

Masters Degree Consortium of Writing Studies Specialists

2016 Annual Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 18, 2016
Hilton Grand Ballroom L
Houston, TX
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Welcome and update on last year's activities

Co-chairs Rebecca Jackson and Eric Leake welcomed attendees to this year's meeting. They reviewed the Consortium's work in the past year and highlighted the organization of a SIG-sponsored panel at this year's 4Cs, The Extracurriculum within Our Wall, session A30. The co-chairs and members agreed that the Consortium set a rather ambitious agenda last year and that it would do well this year to focus enthusiasm and prioritize efforts.

New Business: Refocus and prioritize Consortium efforts

The co-chairs presented a number of possible initiatives. Those included:

- Extending the current survey of MA program in Writing Studies using *Rhetoric Review's* Wiki survey of PhD programs as a model
- Pursuing a journal special journal issue focusing on MA programs in Writing Studies
- Developing a protocol for consulting / reviewing / establishing a best practices framework to support new and emerging programs
- Maintaining the Consortium website, possible handoff and upgrade
- Considering ideas for next year's special session

The consensus of Consortium members was to prioritize proposal of a special issue and to continue sponsoring sessions. The Consortium decided to maintain the current website and program directory, with the possibility of developing a Wiki to allow MA/MS program directors to enter and edit their program's profile information.

Susan Murphy offered to talk with the managers of CompPile about collaborating on or hosting the Consortium **directory**.

Stephanie Vie volunteered to get in touch with the editors of *Composition Forum* regarding a **special issue** and write an inquiry email, which was sent during the Consortium meeting. Rebecca Jackson agreed to help coordinate these efforts among Consortium members.

Discussion then turned to ideas for next year's **sponsored session**. Consortium members talked about the issues facing their programs, such as recruitment, state teacher

certification requirements, and the inter-department and inter-college relationships. John Dunn suggested looking at local histories of programs in order to understand better how programs respond to the needs of their places and times. This proposal worked with Mia Zamora's idea of examining personal and programmatic disciplinary identities in her program. Rebecca Jackson offered to spearhead a CFP for proposals and to organize a panel around programmatic histories and futures for next year's conference.

Presentations and Program Overviews

Nikki Caswell, of East Carolina University, presented first. She covered the history of her program and its position within the English Department. The larger discussion eventually turned to issues of recruitment of under-represented students and the relationships of programs with their local communities.

Dagmar Scharold, of University of Houston-Downtown, presented second. She described the development of her program and its emphasis on multicultural composition instruction and rhetorics. That led to a larger discussion about program branding and how best to manage a distinct emphasis within the required courses of an MA/MS program.

The annual meeting concluded with a review of the determined actions for the next year and some additional discussion of possible presentations for the sponsored session. The meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.