CREATING AN INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATION:

What Do We Teach in the Service Course?

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To what extent do course goals from instructors’ syllabi align with instructors’ perspectives about the outcomes of TPC service courses?

Contextualizing Service Course Goals
Literature in TPC clusters around three goals for the service course:
1. Solving problems through workplace genres (Meloncon, 2018)
2. Forming students into ethical change agents (Browning & Cagle, 2017)
3. Facilitating students’ workplace readiness (Lucas & Rawlins, 2015)

Answering the Research Question
To answer this research question, I
1. Recruited 10 instructors from 9 universities across the United States who taught the service course
2. Completed instructor interviews about how instructors articulated and enacted their course goals
3. Conducted content analysis of instructors’ syllabi, assignment sheets, and feedback on de-identified student writing.

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

THE SERVICE COURSE TEACHES SKILLS IN RHETORIC, GENRE, AND CRITICAL THINKING

INSTRUCTORS NEED TO FOCUS MORE ON CONTENT AND CONNECT IT WITH CRITICAL THINKING

INSTRUCTORS REQUIRE MORE TRAINING ON HOW TO TEACH CONTENT-CENTRIC WRITING
Instructors' pedagogical goals during their interviews stayed remarkably consistent: instructors primarily discussed rhetorical terminology of audience, context, and purpose. Genre was of secondary importance during these interviews.

Instructors' Interview Goals

Instructors’ Syllabi Goals

Analyzing instructors’ learning outcomes from their service course syllabi revealed that while rhetorical understanding and ability remained most important, critical thinking—including information literacy and teaching students to write about content—was second most important.

WE TEACH RHETORIC, GENRE, & CRITICAL THINKING

Particularly for less experienced instructors, issues of purpose or genre took precedence over issues of content or detail in the service course because instructors lacked the *phronesis* of substantive experience as a workplace writer (Doan, 2019). Instead, instructors relegated detail and content to lower-order issues and discussed higher-order issues such as purpose or context, when content should be considered a higher-order and high-stakes issue (Boettger et al., 2017; Spilka, 2009). However, instructors (especially those without workplace experience) require more training to be able to teach content-centric writing well.