

Teaching Philosophy Molly E. Daniel

Teaching for me is a process of constantly re-visioning the classroom, the conversation, the coursework, and the community. This approach to the classroom stems from my view of composing as a social and collaborative act that relies upon different symbols systems shaped and delivered through various forms of media, ranging from print and digital to networked composition. Because my own view of composing extends beyond the edges of a written page and the classroom walls, I encourage my students to consider three major issues with each component of our class: 1) the public-ness of their writing, which requires balancing personal/professional voices, 2) their position within the public conversation and within our community, and 3) their rhetorical awareness of the scope of their composition and the choices they make as composers. In order to help students in both College Composition and major courses grow as composers by grappling with these three concerns, I incorporate social media into my pedagogy, create extensive discussion tools, offer a variety of workshop opportunities, and support rhetorical reflection in conjunction with the projects students produce.

Within my classroom, I encourage students to interrogate the public-ness of their own writing and the identities they framed through their voice, especially in digitally mediated spaces. Therefore, I integrate social media, specifically Twitter, into the fabric of each course, and I remain an active participant in this space by tweeting with my students. In the process, I model the importance of balancing personal and professional digital identities as a means to help them negotiate similar challenges. Twitter supports my approach to both the public-ness and social nature of writing in a variety of ways. For instance, it gives students the opportunity to explore how their composed tweets circulate the platform as they attend to their purpose and audience. Not only do their peers see their tweets, but so does a public beyond the classroom, often even scholars we read in class. Secondly, Twitter invites students to think critically (potentially for the first time) about how what they say emerges for their audiences on the platform, and it allows them to explore the identities they have shaped, begin to shape, or will shape as they continue their collegiate careers. These identities center on balancing their personal and professional personas. Rhetorical awareness of how and why we use the platform informs this balance because it invites students to interrogate their preconceived notions about Twitter while also actively engaging with it. Third, twitter creates a community outside the boundaries of the classroom wherein students create a support system throughout the composing processes, not just during class time. As a Twitter community, students offer to one another support, feedback, and enthusiastic and genuine responses to questions. This support system has greatly influenced the way my students communicate with one another both inside and outside of class time.

Since I believe composing is a social and collaborative endeavor, I help students develop approaches to coursework that invites them to situate themselves as active contributors to academic conversations and as active members of our community. In order to foster this, coursework privileges class discussion, both face-to-face and digital. We hold digital discussions that are instigated by questions students tweet to one another, in-class conversations, and responses to assigned readings. By maintaining a strong presence in the course Blackboard space and in our class, student begin to develop and sustain community. To support such engagement, I organically shift students into groups for small group conversation, a process that leads to participation in larger spaces as well as to collaboration through workshop practices. These workshops are developed collaboratively: students contribute to the workshop plans so that we

address the components they value or struggle with in each draft. As a result of these varied opportunities for communal interaction, students grow together as composers, learning from each other in the process.

Finally, and most importantly, within each project they compose, I challenge students, first, to approach composing with a rhetorical lens and, second, to consider their choices as rhetorical acts. This attention to rhetorical awareness surfaces in two major ways throughout class: in revision workshops and the *Rhetorical Rationale*. Within revision workshop, which incorporates a variety of peer responses, composers responds to their own piece through a reflection. This encourages students to think critically about their own composition, articulate a revision plan, and prepare for the *Rhetorical Rationale*. After completing the project, students compose a *Rhetorical Rationale*, a companion piece to each project which asks students to consider their rhetorical choices. Within this text, students reflect on their process and attend to the specific rhetorical choices they made throughout the development and completion of the project at hand, including minor and major choices. The purpose of this text is two-fold: 1) it fosters deliberate rhetorical awareness within composing and 2) it provides a rationale for me to understand why a student chose to create the project I receive.

Focusing on composing as social and collaborative creates a dynamic classroom wherein my students and I are active participants, composing across a variety of media and creating interesting conversations of personal and professional voice. As students pass through my courses, I aim to increase their growth as composers by attending to both the public-ness of writing, voice, and the rhetorical effects their choices have on both their end product and their audience. As students interrogate their own conceptions of what it means to compose and collaborate, they enrich their ability to communicate and compose as well as develop a critical eye to examine information, technology, and identity.