The Path Ahead for Recent PhDs

Thomas Miller
University of Arizona

Charles McMartin
Utah State University

Thomas Miller (he/him) is professor emeritus at the University of Arizona, where he served as writing program administrator, graduate director, and vice provost for faculty affairs. He received awards for his diversity leadership, teaching, mentoring, advocacy for shared governance, and research. He is a recipient of the Mina Shaughnessy Award for his book *The Formation of College English* (1997). His current research examines the challenging opportunities facing early-career faculty and staff leaders.

Charles McMartin is an Assistant Professor of English at Utah State University. His research focuses on culturally sustaining pedagogies, community writing, student activism, and NextGen faculty and staff leaders. His work has recently appeared in *College English*, *Reflections: A Journal of Community-Engaged Writing and Rhetoric*, *Rhetoric Review*, *Peitho*, and *Composition Studies*.

The Interviewees

We conducted 60-minute interviews with 30 of the 93 recent PhD graduates we contacted from 7 doctoral programs (including 5 in large research universities).[1]

- 10 graduated during the pandemic: 5 in 2021, 5 in 2020, 6 in 2019, 4 in 2018, 5 in 2017, and 5 in 2016.

- 21 are tenure-track assistant professors, 3 are nontenure-track faculty, 3 academic staff (including 2 who teach part time), and 3 non-academics (including 2 who had been NT faculty).

- 7 TT faculty are not in "English" or English-only departments, and 2 were helping to create new departments.

---

[1] For permission to cite this research, please email the authors.

- All specialize in writing studies and related areas (with 1 in English ed. and 2 in technical communications).

- 7 of the tenure-track faculty serve as WPAs and in other formal administrative roles, and the 3 staff also have administrative duties.

- 11 work in Doctoral Very High Research universities, 4 in Doctoral High Research, 1 in Doctoral/Professional, 7 in Masters, 2 in Baccalaureate, and 2 in community colleges.

- 16 are women, and 2 are African American, 2 Asian American, 3 Hispanic, and 23 White Non-Hispanic. We did not ask for information on sexual orientation.

The Interviews

Almost half of our interviewees experienced the worst job market in recorded history, including several who graduated before the pandemic and conducted job searches in subsequent years. All of the interviewees have launched their careers amidst the deepest disruptions in higher education since WWII. In our summaries of the interviews, we attempted to characterize the interviewees' perspectives without belaboring the stress and burnout

"A family-friendly policy that's friendliest to male professors"

they experienced because these concerns have been well documented in the research cited at the end of this report.

We framed these discussions with questions about leadership because early-career faculty face historic leadership challenges—and opportunities. Many English departments have struggled to sustain day-to-day operations with declining support and futures obscured by the ongoing impact of pandemic. Many of our interviewees have had to step up to fill the leadership gaps created by the rising retirements of senior faculty, the lack of faculty with the expertise to develop and teach professional and other writing majors, and the challenges of sustaining writing programs that often include large numbers of teaching assistants and recently hired and part-time instructors. One third of the new assistant professors we interviewed had taken on administrative leadership roles, and others recounted how they had stepped up to support students and coworkers through the pandemic, including helping with transitioning teaching to online.

In these and other roles, early-career faculty are stepping into the leadership challenges of helping English departments adapt to the institutional, economic, and demographic changes that have become powerfully apparent with pandemic-related changes in the educational and social environments of higher education.

1. **How do you understand leadership? What do you look for in leaders?**

Like most faculty, our interviewees initially presumed that questions about "leaders" referred to heads and other administrators, but some immediately acknowledged that those not in designated leadership positions could also serve as leaders. Some defined leaders as collaborators who step up to help a group get things done, as they were doing in their

departments. Virtually all the discussions identified effective leadership with listening and supporting coworkers, and many characterized weak leaders as those who avoided conflicts, lacked transparency, and were more intent on their own purposes. Many interviewees noted that good leaders had made efforts to consider the human impact of the pandemic, while unresponsive leaders had not adequately prioritized the well-being of students and faculty.

2. How has the pandemic impacted you and your coworkers?

As one would expect, interviewees reported feeling isolated and overworked, but some noted that working from home had shielded them from the worst aspects of the pandemic. Mothers with young children struggled, and those struggles prompted reassessments of career aspirations. Many interviewees praised coworkers and departments for how they managed the transition to online, though many also observed that senior colleagues had needed help with adapting.

3. What do you see as the lasting impact of the pandemic?

There was a collective hope that all the stress and burnout would encourage the prioritization of mental health and work-life balance in an ongoing way. Many interviews also noted how attention to accessibility skyrocketed with the move to online teaching and remote work. The increased emphasis on accessibility and working from home were seen as lasting changes with positive benefits, though the loss of community was also a concern. While interviewees were also concerned about encroaching business interests, several saw the impact of technology as a source of innovation. Such mixed assessments are consistent with Dumont et al., "The effect of the COVID pandemic on faculty adoption of online teaching," *Cogent Education*, 2021.

4. How effectively is your department responding to the leadership challenges it is facing?

Our discussions of this question often focused on how early-career faculty had to find their place in departments that were struggling with leadership challenges, including generational divisions (which were cited by one third of the faculty we spoke with). Several interviewees related these internal tensions to faculty anxieties that English departments were losing support, while others expressed hope that much more could be done to better articulate the contributions of their departments and programs if faculty worked together to adapt to the changes they faced. Virtually all who worked outside of English departments reported fewer such challenges.

5. Are your coworkers discussing revising curricula to increase enrollments?

Many interviewees reported that their departments were discussing how to respond to the enrollment declines that have led almost 90% of English departments to revise their majors according to the MLA's "A Changing Major" (2018). Interviewees reviewed curricular

reforms aimed at creating more "broadly applicable" majors with fewer prerequisites and period-based literature courses. Several noted the rising popularity of professional writing majors. Virtually all the respondents adopted a pragmatic stance concerned with adapting programs to improve student recruitment and support.

6. Is your department making efforts to address social justice and anti-racist concerns?

These issues were a major priority of almost all interviewees. Some reported they had joined with students and faculty across campus to press for more attention to BLM and related issues. Social justice came up in many discussions of interviewees' leadership outside of their own teaching and mentoring. Several faculty of color and other respondents noted that such service efforts had increased their workloads.

7. Is your department treating NT instructors fairly? Are they included in deliberations on these issues?

Our interviewees included a lecturer, instructor, nontenure-track professor, and others who had worked in such roles in writing programs before leaving the academy or transitioning to TT positions. Two staff taught in part-time positions. Some TT interviewees did not have much contact with NT coworkers. Those who did expressed concerns about working conditions while some also reported that NT faculty were voting members of their departments. Our NT interviewees seemed to be more involved in their programs than in their departments.

8. How effectively is your department articulating its contributions and priorities going forward?

We had several generative conversations about "the deep irony" that faculty in English departments "specialize in communication" and yet often do not effectively communicate their contributions to their universities. Our interviewees who worked outside English departments were particularly critical of how English departments position themselves. Several interviewees cited examples where effective leaders had helped their departments develop proactive and innovative ways to strengthen their positions, for example by developing interdisciplinary and community partnerships.

9. How well did your grad program prepare you to address the challenges you're facing?

Our participants noted that "nothing could truly prepare them" for the global challenges they are facing. No one cited graduate courses that were directly applicable. Discussions focused instead on the mentors who helped them understand how higher education works and TA leadership roles in writing programs and centers that involved them in that work. Some also responded by looking beyond their graduate studies to talk about how their leadership had been shaped by teaching in schools, labor organizing, and working in businesses and nonprofits.

10. Given these challenges, how do you see your own leadership? Is leadership part of what you teach?

Many respondents who were not in designated leadership roles were initially hesitant to identify themselves as leaders. Those who did generally focused on their teaching as the primary area where they served as leaders. Interviewees shared inspiring examples of how they

created collaborative classrooms in which they served as a "guide on the side" to empower students. Several cited classes focused on advocacy and leadership, and others identified the teaching of rhetoric as implicitly concerned with teaching leadership. When we introduced our focus on coalitional leadership, virtually all interviewees welcomed that frame and used it to articulate their own leadership contributions in a more unified way.

1. How do you understand leadership? What do you look for in leaders?

When asked about leadership in the academy, most interviewees initially focused on heads, WPAs, and other administrators. Early-career faculty understandably looked to such leaders to clarify expectations, defend their departments, and provide needed support. Some interviewees opened with expansive views of leadership that looked past the common tendency to identify administrators as leaders. When respondents spoke about themselves as leaders, they mostly focused on their teaching, which was pivotal to our discussions of more expansive views of leadership. Interviewees also cited their collaborations with "peer leaders" or "leading from behind." Over the course of the interviews, most respondents shifted back and forth between these more distributed and hierarchical views of leadership.

In response to such views, we directly asked respondents whether one had to be in a position of power to be a leader. When asked, interviewees recognized that the tendency to look to administrators for leadership devalued faculty members' collaborative leadership. In addition to talking about their teaching, interviewees talked about the importance of "horizontal approaches" to collaborative leadership, for example in building coalitions and in distributed forms of leadership such as serving on committees. Many interviewees cited examples from their work in writing centers, community partnerships, collaborative research, and social-justice coalitions and labor unions.

Twelve interviewees cited labor union organizing as an example of what one termed "grassroots community-based leadership." A few noted how they had become involved in unionizing as teachers and TAs, and others noted union efforts to respond to administrators' failures to prioritize health protections, working conditions, and social justice issues. Several respondents noted that English department TAs and faculty had played leading roles in building campus-wide-coalitions to address such issues.

In various ways, respondents distinguished between "authoritarian" and "authoritative" leaders who are transparent and good sources of institutional knowledge and yet ready to learn from their colleagues and be decisive when needed. Interviewees noted that collaborators have to step

When I first got here, I didn't feel like a leader because. . .I didn't have, a particular position that kind of designated me as a leader. . . .. Even though I know that . . . [my work with] students in the classroom. . .is a form of leadership, for sure. But the way I teach, I don't think of myself like that, I guess I think of myself as like a co-participant in this learning process. But this year, I definitely feel more like I am in like a designated leadership role as the director of composition. . . . I'm in charge of training all of our TAs . . ., and I lead our preceptorship. And, you know, offer other forms of support, like professional development days, and things like that.

up "in certain situations where the need for a leader arises." Other interviewees noted the limitations of a collaborative vision of leadership: "too much horizontally can be chaos," and "groupthink" can lead to indecisive discussion loops that do not get groups anywhere.

Good Leadership: Interviewees focused on the importance of communications (especially listening), humility, collaboration, transparency, empathy, democracy, accountability, and trust in discussing effective leaders. Many of these qualities were mentioned together. For example, the skill of listening was highly correlated with other qualities. One instructive example of this skill bundling came from a participant who used Carol Dweck's concept of "growth mindset" to sketch the relations between humility, listening, and collaboration: leaders need to have a "growth mindset" because "humility is so important" in "really listening to others and being in relation to them, instead of seeing you're the expert."

Effective leaders advocate for their departments to secure vital resources and help their colleagues understand institutional priorities and constraints.

They are attentive to the needs of their collaborators and do not just focus on getting business done or seek the prestige of being the boss: "Everyone wants to be at the mic, you know, the bullhorn." Other qualities that were most cited were humanity and a compassionate concern for supporting coworkers in ways that earn their trust.

Because leaders are attuned to the needs of those they represent, they can anticipate and address tensions before they build to a crisis. Effective leaders proactively address conflicts rather than just react to them.

Bad Leadership: Less effective leaders were characterized as conflict averse, indecisive, and self-servingly guided by their own presumptions and ambitions. Instead of engaging in dialogues over issues, they offer "pretend choices" because they've already made up their minds. Several respondents noted that less effective leaders, like less effective teachers, may pretend everything is open for discussion while expectations and criteria are already set.

Interviewees recognized that ineffective and effective leadership is distinguished not just by the qualities of individual leaders but also by the institutional contexts and interpersonal histories that shape the constraints and expectations

Positive leaders. . .are genuinely interested in listening, not just like checking a box. We're not just, you know, trying to, like get this done by a certain time, but we're really trying to listen. . . . And I think, for me, my positive experiences have been when I'm mostly working with students and genuinely trying to listen to what they say. And then when I haven't been such a great leader, . . .I find myself saying, like, we tried that a few years ago, and it didn't work. . . . So I guess. . .[listening is what] *makes a good leader. . .first and foremost,. . .listening,* [with] *intentionality. So really like not having an idea in your mind of what's going to work. I've been part of groups, where we do have like a leader who's been here a while and feels like they've got it figured out. And that's just never a good recipe.*

that leaders work with. In many interviews, individuals shifted from discussing individual leaders to discussing institutional hierarchies and patterns of interaction and deliberation.

A case study in how to build collaborative leadership capacity was provided by an interviewee who worked in a not-for-profit after leaving a lectureship in a large impersonal writing program. The writing program did not involve or even inform her about basic operations, for example by providing a new faculty orientation. In sharp contrast, her nonprofit used "Sociocratic" methods of collaborative decision-making to alleviate problems with transparency, leadership, and a lack of ownership:

> Sociocracy . . . is an effort to self-organize and allow individuals to have more autonomy over their work. And so it makes an effort to really kind of like, make clear who owns what decisions and then who within certain teams should connect with or consult with other teams. And it really tries to codify decision-making power.

The interviewee praised how this collaborative leadership philosophy demystified collaborative situations:

> Like, are we trying to create a proposal, or are we trying to make a decision? . . . [This methodology helps us] get clear about what we're trying to do together. And then the big one is that decision-making within each team and within the organization overall is done through consent. So it's not consensus. . . If somebody does not consent to it, then it does not move forward until we figure out or resolve that issue. . . .

This model of collaborative leadership stood in stark contrast to the experiences of other early-career faculty. The interviews included harrowing accounts of dysfunctional department meetings in which bickering and an inability to develop strategic plans incapacitated collaborative leadership. Such challenges were sometimes blamed on ineffective heads, but the descriptions also highlighted how departments have become stressed over how to address declining enrollments, funding, and TT hiring.

2. How has the pandemic impacted you and your coworkers?

Searching for jobs and struggling to find a place in locked-down departments brought overwhelming stress and anxiety to many of the early-career faculty we interviewed. Those formative experiences impacted their career goals, their assessments of their own work, and their perceptions of the academic communities they watched at work in Zoom meetings. The survey research cited at the end of this report reviews the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on early-career faculty and staff who are women, parents of young children, untenured, and part-timers. Studies have also identified minority faculty and staff as more impacted because of their disproportionately impacted communities.

Six of the twelve respondents who talked about their job searches in the pandemic reflected on the impact of that experience on their career goals. Five had just graduated from PhD programs. One respondent who had landed a lectureship position and then was let go during the pandemic reported feeling suicidal over having to go through another academic job search. Another participant described experiencing multiple "mental breakdowns" throughout her job search, which she characterized as the hardest experience in her life.

The pandemic also had differing impacts depending on the politics of the interviewees' state and whether they worked in smaller institutions, community colleges, or more residential universities. Residential institutions that were "tuition dependent" struggled from losing revenues from dorms, especially those in isolated locations: "Like kids, traditional college age, college students go and live there. . . . That is their model of education." Some respondents at smaller liberal arts or state schools noted they did not receive support like the "COVID-relief" semester offered at better-funded universities. Interviewees observed that testing and mask mandates had been undercut by conservative legislatures, but also that their campus had been a leader in their community by showing care for students and effectively rolling out vaccination clinics and testing.

The pandemic presented unprecedented leadership challenges to university, college, and department administrators and also made it very difficult for faculty and staff to come together to address those challenges. While one interviewee noted that faculty had passed a formal vote of no confidence in a top administrator, others noted that their university administrators did their best to respond to the unpredictable and evolving situations.. Some respondents faulted administrators for operating without transparency, jumping too quickly to cut salaries, and failing to prioritize support and safety for students, staff, and faculty. One participant reported that her colleagues were working without a contract for a year after cuts in pay because of ongoing union disputes. Interviewees were more divided over university leaders' responsiveness to the underlying mental health pressures faced by students and faculty because those concerns were seen to require a deeper commitment and sustained funding, as discussed further below.

There were probably three times the number of jobs available as there are right now, and . . .as the semester progressed, I saw where departments were shutting down . . . [I felt] *this overwhelming anxiety of I'm not even going to have a job . . .when this thing is over. . .To be completely honest my focus shifted. It wasn't so much a let me figure out where I want to go, or even where would be the best fit. I changed my thinking to like who's going to offer me a job, and I hate that I had to think about it like that because . . .I don't want to job hop. I want to find that space that . . .will be a good fit for me, and so it became much more tactical.*

Most interviewees praised departmental leaders who were caught in the middle between evolving university procedures and the individual crises faced by students and faculty, but others were more critical. One noted that she was forced to teach in the classroom even though she had requested to transition to online and had the expertise to do so. She felt she was unnecessarily put under extraordinary stress. Numerous interviewees noted how they and their colleagues stepped up to help such individuals. Such invisible service was often not recognized in workload assignments, but several TT interviewees noted that they were offered the opportunity to delay their tenure reviews. Unfortunately, as discussed in the attached research review, P&T clock delays have been found to have a more positive impact on male faculty productivity. Other interviewees recounted how faculty but not staff were provided with flexible expectations and increased support such as maternity leaves.

The six parents who discussed their family talked about the "chaos" they experienced as "a nightmare" that was "physically and emotionally draining." One parent explained how he had not done research for fifteen months, and others noted that they could not find the time or cognitive space to write.

Several interviewees noted that those teaching off the tenure track were more impacted by the transition to online. While some tenure-track faculty were able to get by with how they wanted to respond to teaching online, NT faculty had to pick up the slack under much stricter mandates. One interviewee noted that the most impacted were part-time instructors:

> We're throwing all this new technology, all this new medium of teaching off on our part-time faculty, which was kind of crappy, because the part-time faculty . . . get paid horribly. I mean, like less than $3,000 for a class. So you have a three-credit class and you're getting paid like $2,200 for it. So it's pretty awful, right? And so then on top of all of that, . . . the college didn't give us a webcam.

I think in teaching, we can never again assume that the students are like, absorbing information. I think, because in pandemic teaching, we had to be more thoughtful about if a student is not actually there on the other end. But in our classes, we should also be thoughtful about if students are actually there and engaging. And in pandemic teaching, you know, I was able to say, okay, here's a question. I'm putting it on the screen, put your answer in the chat as a private message to me, or put your answer in the group chat, . . . And I think some of that we can extend into our regular teaching . . . . Can there be more collaborative writing during class? I think that students really value those tools, and they're more comfortable with them now. So I think that engagement might go up as a result of the pandemic.

While many interviewees appreciated the convenience of working from home, one of the most common concerns was the isolation the pandemic created. This stress made departmental discussions of divisive issues even more challenging. Relationships became strained when interactions were limited to Zoom meetings in which some colleagues remained silent and unresponsive "Zoom ghosts." Concerns were often expressed that faculty might keep to themselves after the pandemic, resulting in decreased collaborations and more "siloed" departments. One interviewee observed,

> Everyone I know is incredibly burnt out, disenchanted, angry, tired. Not their best self, just in general. I think that like, are you going to see a lot of like decreased buy-in, decreased job satisfaction, . . . [and] strained relationships in departments.

3. What do you see as the lasting impact of the pandemic?

While many interviewees were concerned that the pandemic would undermine their department's collaborative culture in a lasting way, others speculated that the differing impact of the pandemic on younger and older faculty might persist. Many interviewees noted that older faculty struggled with the transition to online, and several noted that senior faculty had remained less involved. The research cited in our concluding overview also notes that older faculty have remained less engaged, perhaps out of continuing health concerns. One interviewee noted that younger faculty have lived through the formative impacts of the great

recession, mass demonstrations, the insurrection, and the pandemic. She concluded that younger faculty often identify more with students and were more likely to join them in social-justice demonstrations: "It mattered a lot to students that we showed up." Such identifications can be a source of resilience.

An interviewee raised a question that every department needs to be asking: "How do you start your career when . . . you're totally fried?" Many interviewees expressed concerns about whether the increased awareness of mental health and related services would be continued. One participant noted that her academic work culture still encouraged burnout: "That's the problem with academics, isn't it? We just take it all on and keep moving because we're so used to doing that." This same participant felt the "burnout of the faculty will be lasting." Another interviewee observed that she had come to realize that her family was more important than her career. Our departments and institutions will need to recognize that such perceptions are a healthy part of the life of many early-career faculty. Older faculty will need to recognize that the choices they made with prioritizing work may differ from those made by younger faculty cohorts.

Several interviewees noted that they expected that their colleagues' commitment to improving work-life balance would be long lasting. One interviewee who had left the academy in part because of the lack of boundaries around work demands noted that such demarcations are vital to retaining faculty and staff. Healthy work-life balance has also been shown to be vital to creativity and productivity. As one interviewee noted, we need a "larger recognition that, you know, everyone has different, different vulnerabilities, different responsibilities at home. And to just kind of make policy and . . . reformat the classroom around those kinds of realities."

The concern for wellness and self-care often came up in discussions of teaching. Several participants noted that their compassion towards students increased. Five participants expressed hopes that compassion for students' vulnerabilities would converge with the increased visibility of faculty labor to lead departments and institute policies that pay more attention to work-life balance.

This attention to wellness and self-care was integrally related to another result from the pandemic that interviewees hoped would be sustained: increased attention to accessibility. While interviewees noted the access challenges faced by some students, the move to online teaching was viewed as "an accessibility moment" in education. Many respondents saw the increased number of online courses and the use of collaborative platforms in classes as positive steps towards widening access to higher education, including online advising and tutoring in writing centers.

Accessibility, wellness, and work-life balance have generally been understood to be accommodations for those who need more help. This perspective was challenged by several of our lines of discussion, most notably our discussions of leadership. More wholistic and compassionate perspectives on leadership were articulated by many women and some men faculty, staff, and nonacademic interviewees. This concern for prioritizing rather than simply accommodating people's needs was informed by the interviewees' own experiences seeking jobs and building a place for themselves in departments that were overwhelmed with stress and anxiety.

4. How effectively is your department responding to the leadership challenges it is facing?

Many interviewees were faced with the problems that have been documented in research on national trends: There has been a 40% drop in BAs in English in the last ten years and declining TT hiring even before the pandemic. Several of our interviewees observed how the inability to replace leaders had sent their English department into decline, with heads pressed "against the wall" by a bottom-line mindset that devalued the contributions of the humanities. Much more positive dynamics were reported by other interviewees, depending in part on regional differences in college-aged populations, and also on how effectively their departments were adapting to these environmental changes.

Some interviewees described departments that were proactively adapting and others that lacked the individual and collective leadership to change. Major leadership gaps were reported by about 25% of our interviewees. Interviewees noted that their senior colleagues were reluctantly pressed into leadership roles because faculty losses had left their departments with few mid-career faculty willing to step up. One interviewee noted that their small department established a rotation system in which all had to serve as head even if they did not want to. Several respondents noted that when no TT faculty member wanted "to step up," NT faculty were given leadership roles on an interim basis. They sometimes had to struggle with supervisory duties and without the standing to implement major changes.

Many respondents cited leadership challenges in English departments. Several shared striking examples of how their departments had lost heads and directors, including one who had reportedly been such an engaged leader that his department turned him down for tenure because all the time he invested in leading the program the department depended on did not leave him with enough time to fulfill traditional research expectations. Many interviewees noted that their department struggled with faculty heads who were not keeping up with the times. For example, one interviewee joked that his head was still "printing his emails," and another noted the ineffectiveness of a longstanding head who burned up meeting times with routine announcements and did not leave enough time to deliberate on vital problems. As a result, "nothing ever happens." The interviewee noted that he "dreads" going to departmental meetings because they are the "least efficient, most meandering" meetings he had ever attended. He observed that the resulting inertia sapped the departments' collective potentials.

> *Going into the English department was sort of like walking into your divorced parents fighting, and so basically, there's just all of these underlying conflicts that you're not privy to . . . beneath the surface, like various real and perceived slights from the last 15 years . . . Another part of it is I'm the only rhetoric and writing type person, right? Like, the rest of them are all pretty traditional literature people, and so a lot of them are really invested in how do we get our students to appreciate great literature . . . The reason [students] don't want to take these classes is because you're insisting they read Alexander Pope, right? .... So part of it is disagreements about pedagogy, and sometimes . . . it is. . . one senior colleague who's super abrasive and . . . upsetting.*

"Toxic" interactions left some of the assistant professors we interviewed feeling they were not able to be heard in their departments: "It's . . . a numbers game" because "there's more literature people than comp people, so that's who ends up dominating." The "war" between literature, composition, and creative writing was seen by one interviewee as distracting from efforts to defend departments: "Stop fighting these little battles and instead look at the larger war of legitimizing" the department's mission. Interviewees who criticized English departments' resistance to change noted that such tendencies arose in part because older faculty believed that adapting to prevailing environmental changes was a matter of selling out their values.

We have a coordinator. And the coordinator is kind of a WPA, but kind of a catch all for everything else. So it's not, it's not a clear WPA position, but she's kind of responsible for a lot of the WPA composition type stuff. But then she does other things that are not WPA-related at all. And I just started asking if people needed mentors, you know, I'd be happy to help out because that's what I started. And so I've been working with some people, . . . and I've been mentoring now for like about three years.

The divisions between literature and writing faculty were cited as a problem by one third of our faculty interviewees. Such problems differed in departments with significant numbers of writing faculty and thriving writing majors and also in some smaller departments where the tendency toward "territorialism" included not just divisions among literature, creative writing, and composition studies but also English education, linguistics, and other disciplines such as communications and drama. Seven of our interviewees did not work in English-only departments but in writing, liberal arts, communications, and education departments and programs. Some departments have worked through their internal divisions to develop a range of majors, as discussed further below. Most interviewees from other departments criticized the English departments in their institutions, while also acknowledging that their own units were facing some similar leadership challenges that were exacerbated by hiring restrictions that prevented them from replacing heads and directors.

The leadership challenges faced by new faculty varied not only by the type of department but also by the type of institution. Many interviewees who worked in community colleges and smaller colleges noted that their colleagues had been conscripted into leadership roles for a stipend of just a couple of thousand dollars. When they refused, assistant professors had to step up. Five of the thirty interviewees were serving as their department's principal writing program administrator (WPA), and several others had leadership roles in running writing centers, teaching practicum courses for new TAs, directing courses, and mentoring instructors. The lack of leadership support for such roles was noted by several interviewees. Several assistant professors recounted how they stepped up to fill leadership vacuums in their department in ways that tend to be overlooked by discussions of writing program leadership as writing program administration.

"The Evolving English Major": "*Report documents decline in numbers of majors but growth in new tracks. Of the specializations within major, writing is doing relatively well, and literature not so much.*" Inside Higher Ed, 7/18/18; based on 2016-17 MLA report, "A Changing Major."

While many of our TT interviewees showed a willingness to step up to play leadership roles, the NT faculty we talked with tended to have fewer such opportunities and were more overloaded with teaching and service duties that were not fully represented in their assigned workloads. NT and other interviewees with heavy loads noted that the lack of leadership in their department contributed to their burnout in ways that were being exacerbated by the inability to replace retiring faculty:

> The biggest problems we'll have right now is that we have people who are older . . . They're starting to retire, and we're not getting any funding to hire new people to replace them. So it's sort of like a game of attrition . . . . I teach at the community college, we teach a five-five load, so I'm teaching five classes a semester. And, you know, for basically, the last five years . . . , I've taught nine classes a year of this, which is a lot of grading, so it's a lot of burnout.

5. Are your coworkers revising curricula to increase enrollments?

When asked about enrollments, some reported the steep declines that were shaping the evolution of majors in departments across the county. To adapt to these trends, participants reported their departments were creating interdisciplinary minors and majors, removing prerequisites to enable non-majors to take classes, revamping period-based curricula, and making classes more "broadly applicable." Recruitment efforts included organizing promotional events, overhauling social media pages and websites, and asking first-year-writing instructors to send students personalized invitations to major in English.

One interviewee noted that every department meeting had focused on how to recruit more students and a special working group had been created to work on increasing enrollments. However, this interviewee and others reported that major changes were slow in coming. The interviewee also noted that graduate enrollments were also being cut because the administration was reducing funding for TAs. Such external pressures were cited by several interviewees who discussed the struggles of their departments to implement significant reforms. One interviewee described how his department seemed to be locked into a survival mindset as a result of a loss of trust in university leadership and self-justifying complaints that students were just not interested in literature like they had been.

A professor with a split appointment noted that his communications department had an "understaffed popular" major while English had an "overstaffed unpopular" one. Another interviewee noted how his English department relied upon the required gen-ed courses in literature that have been cut in most universities. According to another interviewee, "The conversation in English is perpetually about" recruiting majors, but little progress was made because of an unresponsive head. Others reported broad changes: "We pretty much all universally agreed" that historical surveys and other required courses were "not working," so the major was "opened up" and made "customizable" with "topical" course titles.

One interviewee expressed a common concern that institutions are moving away from liberal-arts missions to focus on "undergraduate research, which is code for science." The interviewee observed that "the challenge for our department is to be competent and relevant and feel included in the initiatives on campus." At this interviewee's BA institution, those initiatives included public health, with related adaptations in "health and the humanities." The

interviewee noted that the faculty member with the necessary expertise had retired and not been replaced, "so that's another challenge, but there's a challenge everywhere."

Other interviewees reported more positive trends. A couple of interviewees noted that enrollments returned to previous levels after the first year of the pandemic, especially in writing courses and writing majors. Several interviewees were involved in such undergraduate and

Number of Bachelor's Degree Completions in English, History, Modern Languages Other Than English, and Philosophy and Religious Studies per 100 Bachelor's Degrees in All Fields, 1987–2016
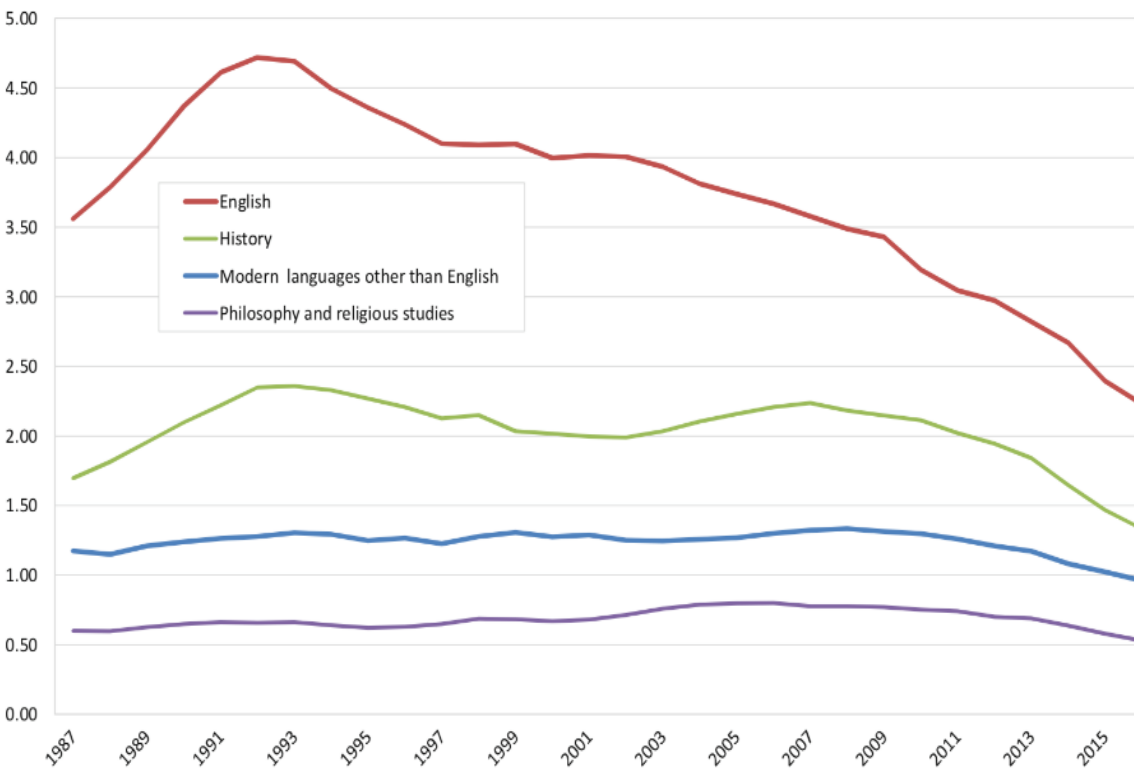
graduate programs, including technical and professional writing. Those interviewees tended to see leadership as an integral part of their teaching and were optimistic about the technological and social changes that were coming to the fore in the increased attention to professional writing, visual literacies, and organizational communications. "Digital rhetoric scholars" and other "nerds" were seen to be leaders of the "pervasive change" that had "fantastic" potential to transform conceptions of cognition, ethics, and culture. Several interviewees were attuned to such environmental changes and reported that their departments were being "very intentional' in recruiting majors, providing internships, offering donor-supported career fairs, and, in one case, following the lead of postcolonial scholars who were helping to move a department's undergraduate curricula beyond its traditional Anglo-American focus.

Some of these discussions touched on how the transition to online contributed to reforms of majors, but this topic came up less than one might expect, perhaps because of broader concerns about the underlying trends involved. While some praised the move to online, others identified it with an increased reliance on outsourced services, business-minded administrators,

and declining faculty control of curricula. One interviewee discussed how his college's software application for writing assessment and placement was undercutting his coworkers' efforts to develop shared approaches to writing assessment. He joked about how the placement software his community college was using had placed Hemingway and Jesus in basic writing courses after he ran passages from novels and the Sermon on the Mount through the program. While this interviewee identified his concerns with "online nebulous institutions" that sell college credits for low contact courses, another interviewee cited examples where first-year-composition credits had been disbursed across the curriculum out of frustrations with an unresponsive English department. These sorts of trends pose direct threats to English departments' reliance on the first-year-composition courses that account for 40-50% of all the courses offered by English departments in PhD, MA and BA institutions according to the 2014 MLA report on staffing, cited in section 7.

Of the 196 PhD, MA, and BA departments that responded to the MLA survey. 87.5% were revising, planning revisions, or had recently revised majors, while another 10% had ade revisions since 2000.

Departments were asked to report on whether enrollments were "sharply lower or lower," "unchanged" or "highly or sharply higher" (which were not defined). 66.3% reported lower or sharply lower overall enrollments.

These types of majors saw declines*:*
- *74% of literature majors,*
- *69% of majors without tracks,*
- *50% of rhetoric & comp. majors,*
- *22% of prof. writing & writing studies,*
- *21% of creative writing.*

The only majors reporting that saw large increases *in enrollments were*
- *40% of creative writing majors,*
- *33% of prof. writing and writing studies,*
- *27% technical writing*

6. Is your department making efforts to address social justice and anti-racist issues?

The environmental change that virtually all participants were excited to discuss was the rising attention to social justice. Interviewees discussed the social-justice courses they are teaching, the committees they are helping lead, and related reforms such as revised mission statements, diversity workshops, and equitable hiring practices. Several respondents talked about how they were working to resist state prohibitions against critical-race theory and basic writing, in part by engaging in coalitional work related to Black Lives Matter and immigrant rights.

One Latina assistant professor who had initially said she did not see herself as a leader outside her classroom and family later talked about a half dozen social-justice initiatives she was helping to lead. When asked about that incongruity, she acknowledged that "doing things that need to be done" should be considered leadership even though she did not have any supervisory authority over others. When we talked about our focus on coalitional leadership as an alternative to focusing on individuals in positions of authority, she looped back on her discussions to integrate them into a coalitional view of leadership that she identified as "feminist." When we invited her and others to consider the contradictions that emerge when

traditional conceptions of leadership are viewed from a social-justice perspective, she deftly pivoted to discuss leaders as "connectors."

Why isn't anybody saying anything? You know, there was a deafening silence on the part of leaders in response to [BLM]. *So a group of faculty, just myself and about three other people who are in leadership roles . . . decided we need to do something, we need to say something, right? If nobody else is going to say something, we need to* [for] *our incoming graduate students.*

The faculty of color whom we interviewed and some other interviewees noted that the faculty in their department were almost entirely white ("one of the whitest on campus" according to one interviewee), and undergraduate English majors were also characterized as disproportionately white. Many respondents noted their departments and institutions were making diversity efforts that increased significantly after the murder of George Floyd. Several faculty of color noted that they had been enlisted to take up leadership of the increased initiatives, and a couple pointedly observed they had been hired to "fix" diversity problems that they did not create and which could only be remedied if Anglo faculty stepped up. It was also observed that there are very few BIPoC faculty to teach the diversity courses that students want and need.

Some of these faculty initiatives were university-wide efforts undertaken in collaboration with students. These collaborations are vital to enhancing the experience of students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. One interviewee noted that when she engaged in discussions of social justice, she felt more aligned with graduate students than with other faculty. She observed that talking about BLM and other social-justice issues with her senior colleagues could be "a tricky conversation, and for the most part, kind of a non-conversation." She discussed how she had helped to build a coalition with other faculty and staff, publicize a call for action, and develop instructional resources. This "collective" organized demonstrations and meetings to press universities to take action. This sort of coalition building was cited by a half-dozen of our TT interviewees, and when we identified leadership with enabling collective action, several said they loved that "remix" and looped back to identify it with aspects of their social and political engagements.Other respondents discussed how their departments were proactively working to integrate social-justice themes into their udergraduate courses. One

Faculty have very much been about how do we front load . . . social justice issues, how do we give greater . . . emphasis on Black literature, African American literature, and so that's been a big push... We theme the courses, . . . and, these should be big themes . . . We also just recently did a diversity and equity kind of review of our curriculum. It was our assessment goal for a year. . . The younger faculty were kind of like, we should make it more explicit, right? . . . It is the right thing to do and also might attract students, and some of the older faculty were basically like, I'm not sure that we need to do that . . . [With our] new hire, what we're trying to do right now is . . . to kind of jumpstart our conversations around this . . . We're particularly looking for someone who uses kind of Media Studies or new media as a way to understand social justice movements.

interviewee noted that her department was one of the first on campus to make contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion part of annual assessments of faculty, and that the department was "proud" to highlight its leadership in this area, in part to make the "case for the English major on campus more broadly."

Several interviewees expressed concerns about the rising interest in diversity and equity issues. The deepest expression of concern came from an NT faculty member who felt that his own career prospects had been overshadowed by his department's decision to commit all future TT hiring to diversifying the ethnic profile of the department. He observed that a hiring freeze had supposedly been implemented, and then his department had hired several minority faculty without national searches, and this left him thinking that he had to leave the academy to find advancement. This assessment provided another example of the vital importance of transparency and personal engagement in departmental leadership.

Other interviewees were concerned about tokenism and empty gestures. One TT faculty member of color expressed hopes that this focus on social justice is "not just a trend" and questioned how departments can create lasting change in both what and how they teach. Two other participants voiced similar concerns with the "trendiness" of social-justice initiatives. As one of those participants discussed, adding a class, making a public statement, or offering one-time diversity workshops are necessary but insufficient steps.

The more sustainable changes participants discussed were waiving GRE scores for graduate admissions, moving beyond standardized test scores for student placement in FYW, creating systems of support for faculty of color after they are hired, adopting textbooks that treat social-justice issues as central rather than marginal, and seeking grants and funding to integrate social justice into general education curricula.

The interviewee quoted at the top of this page recounted how her community-college department began conversations of Asao Inoue's work with labor-based contract grading when the pandemic hit. As you can see in the quote, social justice was a pivot point where she was able to lean in while still an assistant professor to help lead her colleagues through a curriculum review to consider antiracist reforms that she was envisioning leading, including the hire of a colleague who would help advance innovations that would engage students and transform established disciplinary paradigms.

Other interviewees discussed how their standpoints on such leadership initiatives differed from older faculty: "Our more senior colleagues feel maybe a little defensive that they don't know how to do that better, and the younger colleagues maybe feel a little more empowered to lead those discussions without as much fear." This interviewee noted that he and others in rhetoric and writing were better positioned to lead a social-justice initiative

Social Justice English Majors and Resources

- [Literature and Social Justice](), Lehigh U
- [Imagining Social Justice](), U of Pittsburgh
- [Literature, Social Justice, & Environment](), Texas Tech
- [Social Justice: Race, Class, Gender, Ability](), Amherst
- [Social Justice and Literature](), U of North Carolina

Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication, Frankie Condon and Vershawn Ashanti Young, 2017

because they teach student-centered classes that have a formative impact on all students' first-year experience. Several interviewees cited courses they had created that directly addressed social justice and civic engagement, for example a course in "Writing for Change" that had developed into an undergraduate minor.

7. Is your department treating nontenure-track faculty fairly and including them in discussions on these issues?

We talked with a lecturer, an instructor, a visiting assistant professor, two staff who are part-time instructors, and at least four interviewees who had worked as nontenure-track faculty before leaving the academy or finding a TT position. We unfortunately did not explicitly ask other TT interviewees about their prior teaching experiences. Our interviewees noted how their colleagues spoke about "adjuncts" and other NT faculty. One community college instructor noted that TT faculty were called "the full-time faculty," and others were called "part-timers," though some were actually full-time instructors on annual contracts. Whatever their titles, the NT faculty we talked with do the work they do because they are excited about teaching and care about students.

The instructor rank, which is where I'm located, . . . is you know, the bottom of the rung, or very nearly anyway. And it's generally recognized that it's . . . a tough job, it's a full-time teaching load. It does not pay super great . . . This is sort of just generally part of the conversation around the instructor rank… in the English department because writing programs and the English department staff wise is made up largely of instructors. So the concerns of the instructor rank are, I think, the concerns of the department. It is to the department's credit, that those concerns tend to be very publicly transparent, publicly discussed.

Some worked in their departments for years, even though they might not be recognized by TT coworkers, especially those hired in the last years when conversations in hallways have been replaced by headshots on Zoom screens. Many of our TT interviewees noted they did not have much contact with their NT coworkers. Some reported that NT coworkers had the right to attend and vote in faculty meetings and others expressed concerns about "adjuncts"—a common term that glosses over the integral and varied roles of NT faculty in ways that can show insensitivity to NT concern.

The NT faculty we talked with reported they could attend departmental meetings but generally didn't. One of the three was working to leverage his expertise with technical communications to leave the academy. He recounted how he had been told he would be able to work his way into a TT position and now felt he was being forced out for asking hard questions. Two others had left NT jobs because of little pay and respect.

Like other NT faculty with PhDs in writing studies, our interviewees faced converging hierarchies because they teach service courses at the bottom of faculty ladders in departments that often prioritize literature. One interviewee noted that NT faculty were treated as "hired hands." While low wages and support are clearly issues, some large departments were characterized as impersonal and even hostile, leaving NT faculty "constantly battling for rights." Another interviewee who left the academy noted that her writing program had

established secure positions for NT faculty but had not followed up to create opportunities for career advancement and salary increases.

Our NT interviewees had a rhetorically sophisticated understanding of the challenges they faced. One provided a nuanced assessment of the exploitative systems he worked in without blaming his TT coworkers for the benefits it provided them:

> I think that the instructor representatives on the writing programs committee have their voices heard and respected and attended to in that setting. I think that the TT leaders of writing programs are interested in the value of instructors and the intellectual expertise that the instructors bring. But a writing program's a sort of logistical organism or pedagogical kind of entity. [It doesn't make] . . . the bigger decisions for the instructor rank—things like course load and salaries . . . And so I think that as we move sort of up into a broader sort of setting and we start thinking about what kinds of power . . . instructors have at the departmental rank, I have less knowledge of that. I have never served on the English department committee as an instructor representative.

The 2014 MLA Report on Staffing provides pre-COVID statistics on NT staffing levels that have increased in recent years according to the 2020-21 AAUP Report on the Profession.

	Types of Institutions		
% of All Courses Taught	PhD	MA	BA
Full-time TT	39%	41%	58%
FT NT	21%	26%	18%
PT NT	17%	27%	24%
TA	24%	7%	1%
% of Instructors			
Full-time TT	34%	38%	52%
FT NT	14%	19%	15%
PT NT	16%	32%	32%
TA	36%	10%	.9%

While he perceived that instructors were able to develop collaborative leadership within their program, he observed they were looked down on as "dirt" by corporate-minded upper administrators who considered them merely "working capital."

Another interviewee provided a stark example of how NT faculty were reminded of their standing in a department by being forced to stand at the back of the line of instructors waiting to sign up for courses. Before COVID, the interviewee recounted how all instructors were given "a lottery number" and required to stand in a hall waiting to pick their courses:

> It was always really awkward and uncomfortable that like the nontenure faculty, they call them specialized faculty, that they were sort of at the back of the line. Right? So the grad students got to schedule first because they had classes and, you know, weren't contingent faculty. And I think that's a moment that stands out to me where like, and it wasn't because like, the grad students had issues or anything, but it was more that departmental bureaucratic structure that made those differences and status really palpable.

Faced with such "palpable" reminders of how they had to stand and wait for what they needed, several interviewees recounted how they had gotten involved in unionization efforts and strikes as TAs and NT faculty. Several noted that these efforts were the result of bad leadership that failed to attend to the needs of those who made vital contributions. She observed that the impersonal dynamics of her department demonstrated a lack of "investment" in supporting NT:

> Being a part timer is really lonely, you know. If you're an adjunct, you don't really have a lot of connection to the department. And having someone you can go to, to ask questions, or to,

you know, sort of get centered into what the department's doing or what they're asking or what the department needs or whatever.

She recounted how the only collegiality shown to her came from graduate students who reached out with offers of support. This lack of support was quite different from what she had experienced as a TA who had attended orientations each semester and worked with a peer mentor, a supervisor, and a representative TA association.

Another NT interviewee contrasted his current lack of leadership options with the role he played as a TA when he shared in "the work of leaders" as an "Assistant Director" of a writing program. He was very pragmatic about his current situation. For all its limitations, he remained committed to teaching and to his NT colleagues:

> I don't know about the tenure track folks at all, and how they're going to adapt. But everybody else, I think, is gonna feel a stronger sense of mission as a result, and also be a lot more aware and compassionate of students than ever before. Not that they weren't, but just more so now. We understand how they suffer.

This experienced faculty leader identified with his NT coworkers' strengthened sense of mission, but he was unsure how TT faculty were going to "adapt" to changes because he did not work with them closely enough. This gap between TT and NT faculty weakens the collaborative leadership in place in English departments and contributes to the rising numbers of writing programs and departments that are splitting off from them. The ability of English and related departments to adapt to ongoing environmental changes will depend in part on whether they can make full use of the leadership in place in their staff and NT and TT faculty ranks.

8. How effectively is your department articulating its broader contributions and priorities?

The most instructive examples of the challenges of strengthening departments' collaborative leadership came from discussions of how heads serve as intermediaries between their departments and upper administrators. Several interviewees discussed how they felt their heads had weakened their departments by not articulating their needs to upper administrators and by not helping the department understand institutional priorities and constraints. Several cited examples of how a lack of transparency weakened collaborations. One interviewee spoke about "the disconnect between the people you . . . look to for leadership . . . and the people who actually make decisions . . . above them." One recounted how she had had stumbled with leading a project because her supervisor was unclear about the institutional needs. These discussions highlighted how less transparent heads undercut the collaborative leadership capacities of their departments.

Those collective leadership capacities are vital to adapting to the profound environmental changes facing English and related departments. The rising generation of leaders is aware that the challenge of "selling" the broader mission of their departments often begins with their colleagues. Some interviewees identified with their coworkers while criticizing them for being

unwilling to consider "benchmarks for efficiency and utility" because they "got into teaching Englis . . . to not have to worry about this." This interviewee noted that his coworkers resisted "new economic models" because "they don't want to sacrifice the kind of enclave that they created for themselves." He also recognized that selling the contributions of English in terms of competitive rankings "can undermine the mission of the English department" by adopting a mindset of "just producing for the sake of metrics." The interviewee noted that departments have "to think of savvy ways to sell it or manage it."

Many of our interviewees showed a pragmatic flexibility and awareness of broader changes that may help them adapt in ways older generations of English department faculty are resistant to do. While participants generally recognized the importance of being able to articulate their pragmatic contributions, many also noted why faculty are resistant and exhausted by the pressures to justify their existence to administrators, especially when

Chairs have to be a sort of mediator of that downward push into action from all of their faculty. And I imagine it's quite difficult, because, you know, you have potentially a large section of faculty that's totally checked out, because they've reached the point in their career where they are comfortable with that. And then you have a younger faculty who are trying to get tenure and can't take on full responsibility for new initiatives, so you have . . . rely on a shifting sort of middle ground of folks that are secure, going to be secure, and are still sort of up for it, so to speak, up for taking action. That pool can be very small sometimes.

they are seen to be careerists seeking advancement. The same participant quoted above explains why the skill of articulation is often looked down on by professors who "come from the humanistic approaches," for them "it feels social science-y, or business-y to make these claims." He recounted how he had learned to overcome such reservations in his own leadership experience:

> In writing centers, I mean, it is like a small business sometimes, you know, in like the way that you have to think about it, like, in the way that you have to do your budget and things like that. And I think academics are not used to doing that, and don't often have opportunities to practice that or learn about why it's important. And I think it's just, we feel like these things should be self-explanatory.

Many of our interviewees had experiences that had made them more attuned to the "deep irony" that faculty in English departments "specialize in communication" and yet they resist pressures to communicate their value to the organizations they serve. He observed that English departments do not get to exist

> by fiat, right? … We do not have a God-given right to exist, we exist because we're providing value to our students and to the world at large. . . . We have no reason to be defensive about articulating that value. And we should recognize that other people are not going to assume that same value that we see. And if we can't show it to them, even though we're… English PhDs, then we are not doing our jobs as far as I am concerned. I think I am . . . in the minority for thinking about these things this way. And that is sometimes a point of frustration for me.

Interviewees recognized that their colleagues might not see themselves as specialists in communication, but some remained committed to working with them to promote the humanities without selling out their values. One interviewee discussed how these same competing forces were playing out in the high school literature courses that college English departments have depended upon to sustain public interest in literary studies. She was sharply critical of the English department for failing to focus on preparing English teachers, but she recognized that the department was reacting to the same forces she confronted in her efforts to resist the move away from literary studies in high school curricula:

> I feel like it's a case of not being valued and honored right in the grander scheme of things . . . People [believe] Oh, English, that's not important. And I get it because I taught English forever, and . . . my resistance to Common Core kind of lies in the fact that [where else are students] . . . asked to learn how to be human other than your English class, right? But we've stripped away the parts that make English amazing to basically be in service to other areas. They're like, Oh, they need to learn how to write for that, or they need to learn how to read for that.

I think English departments as a whole . . . are going to be fine. Right? But what it's going to come down to is what English departments are going to . . . to define themselves as . . . . If they kind of remain committed to this idea [that]. . . we are the repositories of great literature. . . That's not going to work . . . . There are successful English departments, but they're dramatically changing . . . their focus and their mission.

One interviewee noted that her "dream English department" would be less "self-serving" and more centered on "community relationships" to be of "service to the community." Another interviewee explained that departments should be doing what her Rhetoric and Writing Program was doing: "Reaching out to individual professors and other departments that you know can get behind [the work of your department] …building strong connections with other professors who are well positioned in their departments and getting them to see the synergies between what it is that our Rhetoric and Writing Program does and what they're asking their students to learn and become competent with." A different participant provided a success story of this type of interdisciplinary partnership to focus on integrative learning. He discussed how his prior English department promoted its major as a pre-professional counterpart to pre-law and pre-medical programs to do "the teaching that allowed students to innovate within their own fields."

These and other interviewees positioned themselves differently because they were in departments with differing sets of engagements. Those differences become obscured when we look at English studies and related fields from the perspective of doctoral English departments, especially those in better insulated universities. Most PhDs in English are trained in such departments, and their model of an English department is imprinted on successive generations even though most graduates will not work in a department that looks like that model. This imprinting limits the adaptive capacities of English studies by encouraging faculty to identify with a transcendental field of study that may be indifferent to the regional and institutional possibilities of their own departments. Almost half of our TT interviewees (9 of 21) worked in or were working to create departments that were not English-only departments, including

departments in writing and rhetoric, English and dramatic arts, humanities, and communications. Those of us involved in preparing future faculty need to reflect upon how well our graduate programs prepare faculty to work in such departments—and the other leadership positions our graduates increasingly move into when they graduate.

9. How well did your graduate program prepare you for the challenges you're facing?

At various points in our discussions, interviewees talked about how they had learned about leadership. When we asked about graduate programs, several responded with some version of "nothing can truly prepare you for this work." Many cited the collaborative aspects of their graduate student experience rather than graduate courses, including collaborating on research, working in writing centers, serving on committees, and doing qualitative research that involved community partnerships. Many cited collaborations with mentors, and several discussed how difficult interpersonal interactions had introduced them to how to negotiate conflicts and overcome hurdles. Those who had to jump right into administrative roles felt they were largely unprepared for "how to delegate, how to facilitate" and how to manage the workflow to protect their research time.

The mentorship I received from my advisor was very, very good. But I was trained primarily to be a good teacher. And to be very serious about research, which I think most R1s are. So that's what I was trying to do. And there were other opportunities for me to . . . get more into service or to understand some other things, but I had one of my dissertation committee members say it's not a good idea to see how the sausage is made too early. . . . She didn't actually want [me] *to see just how contentious these things could be.*

Most graduate programs in English departments concentrate on preparing students to do research, but two of our interviewees graduated from less research-oriented graduate programs. Of course, most graduate programs in composition and English education emphasize teaching and provide preparation in curriculum development, professional writing, and program administration. Graduates of such programs are more likely to consider the sort of administrative work that is commonly identified with leadership, and according to several of our interviewees, these emphases helped them step into staff and nonacademic jobs, though they felt that step was more difficult than it might have been.

Two of our three staff worked in writing centers, and several other interviewees cited their collaborative work in writing centers as peer tutors as a formative experience in helping them understand leadership:

> we just viewed [the WC coordinator] as like our boss that we would go to for the most serious kinds of issues. But then there were sort of other leaders that emerged in the center, mostly just tutors who had been there for a few years who would take you under their wing and lead by example. So I often felt like all those levels of leadership, I felt supported, and I also felt like there were opportunities for me to take on leadership roles . . . . We created this nice environment where you would step into a leadership role and kind of step back at certain times to learn from each other. And I think that's kind of how I tried to function as a teacher too. And

now as like a teacher, trainer, . . . like at certain points, stepping back and letting other people take ownership of that leadership role.

The give-and-take of such apprenticeships in collaborative leadership are an example of how many interviewees looked to the writing process and writing workshops as models of collaborative leadership.

In our discussions of how graduate school prepared next-gen faculty for leadership, the parallels between these collaborative processes were extended to include mentoring, organizing with other TAs, and serving on committees with faculty. Committee work was cited by several interviewees as the sort of apprenticeships where one learns how "the sausage gets made." Fractious faculty interactions were observed that hurt collaborations with students in ways one interviewee swore he would never let happen with his own students. Sometimes those conflicts helped the interviewees understand how collaborations can get tripped up by personalities, and several cited attending faculty meetings as TA reps as places they learned how "institutional networks" and "structures" shape what can be done and how to do it.

Qualitative research methods and community-based partnerships were also cited as formative models for how interviewees learned the dynamics of collaborative inquiry and problem-solving in graduate school. Several cited the importance of learning to listen with people, and one noted how her sense of what it means to be a leader with people was transformed by a "community remembrance project" led by a woman activist

> who really tried and strove for a different style of leadership than I think what we typically see where we have, you know, bullet points, we have agendas, we have things like that. She really focused more on the listening side, using our lived experiences. And like taking the actual time to address conflicts when they arose. We were in an interracial space talking about really heated issues, and so that meant, like, we don't need to just like keep plowing ahead on our agenda items. We need to take a step back and check in on our feelings and things like that.

This was one of the formative lessons in leadership that had enabled this professional staff member and NT instructor to conclude that internal conflicts were distracting English department faculty from coming together to articulate their shared contributions.

In addition to looking to their work with collaborative inquiries, this interviewee also discussed how her studies of rhetoric shaped her perspective. She observed leadership is

> a form of rhetoric. So you've got to understand who it is that you're leading. What are their needs? What kind of role can you play? For them that is . . . responsive to their needs, and effective for meeting those needs. So I think that like to be a good leader, you have to be responsive, you have to be able to sometimes shift your expectations . . . For me, leadership is about building community around whatever it is that you're doing. It's less about being like the sole person who has an answer, or who is sort of creating directions for something. It is, it's about
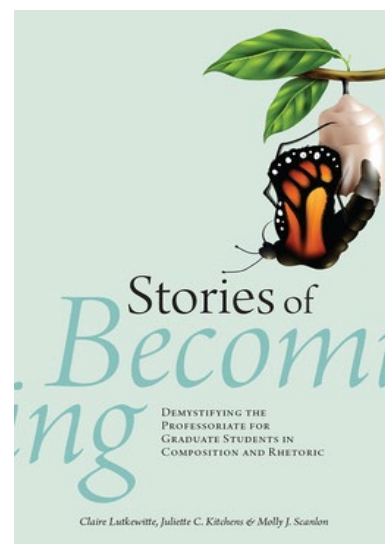
Stories of Becoming *draws on a pre-covid survey of new faculty to propose the reforms of grad programs discussed in the attached review of research.*

working together and sort of being a catalyst for whatever it is that you need to do.

Another interviewee responded to our final question on whether he saw himself as a leader by distinguishing his current role as a nontenure-track instructor from his TA role as an Assistant Director in the Writing Program:

> If you'd asked me that question, a year and a half ago, or two years ago, when I was a graduate student, I probably would have said yes, because I was closely involved in a number of activities, or a number of the sort of systems that make up the enacting of power within the organization. I was the assistant writing program director, I was on a small committee, I was a research assistant for a prominent . . . leader in the department . . . I was probably one of the most recognizable names . . . to administrators and leaders and to my fellow graduate students.

This passage starkly contrasts the leadership possibilities of two communities of practice. The interviewee did not see a place in his role as an NT instructor for the collaborative leadership skills he had developed as a TA. We might attribute that lost potential to the constraints of his NT role, but we should also consider how his graduate experiences might have better prepared him to claim his rights to be a full contributor to the leadership in place in his writing program. Our graduate programs concentrate on research, the smallest part of the workloads of most of our graduates, and our focus on teaching tends to be confined to talking about the classroom. The collaborative leadership of writing programs ends up being defined as writing program administration. Next-gen faculty will step into institutions that do not conform to these categories, and our graduate programs need to face that fact to prepare the next generation of faculty leaders.

10. Given these challenges, how do you see your own leadership? For example, is leadership part of what you teach?

In this section we combine our discussions of recent graduates' views of leadership and the teaching of leadership because most interviewees cited their teaching as a principal area where they served as leaders. One might assume that faculty would think of themselves as leaders in the classroom because that is where they have designated authority over others. However, the two lines of discussion were connected by the interviewees' focus on their roles as facilitators in the classroom and in other collaborations. Many characterized their teaching role in terms such as a "guide on the side" as opposed to the more authoritative role of "the sage on the stage." Seven early-career faculty explicitly cited critical pedagogy as part of their guiding philosophy for teaching and collaborative inquiry. Others cited feminism, hip-hop, and the qualitative research methods mentioned in the prior section.

> *What I hope to do is prepare students to be leaders in their own right and in their own spaces, in their own fields, by teaching critical thinking and critical consciousness, . . . the foundational critical pedagogy elements, for the purpose of teaching how to read power structures, read spaces, read their situations because, like I said, that's kind of the foundation of my definition of leadership.*

Several interviewees focused on their teaching of rhetoric as explicitly concerned with teaching leadership because of its concern with civic engagement. Participants discussed how their students learned to "read" power structures to build coalitions and enact change. Many of these responses focused on equipping students with the rhetorical agency and the skills needed to solve problems and serve as advocates in their professional and civic lives. A handful of participants framed their answers by describing project-based leadership assignments. Two participants were implementing majors in advocacy and civic engagement, and others had taught writing classes on advocacy, community engagement, and leadership. Interviewees shared examples of students' research and advocacy, including the example in the quote below.

So, I had a F.L.I student—first generation, low income, right. There's a really robust community in the university I was teaching at, but she had some real concerns about access to resources. So she was from a grossly underserved population, Latina, parents were agricultural workers actually. So real rock star, but she recognized that there were gaps in the resources available to students like her who needed a lot of explicit guidance through the structures of the university, which are super opaque at times, right . . . [She] put together a proposal and brought it to the F.L.I office . . . She went out and did interviews in the community, she talked to her writing center. She did really fantastic work, and she was able to help folks see a problem that they didn't know was there. So she actually worked with staff and faculty and got their buy in, and it was really incredibly impressive.

These leadership contributions were informed by visions of leadership that were shaped by interviewees' own struggles to find a position and build a place for themselves amidst the worst economic disruptions in almost a century.

The most powerful example of the leadership challenges that recent graduates confronted was a new PhD hired to start an ethnic studies department as a part of a cluster-hire initiative that was reduced to just two faculty, both assistant professors who were the only TT faculty from their ethnic group at the small college. Establishing an ethnic studies program is one of the most politically challenging initiatives one can imagine, and this assistant professor had to negotiate sometimes hostile and often difficult questions from all sides. Her vision of these leadership challenges was guided by an embodied commitment to caring for the students she served and a compassionate understanding of her white colleagues, including the well-meaning administrators who assumed they knew more than she did even though they had no scholarly or personal background in her ethnic community's experience. Her humility was but one part of her vision of leadership as compassion in action:

I define leadership as the . . . ability and the willingness to use whatever skills and power that you have in whatever capacity you're in to help people grow and achieve their own goals . . . I would never say I'm a leader . . . The word [does not show] humility . . . For other people to see the characteristics and the attributes of a good leader, or of humility, in me and then be able to say you know … she's a good leader, of course, . . . I want to always bring those characteristics to the table. I just have problems, I have difficulty, with just labeling myself in

that way . . . Thinking about other people, and how the things that you do and say impact these other people positively or negatively, is a clear sign of what type of leader you are and will be, even if they don't call themselves leaders.

The contributors to this study were all leaders in their own right. Our conversations provided them with an opportunity to discuss and reflect on their leadership achievements in ways they clearly valued, perhaps because some of their departments did not give them such opportunities to think of themselves as leaders. The perspectives of next-gen faculty are a vital resource for departments working to move past the retirements of the largest generation of faculty in history to implement innovations that are vital to helping English and related departments adapt to profound environmental changes. Next-gen faculty have the technological expertise that senior faculty often lack, and early-career faculty are more diverse, more engaged, and more enthusiastic about the social-justice initiatives that can help renew undergraduate majors. Their leadership provides models for graduate programs to consider and for senior faculty to support.

Such support requires that senior faculty listen and sometimes defer to the assessments of early-career faculty. T final example of a distributed model of leadership highlights the sort of reciprocity that is at the heart of the distributed models of leadership that are vital to building collaborative learning capacity. When we asked one respondent if he would like to revise the tendency to assume academic *leaders* refers to *administrators*, he responded,

> I would definitely remix and say, well, maybe it's not about me having to do or say something so that you feel like you could participate, maybe it's just how I perform in my own space right, and how you can build off of, build with, build through that performance.

From his research on hip-hop pedagogy as a model for administration, this interviewee revised prevailing assumptions about who is a leader in academe, and he also subtly shifted the conception of coalitional leadership that we were suggesting as an alternative. Rather than endorsing the assumption that collaborative leaders empower others, he set out an alternative vision of how people can perform in their own spaces in ways that synch up to build "off of" each other—listening to each other but not necessarily playing the same tune or looking to others to serve in their chorus.

A final example of how this can play out is provided by another interviewee who had consciously resisted the assumption that the way to advance in rhetoric and writing is to step up to the sort of administrative position held by many of the early-career faculty with whom we talked. When she was first hired, she protected her own space to do the work that mattered most to her, which included building on her ongoing collaborations with migrant communities. Once she was far enough along with that research to feel confident that she could sustain it through the promotion and tenure process, she stepped up to help lead a departmental initiative. Her department enlisted her to facilitate an effort to rearticulate its vision and guiding assumptions in all its "outward facing documents," including websites and program outcomes. She discussed how her department had done an environmental scan of the values, outcomes, and mission of all its undergraduate and graduate programs as well as its interdisciplinary leadership of the university's writing center and writing across the curriculum program. As

part of this strategic effort to orchestrate its expansive articulation apparatus, she was enlisted to get all five undergraduate and graduate directors

> working together and thinking more concretely about collective action: How can we facilitate and work together to achieve departmental goals and have more common outcomes across the board… Our graduate students tutor in the writing center, or they teach in our comp program . . . . We are all interconnected, and right now, we have leadership that is wanting to work together for collective action. And so it has been a really opportune moment. But it's a lot. It's been a lot of work… I think we are committed to this . . . as a whole . . . . We have to ensure we are all on board in our practices, in the classroom, in our meetings, in our scholarship, with some of these social-justice values.

This coalitional initiative is a powerful example of how next-gen faculty are undertaking the interdisciplinary work of strategically exploring their environment to consider opportunities to rearticulate the mission and values of their departments in ways that address pressing social-justice issues.

Such adaptive leadership is vital if our departments are to make the best of the environmental changes that are transforming higher education. To support early-career faculty in making such contributions, departments will need to do their best to give them their "own space" to balance their work and family commitments and allow them to decide when to step into formal leadership roles. To be successful, such efforts to build collaborative capacity must include the NT faculty who are a major part of the leadership in place in our departments. Such compassionate leadership will be very difficult to develop in departments that have gaps in leadership as a result of the rising retirements of senior faculty, but that generational transition represents an historic opportunity for the next-gen leaders who will shape the future of our departments in collaboration with the mid-career faculty who are now stepping up to serve as heads and directors.

Related Research on the Path Ahead for Recent PhDs

"The 'Long Covid' of American Higher Education" (7/1/21) will not end with the pandemic. Even before it began, converging trends were building to crisis proportions: student debt had doubled in the prior decade while the return on investment of a college degree stagnated; the ranks of TT faculty had shrunk so much they were teaching only 25% of all classes; a "demographic cliff" was coming with drops in college-aged populations; and online for-profit companies and black-box instructional units were selling low-contact credits to those seeking convenient college degrees. The pandemic brought the deepest job losses in history according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s "Forced Out" (3/19/21), which includes profiles of some of the staff and faculty laid off in the pandemic. These layoffs contributed to the "Great Disillusionment" (8/25/21), of faculty and staff leaving higher education, "just when they'll be needed most."

> Just as the COVID-19 pandemic helped to expose the inequities that already existed between students at every level of education based on race and socioeconomic class status, it has exposed existing inequities among faculty based on gender and the intersection of gender and

race. (Onwhuachi-Willig, "The Intersectional Race and Gender Effects of the Pandemic in Legal Academia," Hastings Law Journal, 72.6, 2021)

In higher education as in the rest of our society, the pandemic has disproportionately impacted vulnerable groups, including women, minorities, and those with less secure jobs. Many early-career faculty and staff are in these groups. NT faculty have been laid off, including disproportionate numbers of women faculty and faculty of color. Minority faculty are also more likely to carry the stress of severely impacted families and communities (AMA 10/7/20).

The pandemic has impacted women faculty in distinctive ways that may turn back decades of progress with bringing more women into senior faculty positions. Tenure-eligible women (TE) faculty were 20% more likely than their male peers to express concerns about being able to meet research expectations for promotion and tenure according to the *Chronicle*'s *"'On the Verge of Burnout': Covid-19's impact on faculty well-being and career plans"* (2020). The survey of 1100 faculty found that over 40% of the tenure-track (TT) respondents were considering new careers, and a phenomenal 38% of all respondents were planning on retiring early. The increasing numbers of senior faculty who are retiring are creating historic opportunities as well as challenges for next-gen faculty.

To address those challenges, universities implemented tenure-delay policies and other accommodations. Unfortunately, the related policies for parental delays of tenure reviews have been shown to benefit male faculty more than female faculty according Antecol et al., "Equal but Inequitable" (2018), as discussed in this *NYT* article.

To support early-career faculty, universities need to develop systematic reforms in collaboration with faculty leaders. Faculty leadership has been significantly weakened according to the AAUP's "Survey Data on the Impact of the Pandemic on Shared Governance" (2021). The published scholarship provides detailed proposals for related policies and institutional changes, as discussed in Mallsch et al., "In the wake of COVID-19" (2020). Guidelines for such efforts are included in this overview of needed reforms and this overview of the systemic changes that are needed to support women with children.

Department heads and senior faculty have an obligation to review research on these issues and practical strategies for addressing them. In addition to the resources cited above, policies and strategies for addressing the impact of the pandemic on women and faculty of color have

---

Reset norms and expectations:

Articulate the value of teaching and service in an academic world where research is often seen as paramount. This work has always been essential to the functioning of the university and is especially critical now. The pandemic (and racial injustice) has resulted in an increased need for faculty to engage in outward facing public engagement, support and mentor students, and engage in committee and leadership efforts on campus and nationally. Therefore, communicate to faculty that this work is valued; align evaluation standards and criteria to match where faculty have placed their efforts to address the critical needs of this moment; adjust reward structures to mirror this commitment.

ADVANCE Program, U of Michigan

been gathered on this crowdsourced google page and this crowdsourced set of links on the pandemic, race, gender, and academia from this MLA 2022 session. These resources include links to best practices on workload assignments (including online teaching).

Lessons Learned from our Discussions with Early-Career Faculty

1. Recognizing distributed forms of leadership can help early-career faculty articulate the impact of their research, teaching, and service.

Many early-career faculty are being pressed into serving in administrative roles. Service is generally undervalued in P&T reviews in ways that impact women and minority faculty, whose "invisible labor" has increased in the pandemic. Such contributions need to be recognized as forms of collaborative leadership that create more equitable and productive departments: "Calling out Whiteness: Faculty of Color Redefining Leadership" (2021), "Applying adaptive leadership to successful change initiatives in academia" (2006), and "Conceiving land grant community engagement as adaptive leadership" (2010). Rewarding adaptive leadership can help strengthen departments' collaborative capacities, as discussed in "Reimagining Leadership after the Public Turn" (2017).

Almost half of the tenured respondents to the Chronicle's survey reported they plan to retire within two years, while only 20% were planning to retire within two years in 2019. As the report notes, the rising retirements of senior faculty provide an "extraordinary opportunity to diversify our faculty."

2. Recognizing adaptive leadership can help renew the collaborative leadership of departments that have been weakened by the pandemic.

Departments need to recognize the leadership they depend upon, including the leadership of next-gen faculty. One way to do that is by documenting pandemic impacts. Such efforts should not be seen as accommodations to established norms but as opportunities to revise those norms to support evolving communities of practice, as discussed in "United We Adapt: Communities of Practice Face the Corona Virus in Higher Education," (2020).

3. The wellness of early-career faculty and staff is a collective concern and not just an individual accommodation.

Peer mentoring is especially vital for women, minority, and others who underrepresented in their 'home' departments. Faculty of color are less likely to feel that they "fit" in their departments according to The Illusion of Inclusion (1/6/21). Such perceptions need to be addressed to cultivate "an atmosphere of self-care" (7/17/19). While wellness is often defined in individualist terms, the resilience of the communities most impacted by the pandemic provides powerful lessons in "social resilience" as a collective quality. Such resilience is discussed in "'Always Up Against': A Study of Veteran WPAs and Social Resilience" (2018) and *Feminist Rhetorical Resilience* (2012). To build such resilience, departments must be vigilant about how senior faculty can "gaslight" early-career faculty in ways recounted by our

interviewees. Such bullying can make next-gen faculty feel vulnerable and less willing to challenge assumptions and propose needed changes.

4. The leaders in place in departments need to be recognized and supported as part of such collaborative efforts.

When we discuss department leaders, we generally focus on the challenges faced by heads and rarely consider the ranks of NT faculty. Models of distributed leadership such as those set out in "Improving Leadership in Higher Education Institutions" (2009) are vital in considering how to resist "the new managerialism. Such leadership is also vital to developing "communities of practice" around initiatives such as curriculum reviews, environmental scans, and campus coalitions. The "Leadership in Place" perspective discussed by Jon Wergin (2004) is important to consider to reduce the tacit tendency to identify leaders as administrators..

5. Revisions and launches of new major provides opportunities for such efforts to build collaborative leadership.

A Changing Major: The Report of the 2016-17 ADE Ad Hoc Committee on the English Major provides a detailed overview of English majors and efforts to revise them. What We Are Becoming: Developments in Undergraduate Writing Majors (2010) provides case studies of developing writing majors in various types of institutions. Efforts to revise majors are discussed in the 2019 issue of ADE Bulletin. The traditionalist assumptions that limit such efforts are evident in the editorial by former MLA leader David Laurence, "On Humanistic Expertise" and in his prior pieces as ADE editor encouraging heads to dismiss declines in majors as due to "vocationalism" (ADE 2003) and "massification" (ADE 2015). The leadership of the MLA on these issues is contrasted with that of NCTE in The Evolution of College English (2010).

6. Social-justice and anti-racist initiatives are a vital area where early-career faculty are connecting with next-gen students in ways that can enhance efforts to renew undergraduate programs.

The coalitional leadership involved is discussed in a special issue of *Composition Studies* entitled "Diversity is Not Justice" (2021), which includes an article by Arellano, Cortez, and Garcia, "Shadow Work: Witnessing Latinx Crossings in Rhetoric and Composition," on the complexities of undertaking social justice leadership in the "gated faculty community." Open-access resources include *Dismantling Racism: A Resource Book* (2016) and Condon and Ashanti Young's Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication (2017). Social-justice equity is one of the best examples of the values and need for distributed models of leadership, as discussed in "Shared Equity Leadership: Making Equity Everyone's Work" (2021). The systemic inequities to be overcome are examined in "Women, Work, and the Academy: Strategies for Responding to 'Post-Civil Rights Era' Gender Discrimination" (2007).

7. Such efforts must recognize and support nontenure-track faculty as vital contributors to the leadership in place in departments.

Discussions of departmental leadership rarely include NT faculty, unless the topic is labor organizing, as for example in this AAUP article "Faculty Forum: Ways to Organize Non-Tenure-Track Faculty" (2011). Some of the most actionable research on improving support for NT faculty has been done by Adrianna Kezar, most notably the Delphi Project, which developed an extensive toolbox that includes a climate survey instrument to assess support for NT faculty. Kezar also developed a social-justice model of NT faculty organizing that draws on design thinking, "Using Design for Equity in Higher Education for Liberatory Change: A Guide for Practice" (2021), though the model adopts the top-down perspective that is common in most discussions of academic leadership.

8. English departments need to consider their interdisciplinary and community engagements to articulate their contributions and strengthen institutional support.

Many English departments are using "engagement" as a frame for rearticulating their public mission. A primary source for such efforts is Ernest Boyer's "The Scholarship of Engagement" (1996), which is pivotal to efforts to adapt traditional conceptions of research to the evolving relations of higher education and democracy, as discussed in "Boyer's 'Scholarship of Engagement, a Retrospective'"(2016). Scholarship of Engagement resources have been developed for use in P&T reviews to frame community engagements and applied research and for a wide range of scholarly initiatives concerned with social justice, service learning, community partnerships, and reforms of higher education. Boyer's paradigm has been a major source for the historical transition from the traditional research university to the international movements associated with the engaged university.

9. Graduate programs should consider how they are preparing students to address the leadership challenges and opportunities they will be facing.

Recommendations on how graduate programs can better prepare future leaders are provided by *Stories of Becoming: Demystifying the Professoriate for Graduate Students in Composition and Rhetoric* (2022). Lutkewitte and her coauthors' recommendations are also helpful for early-career faculty: learn to tell the stories that matter to you and the field; watch the job market to think strategically about your **t**eaching, **r**esearch, **s**ervice, and **a**dministration; use your leadership to build synergies among them; manage your time; and collaborate to reduce isolation and increase your productivity. To effectively support the next generation of leaders, grad programs will need to reassess how insulated they tend to be because prior surveys of early-career faculty have found that they feel unprepared because they do not know very much about how universities work (Kelsch & Hawthorne, "Preparing New Faculty for Leadership," 2014).

10. Faculty leadership development is vital to resisting the managerial mindset that is reshaping higher education.

The importance of "Cultivating the Next Generation of Academic Leaders" (2014) is examined in an interview study that reports the trends witnessed by our interviewees: baby boomers "preparing to retire," "mid-career faculty . . . reluctant" to serve in increasingly complex administrative roles because of concerns about "work-life balance," their own research and

teaching, and "going to the dark side." Two collections of essays provide varied perspectives on mentoring faculty women of color: *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia* (2012) and *Presumed Incompetent II: Race, Class, Power, and Resistance of Women in Academia* (2020). The second collection includes narratives and assessments of promotion and tenure, coalition building and allyship, white fragility and microaggressions, and survival and change strategies.

Works Cited

Abramson, Kate. *On Gaslighting*, Princeton UP, 2024, https://fitelson.org/piksi/on_gaslighting.pdf

Adler, Laura. "The 'Long Covid' of American Higher Education." *Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics*, 1 July 2021, https://sase.org/blog/the-long-covid-of-american-higher-education/.

American Medical Association. *Impact of COVID-19 on minoritized and marginalized communities*. 7 Oct. 2020, https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/health-equity/impact-covid-19-minoritized-and-marginalized-communities.

Antecol, Heather, et al. "Equal but Inequitable: Who Benefits from Gender-Neutral Tenure Clock Stopping Policies." *IZA Institute of Labor Economics*, Apr. 2016, https://docs.iza.org/dp9904.pdf.

Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2020-21. American Association of University Professors, July 2021, https://www.aaup.org/report/annual-report-economic-status-profession-2020-21.

Bérubé, Michael, Michael Decesare, Ruben J. Garcia, Pippa Holloway, Susan Jarosi, and Henry Reichman. *Special Report: COVID-19 and Academic Governance*. American Association of University Professors, 2021, aaup.org/special-report-covid-19-and-academic-governance.

Cardel, Michelle, et al. "Preventing a Secondary Epidemic of Lost Early Career Scientists: Effects of.COVID-19 Pandemic on Women with Children." *AnnalsATS*, vol. 17, no. 11, Nov. 2020, https://www.atsjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1513/AnnalsATS.202006-589IP.

Dumont, Georgette et al., "The Effect of the COVID Pandemic on Faculty Adoption of Online Teaching." *Cogent Education*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2021, https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2021.1976928.

Dweck, Carol S. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Random House, 2016.

Ellis, Lindsay. "The Great Disillusionment." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 25 Aug. 2021, https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-great-disillusionment.

Flaherty, Colleen. "The Evolving English Major." *Inside Higher Education*, 17 July 2018, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/07/18/new-analysis-english-departments-says-numbers-majors-are-way-down-2012-its-not-death.

Lutkewitte, Claire, Juliette Kitchens, and Molly J. Scranton. *Stories of Becoming: Demystifying the Professoriate for Graduate Students in Composition and Rhetoric*. Utah State UP, 2021.

Malisch, Jessica L, et al. "In the Wake of COVID-19, Academia Needs New Solutions to Ensure Gender Equity." PNAS, 17 June 2020, https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.2010636117.

"MLA Survey of Departmental Staffing, Fall 2014." *Modern Language Association*, 2015, https://www.mla.org/content/download/103529/file/2014-Staffing-Survey.pdf.

Onwhuachi-Willig, Angela. "The Intersectional Race and Gender Effects of the Pandemic in Legal Academia." *Hastings Law Journal*, vol. 72 no. 6, 2021, https://repository.uclawsf.edu/hastings_law_journal/vol72/iss6/4/.

"Sociocracy," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 14 Nov. 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sociocracy.

Settles, Isis H. and Jennifer Linderman. *Faculty Equity and COVID-19: The Problem, the Evidence, and Recommendations*. University of Michigan ADVANCE Program, 5 Oct. 2020, https://advance.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UM-ADVANCE-Faculty-Equity-and-COVID-19-Oct-2020.pdf.

Tugend, Alina. On the Verge of Burnout: Covid-19's Impact on Faculty Well-Being and Career Plans. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2020, https://connect.chronicle.com/rs/931-EKA-218/images/Covid%26FacultyCareerPaths_Fidelity_ResearchBrief_v3%20%281%29.pdf.

Wolfers, Justin. "A Family-Friendly Policy That's Friendliest to Male Professors." *New York Times*, 24 June 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/26/business/tenure-extension-policies-that-put-women-at-a-disadvantage.html.