He asks, "So, what are you willing to do for antiracist change in the CWPA?" (Inoue, 2021). Reflecting on this work, I am committed to continuing to share in these types of conversations that center on student need and students' home communities. Racism and White supremacy lie in the heart of

our language—the way we shape our programmatic curricula, our course outcomes, the way we subconsciously prioritize certain forms of expression over others and guide students towards a strict focus on Standard Academic English.

The conclusive takeaway from this research reveals the need for systemic change. When labor conditions improve, then these more programmatic shifts towards multimodality can occur. When racism is named, it provides a point of moving forward and doing better, for our students. A question this study prompted is: How can our first-year writing curriculum strengthen without requiring contingent faculty and conversations shift towards discussing multimodality? Based on data from this study, many programs can begin simply by acknowledging multimodality and openly discussing its interpretations. If those who lead first-year writing programs have anxieties surrounding defining the term multimodality, further anxieties could exist among faculty and students. From a scholarship perspective, publications and conference sessions on the topic of multimodality have been covered for years. For many, it feels like multimodality is stale and overly discussed. Yet as this research reveals, in many ways we have glossed over the term because it captures so much, it can be difficult to break it down and actually implement it within our pedagogies. There is still much to be gained from having these conversations and sharing interpretations, perceptions, and actual assignment ideas across contexts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Informed Consent for Survey

Consent for Research Participation

Research Study Title: How Writing Program Administrators Perceive and Implement Multimodality in First-Year Writing Programs

Researcher(s): Allie Sockwell Johnston, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Sean Morey, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

We are asking you to be in this research study because of your title as a current Writing Program Administrator or experience within the last five years serving as a Writing Program Administrator for your institution's first-year writing program.

You must be age 18 or older to participate in the study. The information in this consent form is to help you decide if you want to be in this research study. Please take your time reading this form and contact the researcher to ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

Why is the research being done?

The purpose of the research study is to understand how writing programs implement multimodality into their curriculum.

What will I do in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, you will complete an online survey. The survey includes questions about your writing program curriculum, outcomes, and goals, and should take you approximately 15 minutes to complete. You can skip questions that you do not want to answer.

You may indicate if you would like to participate in a voluntary follow-interview at the end of the survey by including your contact information. If you select this option, you will be asked for your contact information, and the provided information will be linked to your survey responses.

Can I say "No"?

Being in this study is up to you. You can stop up until you submit the survey. After you submit the survey, we cannot remove your responses because we will not know which responses came from you.

Are there any risks to me?

We don't know of any risks to you from being in the study.

Are there any benefits to me?

We do not expect you to benefit from being in this study. Your participation may help us to learn more about writing program administration and multimodal assignments. We hope the knowledge gained from this study will benefit others in the future.

What will happen with the information collected for this study?

The survey is anonymous, and no one will be able to link your responses back to you. Your responses to the survey will not be linked to your computer, email address or other electronic identifiers, unless you opt to be contacted for a follow-up interview. In this case, your identifiable contact information (email address and name) will be linked to your survey response. Information provided in this survey can only be kept as secure as any other online communication.

We may share your research data with other researchers without asking for your consent again, but it will not contain information that could directly identify you.

Will I be paid for being in this research study?

No, participation in the survey is completely voluntary.

Who can answer my questions about this research study?

If you have questions or concerns about this study, or have experienced a research related problem or injury, contact the researchers, Allie Sockwell Johnston, at **csockwe1@vols.utk.edu** or (931)242-6975, or Sean Morey, faculty advisor, at **smorey@utk.edu** or (865) 974-5401.

For questions or concerns about your rights or to speak with someone other than the research team about the study, please contact:

Institutional Review Board
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
1534 White Avenue
Blount Hall, Room 408
Knoxville, TN 37996-1529
Phone: 865-974-7697
Email: utkirb@utk.edu

Statement of Consent

I have read this form, been given the chance to ask questions and have my questions answered. If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By clicking the "I Agree" button below, I am agreeing to be in this study. I can print or save a copy of this consent

information for future reference. If I do not want to be in this study, I can close my Internet browser.

APPENDIX B

Consent for Standard Informed Consent Research Participation

Research Study Title: How Writing Program Administrators Perceive and Implement Multimodality in First-Year Writing Programs

Researcher(s): Allie Sockwell Johnston, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Sean Morey, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Why am I being asked to be in this research study?

We are asking you to be in this research study because of your title as a current Writing Program Administrator or experience within the last five years serving as a Writing Program Administrator for your institution's first-year writing program.

What is this research study about?

The purpose of the research study is to understand how writing programs implement multimodality into their curriculum.

Who is conducting this research study?

PhD candidate Allie Sockwell Johnston, being overseen by faculty advisor Sean Morey, is conducting this research study.

How long will I be in the research study?

If you agree to be in the study, your participation will last for approximately 2 hours. Your participation will involve 1 online survey, lasting approximately 20 minutes, and 1 interview via phone, lasting approximately 1 hour.

What will happen if I say "Yes, I want to be in this research study"?

If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to participate in a follow-up interview to further explain your survey answers. The interview will occur via phone call or Skype at a time best for your schedule. The study will include an initial online survey and phone interviews.

What happens if I say "No, I do not want to be in this research study"?

Being in this study is up to you. You can say no now or leave the study later.

Either way, your decision won't affect your relationship with the researchers or the University of Tennessee.

What happens if I say "Yes" but change my mind later?

Even if you decide to be in the study now, you can change your mind and stop at any time.

If you decide to stop before the study is completed, you can contact the primary investigator to withdraw. Any information already collected from you will be deleted and destroyed.

Are there any possible risks to me?

There are no foreseeable risks to you from being in the study.

Are there any benefits to being in this research study?

We do not expect you to benefit from being in this study. Your participation may help us to learn more about writing program administration and multimodal assignments. We hope the knowledge gained from this study will benefit others in the future.

Who can see or use the information collected for this research study?

The study information and consent documents and scheduling logs will be kept confidential through secure storage by the research team through password-protected encrypted files.
The study will retain and share information provided in interviews for the purpose of comparing institutional contexts, through the published dissertation and through future articles and conference presentations.
If participants agree to voluntarily participate in a follow-up interview, their identifiable information will be connected to their survey.

What will happen to my information after this study is over?

We may share your research data with other researchers without asking for your consent again, but it will not contain information that could directly identify you.

Will I be paid for being in this research study?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

Will it cost me anything to be in this research study?

It will not cost you anything to be in this study.

Who can answer my questions about this research study?

If you have questions or concerns about this study, or have experienced a research related problem or injury, contact the researchers, Allie Sockwell Johnston, at **csockwe1@vols.utk.edu** or (931)242-6975, or Sean Morey, faculty advisor, at **smorey@utk.edu** or (865) 974-5401.

For questions or concerns about your rights or to speak with someone other than the research team about the study, please contact:

Institutional Review Board
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
1534 White Avenue
Blount Hall, Room 408
Knoxville, TN 37996-1529
Phone: 865-974-7697
Email: utkirb@utk.edu

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the chance to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By signing this document, I am agreeing to be in this study. I will receive a copy of this document after I sign it.

_____ _____ _____
Name of Adult Participant Signature of Adult Participant Date

APPENDIX C

Multimodality in First-Year Writing Programs Survey

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Description of Study: How Writing Program Administrators Perceive and Implement Multimodality in First-Year Writing

This study is for my dissertation. Multimodality has become a popular topic of discussion in Rhetoric/Composition, yet its program-wide implementation remains low. This study updates a 2005 Composition Studies piece by Daniel Anderson, Anthony Atkins, Cheryl Ball, Krista Homicz Millar, Cynthia Selfe, and Richard Selfe, which provided an overview of what participants labeled as multimodal or new media for their Composition classroom instruction. This research will incorporate data from writing program administrators working at a variety of institution types to help provide a clear picture of how writing programs actually implement multimodality (if at all) and the steps taken in order to fulfill this implementation (curricular decisions, program outcomes and goals, resources, and training). Survey Question Topics While this study was created prior to COVID-19, it asks about things that are likely on many WPAs' minds right now. The hope is that this research can shed light on topics of current concern.

This study's focus is situated on programmatic values and perceptions, beginning with the WPA and their individual perceptions and culminating to a view of how writing programs within multiple contexts use multimodality. For this reason, the survey is organized by category, beginning with the context of your own institution, individual WPA perceptions, and programmatic implementation, values, and perceptions of multimodality. At the survey's conclusion, you will be asked if you are willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview or to upload materials from your first-year writing program. If you do agree to be contacted for an interview or material collection, you will be asked for your email address. Otherwise, this survey will remain anonymous and not be traced back to you. If you have any questions, please contact Allie Sockwell Johnston at csockwe1@vols.utk.edu. Thank you for your time in supporting this dissertation work! Documentation of Informed Consent By clicking "Yes" below, you indicate you have been informed about this research study and you are volunteering to participate. By clicking "No" or exiting this window, you will be excluded from the survey.

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Description of Study: How Writing Program Administrators Perceive and Implement Multimodality in... = No

---

Page Break

Do you currently direct or coordinate a first-year writing program? For this project's focus, writing program refers to a program with one or more courses, with multiple sections of first-year courses, that share a set of objectives, curriculum, and common placement procedures (Schwalm, 2002, p. 11).

- ○ Yes, I currently direct or coordinate a first-year writing program (1)
- ○ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Do you currently direct or coordinate a first-year writing program? For this project's focus, wri... = No

Page Break

What Carnegie classification does your institution fall under?

- ○ Doctoral University (1)
- ○ Master's College and University (2)
- ○ Baccalaureate College (3)
- ○ Associate's College (4)
- ○ Special Focus Institution (5)
- ○ Tribal College (6)
- ○ Other. Please specify: (7) _____

What is your institution's overall size, including undergraduate and graduate students?

- Under 1,000 (1)
- 1,000-4,999 (2)
- 5,000-9,999 (3)
- 10,000-19,999 (4)
- 20,000 and above (5)

Page Break

In what geographical area is your institution located?

_____

Page Break

What type of institution?

- Public institution (1)
- Private institution (2)

Is your institution an accredited postsecondary minority-serving institution?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Display This Question:

If Is your institution an accredited postsecondary minority-serving institution? = Yes

Which category would your institution fall under?

- Historically Black College and University (1)
- Predominantly Black Institution (2)
- Hispanic-Serving Institution (3)
- Tribal College or University (4)
- Native American Non-Tribal Institution (5)
- Alaskan Native- or Native Hawaiian-Serving Institution (6)
- Asian American- and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (7)

Page Break

How many students does your first-year writing program serve each Fall semester?

_____

Is your first-year writing program housed in the English department?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If Is your first-year writing program housed in the English department? = No

In what department is your first-year writing program housed?

_____

Display This Question:

If Is your first-year writing program housed in the English department? = Yes

How much does your first-year writing program curriculum prioritizes the following areas?

	None at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	A lot (4)	A great deal (5)
Literature (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Rhetoric (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Professional/Technical Writing (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Creative Writing (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Display This Question:

If Is your first-year writing program housed in the English department? = Yes

Please list any other topic areas that are a priority to your first-year writing program:

_____

Page Break

Do you personally teach first-year writing courses within your department?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Is your position tenure-track?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Display This Question:

If Is your position tenure-track? = Yes

Do you have tenure?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

*

How many years have you been in your current first-year writing program administrator position?

_____

Page Break

How important are the following options in providing you with assistance/answers when you have a question regarding your writing program?

	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)
Scholarly resources (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Conferences (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Email listserv (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Colleagues within your current department (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Colleagues outside of your department at your institution (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Colleagues from other institutions (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Please list other resources that you turn to for support.

_____

Page Break

Please list key terms you associate with your program's FYC courses.

_____

Please list your writing program's top priority in one sentence.

_____

Do you have a mission statement for your first-year writing program?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Page Break

Which best describes your first-year writing requirement?

- ○ One course of Composition/English (1)
- ○ Two course sequencing of Composition/English (2)
- ○ Other (3) _____

On average, how often do the following populations teach first-year writing courses?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
Graduate students (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Full-time non-tenure track (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Part-time non-tenure track (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Tenure track (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Display This Question:

If On average, how often do the following populations teach first-year writing courses? != Graduate students [Never]

How many graduate students teach in your first-year writing program?

_____

Page Break

The following section will ask about your own associations with the term multimodality.

When I hear multimodality, I think of...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
New media (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Social media (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Digital media (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Material rhetorics (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Visual rhetoric (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Digital rhetoric (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Multiliteracies (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Modes (aural, visual, gestural, spatial) (8)	○	○	○	○	○

Please list other terms you associate with multimodality.

_____

_____

_____

As a WPA, I believe...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
adding a multimodal component to first-year writing is beneficial overall. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
multimodality enhances students' composing skills. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
multimodal composition is well-received by our students. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
multimodality is well-received by our instructors. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
multimodality is valuable as long as it does not detract from time spent on alphabetic text. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
teaching multimodality is a top priority for my goals as a teacher. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

What is your doctoral degree specialization?

- ○ Rhetoric/Composition (1)
- ○ Creative Writing (2)
- ○ Literature (3)
- ○ Linguistics (4)
- ○ Other (5) _____

When I was a graduate student...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
my coursework included issues in writing program administration. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
my coursework included topics on multimodality. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I created projects using multimodality. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

As a WPA, I remain...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
up-to-date with Composition scholarship. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
connected to WPA conferences. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
connected to the WPA Listserv. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Does your first-year writing program implement multimodality as a program-wide requirement?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Skip To: Q35 If Does your first-year writing program implement multimodality as a program-wide requirement? = Yes

Page Break

While not required, is multimodality implemented by some instructors in your department?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (5)

Has your program ever included a multimodal focus?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Page Break

To what extent do the following factors contribute to the decision to not feature multimodality?

	None at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	A lot (4)	A great deal (5)
Time (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Resources (equipment) (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Training (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Funding (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Departmental interest (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

How helpful would the following be to your program in incorporating multimodal assignments?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
More knowledge of multimodal practices (1)	○	○	○	○	○
More experience with multimodal assignments (2)	○	○	○	○	○
More trained staff (3)	○	○	○	○	○
More access to resources (software, technology, textbooks, etc.) (4)	○	○	○	○	○
More supportive sources that highlight multimodal's benefits (5)	○	○	○	○	○
More exposure to multimodal sample assignments (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Display This Question:

If Does your first-year writing program implement multimodality as a program-wide requirement? = Yes

What are your writing program's guiding goals or outcomes referencing multimodality?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Page Break

Multimodal assignments in my first-year writing program include...

	None at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	A lot (4)	A great deal (5)
Digital assignments (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Maker-based assignments (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Aural mode: podcasts (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Visual mode: posters (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Gestural mode: through dance, performance, movement (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Please list any other forms of multimodal assignments.

_____

Page Break

Display This Question:

If Does your first-year writing program implement multimodality as a program-wide requirement? = Yes

To what extent did the following prompt you to feature multimodality in your first-year writing program?

	None at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	A lot (4)	A great deal (5)
New media theory (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Multimodality theory (2)	○	○	○	○	○
New materialist theory (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Faculty request (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Administrator request (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Student request (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Display This Question:

If Does your first-year writing program implement multimodality as a program-wide requirement? = Yes

Please list any other reasons that led to your decision for featuring multimodality in your first-year writing program.

_____

Page Break

Do students have access to materials needed to complete multimodal projects?

	Yes (1)	No (2)
On-campus studio/equipment check-out (1)	○	○
In classroom (2)	○	○
Personal laptops/software (3)	○	○

To what extent do departmental faculty receive assistance in learning new software and systems for multimodal assignments through the following options?

	None at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	A lot (4)	A great deal (5)
Self training (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Mandatory departmental workshops (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Optional departmental workshops (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Textbook (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Professional development workshops across campus (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Support from colleagues (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

To what extent do departmental faculty receive assistance in planning and integrating multimodal assignments in their classes through the following options?

	None at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	A lot (4)	A great deal (5)
Self training (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Mandatory departmental workshops (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Optional departmental workshops (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Textbook (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Professional development workshops across campus (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Support from colleagues (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

To what extent do departmental faculty receive assistance in assessment and evaluation of multimodal assignments through the following options?

	None at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	A lot (4)	A great deal (5)
Self training (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Departmental workshops (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Textbook (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Professional development workshops across campus (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Support from colleagues (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Please list any other forms of assistance provided to faculty members for implementing multimodality,

_____

Page Break

Does your department offer workshops involving multimodality?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Skip To: Q81 If Does your department offer workshops involving multimodality? = No

Are these multimodal workshops mandatory for faculty to attend?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

X→

Who leads the workshops?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
Graduate students (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Full-time non-tenure track faculty (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Part-time non-tenure track faculty (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Writing program administrator (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Someone from outside our department (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Are workshops regularly offered every semester?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Page Break

What is the nature of learning in the workshops?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
Tool oriented (here is what this does) (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Hands-on practice (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Orientation training (leader summarizes technology) (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Ongoing training (asked to return to future workshop with project completed) (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Approximately how many faculty attend the workshops?

_____

Page Break

The following questions ask you to reflect on how your writing program implements multimodality.

Multimodality...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
is a priority in our first-year writing program. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
adds value to our first-year writing program's goals. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
strengthens our first-year writing program's outcomes. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Please respond to each individual statement below.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Our first-year writing program seeks new ways to incorporate more multimodal approaches to composing. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
My department generally understands multimodality as a concept. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
The stakeholders of my institution see the value of multimodality. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
My personal value of multimodality and the value placed by our overall writing program closely align. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
My department values multimodality. (5)	○	○	○	○	○

How significant is multimodality in the following programmatic documents?

Display This Choice:

If Do you have a mission statement for your first-year writing program? = Yes

	None at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	A lot (4)	A great deal (5)
Display This Choice: If Do you have a mission statement for your first-year writing program? = Yes	○	○	○	○	○
⊗First-year writing program mission statement (1)					
Course outcomes (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Instructor training materials (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Sample syllabi materials (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Sample assignments	○	○	○	○	○

(5)					
Professional development materials (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Program website (7)	○	○	○	○	○

Please list any further comments you would like to share regarding multimodality within writing programs.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Page Break

What is your full title at your institution?

_____

*

What is your age?

_____

What is your gender?

- ○ Male (1)
- ○ Female (2)
- ○ Other. Please specify: (3) _____

With what race do you most identify?

- ○ White (1)
- ○ Black or African American (2)
- ○ American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
- ○ Asian (4)
- ○ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
- ○ Other. Please specify: (6) _____
- ○ Prefer not to answer (7)

Page Break

We are interested in first-year writing program sample materials that utilize multimodality in some form, including assignments, first-year writing program training or workshop materials, or individual instructor samples. Upload your materials below:

Are you interested in being contacted later?

☐ I am willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview regarding my survey responses. (1)

☐ I am willing to be contacted in the future to upload materials. (2)

☐ ⊗I do not want to be contacted. (3)

Skip To: End of Survey If Are you interested in being contacted later? = I do not want to be contacted.

Your Name

_____

Your email address

_____

Name of the institution where you are currently employed.

_____

End of Block: Default Question Block

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

How Writing Program Administrators Perceive and Implement Multimodality in First-Year Writing Programs

Optional Follow-Up Interview

Estimated Time: 60 minutes via phone or video call

General questions

Participants from the survey will have the option to voluntarily participate in a follow-up interview. The interview will be semi-structured. Participants may not be asked all of the questions below, depending on the survey responses they provide.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as a follow-up to your survey response! The goal of this interview is to learn more about the reasoning and background behind your answers.

1. What is your own definition or understanding of multimodality as a concept?
2. What is your own research experience and focus area?
3. Can you describe your student population?
4. What is your view of multimodal composition and how does it play out in your program?
5. What values does multimodal implementation bring to your first-year writing program?
6. What values does multimodal implementation bring overall to students?
7. What do you think is more challenging or negative about multimodality implementation?

8. Are you satisfied with your current multimodal implementation in your first-year writing program?
9. On your survey, you noted that you place a high value on multimodal implementation within your program. What benefits have you noticed by implementing a focus on multimodality in your program?
10. On the survey, you mentioned your program's emphasis on multimodality. To what extent does an emphasis on multimodality aid in the achievement of your outcomes?
11. On your survey, you noted that adding a multimodal component to first-year writing (highlighting its importance, incorporating into the classroom, etc) is beneficial overall for your program. Can you speak to any specific experiences/examples from your own department?
12. Can you elaborate more on the documents you uploaded (mission statement, outcomes, sample assignments) and how multimodality influences these choices?
13. On the survey you noted X and X. Can you speak more to this?
14. On the survey you noted X and X. Can you speak more to this?
15. On the survey you noted X and X. Can you speak more to this?
16. Is there anything else you'd like to say about your views towards multimodality within writing programs?

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX E

Codebook for Qualitative Data

Nodes\\Definition

Name	Description	Files	References
Associations with Multimodal		13	32
Circulation		2	2
Digital media		3	3
Digital rhetoric		0	0
Information Literacy		1	2
Material rhetorics		2	2
Rhetorical ecologies		1	1
Scholar		1	1
Social media		1	1
Visual rhetoric		1	1
Composing		2	4
Definition of Writing		2	2
Influencing Scholarship		3	5

Multimodal Definition		26	41
Reaction to being asked multimodal definition		3	3
Outcomes		10	17
Response towards defining multimodal		6	7

Nodes\\Implementation

Name	Description	Files	References
Access		10	12
Assessment		11	13
Challenges of Multimodality		5	6
Consistency across faculty		2	2
Outside perception of what FYW does		6	6

Staying up-to-date		2	3
Student access		1	2
Time constraints		8	10
Training		3	3
Circulation		6	10
Collaboration		2	3
COVID		3	4
Faculty Development Resources		1	1
First year writing program department		10	24
Future program goals		15	25
Goal as WPA		2	2
Labor		9	13
Multimodal Assignments		15	32
On-campus support		9	19
Faculty		7	11

Student		2	2
Outcomes		1	1
Personal pedagogical approach		3	7
Professional Development		2	3
Program requirement of Multimodality		4	7
Rationale behind NOT having multimodal requirement		7	9
Teacher Freedom		5	6
Training		2	2
Student response to multimodal assignments		23	38
Teacher freedom		3	3
Technological tools		1	3
Training		17	26
Multimodal specific workshop		7	10

Nodes\\Institutional Context

Name	Description	Files	References
Changes made to Program since WPA arrival		12	24
Faculty Make-Up		18	38
Institutional context		6	14
Institutional context differences		1	6
Multi institution connection		1	2
Training limits		1	1
Interdisciplinary		2	3
Primary Majors		14	14
Student context		26	38

Nodes\\Other

Name	Description	Files	References
Graduate		2	44

experience		3	

Nodes\\Value

Name	Description	Files	References
Administrative Approach		2	3
Benefits of Multimodality		3	3
Civic Engagement		1	2
Colleague response to Multimodality		20	55
Community		1	3
Community engagement		3	3
Community engagement (2)		1	1
Faculty Comfort Zone		7	12
Larger field problems		2	6
Literature		1	1
Literacy practices		1	3

Personal experience with multimodal	Explanation of background with multimodal	16	25
Personal value of multimodality		17	31
Real world application		3	3
Rhetoric		1	3
Student experiences		2	3
Student growth		1	1
Student Needs		7	10
Student writing experiences		1	3
Values Multimodality brings to program		6	9
Adaptability		1	1
Audience awareness		3	3
Creativity		3	4
Critical Thinking		1	1
Flexibility		4	4
Genre		4	4

Interdisciplinary connection		1	1
Metacognition		1	1
Rhetorical Awareness		5	5
Risk Taking		5	6
Stronger communities		1	1
Student empowerment		2	3
Student engagement		4	5
Student freedom		2	2
Transfer		5	8
Writing program's top priority		12	23

Nodes\\Values Coding

Name	Description	Files	References
Mixed		25	117
Negative		25	124

Positive		2 6	20 6

VITA

Allie Sockwell Johnston was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, but moved as an infant to her hometown of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. She graduated from Lawrence County High School and enrolled at Lipscomb University, studying English-Writing and discovering her true passion of working in writing centers. She attended the University of Alabama to obtain her Master's in Composition, Rhetoric, and English Studies. Life came full circle as she returned to Knoxville to pursue a Doctorate of Philosophy degree in English with a concentration in Rhetoric, Writing, and Linguistics at the University of Tennessee. Her research is motivated by her students--those she has been privileged enough to work with in the past and those she hopes to encounter in the future. Her research areas include first-year writing, writing centers, and multimodality. She is forever grateful for the support from her family, husband, and community to encourage her dreams and excited to continue serving others through the power of writing.