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## CCCC Position Statement

A statement on an education issue approved by the CCCC Executive Committee

### CCCC Promotion and Tenure Guidelines for Work with Technology

*Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) Committee on  
Computers and Composition, November 1998, Revised November 2015*

Digital media and work with technology has become a critical, integral part of teaching, scholarship, and service in the academy, transforming the ways faculty engage with students, conduct research, and serve their campus, local, and national communities. These guidelines—originally written in 1998 and updated in 2015—are designed to advise departments in evaluating work with digital media and technology for which there is not a convenient print analog [see also the [2012 MLA Guidelines for Evaluating Work in Digital Humanities and Digital Media](#) and the [American Association of History and Computing Tenure Guidelines](#)]. Thus, we offer general principles for evaluating such work, bearing in mind that the rapid pace of technological change means that each case will need to be decided on its own merits.

*Digital media and work with technology* are defined in this document as any work of teaching, scholarship, or service that is developed and distributed on computers. While innovations like additive manufacturing, enhanced fabrication, and other studies in materiality defy our screen-based expectations, generally digital media and work with technology is also consumed and archived on computers. Digital media work may be communicated through number of mediums, including alphabetic text, images, sounds, video, audio, graphics, and animation. Its distribution may be achieved through a variety of methods, including content management systems, personal or professional websites, blogs, social networks, digital archives, and online peer-reviewed publications.

These guidelines are intended for use by promotion and tenure committees, candidates for promotion and tenure, job and fellowship candidates, departmental hiring committees, and others assessing or evaluating digitally mediated works. The purpose of this document is to ensure that prospective hires are informed about whether and how work with technology and digital media will be considered in the tenure and promotion process, provide some general principles to promotion and tenure committees, and safeguard that candidates' work with technology is explained accurately and evaluated fairly.

This document consists of three parts: general statements about digital media technology and its potential impact on review processes, guidelines for review committees, and guidelines for candidates for hiring, reappointment, promotion, and tenure.

In preparing these guidelines, we have tried to address the fact that work with digital media has reconfigured instruction, research, and professional service in the academy. Changes in technology require that faculty be familiar with online course management systems, open-source instructional materials, and ever-evolving digital technologies. New forms of scholarship continue to emerge in electronic environments, and while some digital media scholarship may mimic print scholarship, it also differs from print scholarship in important ways. Finally, service loads for faculty who work with technology may include managing

department and organizational websites, as well as developing and maintaining listservs, databases, surveys, and online forums.

### **General Statements**

#### **Digital media affords new venues for learning about candidates' work and assessing the candidate's role within the profession.**

For example, a person's web page may offer outside reviewers a wider lens through which to view a candidate's teaching, research, and service. While new software tools allow better ways to find citations of publications to demonstrate the impact of a candidate's work, citation practices and other evidence of a candidate's reach to audiences are themselves changing. For example, a candidate's sustained and careful participation in social media venues and other collaborative academic forums like discussion lists related to their areas of pedagogical or scholarly expertise can have an impact on the profession, but that impact may be measured only by number of visitors, shares, or crosslinks.

#### **Work with technology is often collaborative.**

Those who work with digital media often work closely with other departments and campus personnel, such as computing support and librarians. In addition, teachers who work on different campuses may link their courses for collaborative research and composition between colleagues, peers, or students in several class sections. Collaborative scholarship is also common with digital media publications that require equal amounts of research, writing, and digital media design.

#### **Work with digital media is time-consuming.**

Scholars who work with digital media in the classroom must spend a portion of their time learning, enhancing, and teaching new software skills to students and even colleagues. They may find themselves providing technical support to students and colleagues outside of class and office hours, sometimes taking on responsibilities that would not reasonably be expected to fall under their purview, and that cannot be easily documented in the ways other teaching and service obligations may be.

Additionally, such scholars may find themselves taking on a disproportionate number of committee assignments as expertise with technology is increasingly in demand as classroom-, department-, and campus-level resources and functions are digitalized. Finally, faculty who work with technology in their research must keep abreast of best practices and trends in a rapidly accelerating and expanding field.

#### **Digital media often creates access for diverse audiences, and in some cases, may provide more inclusive access for teachers and researchers.**

Scholar-teachers are increasingly focused on using digital media to widen access, particularly for those with disabilities. For example, scholars may create a companion website for a conference where papers can be posted in advance for those who cannot attend and/or for participants who benefit from reading scripts (including Deaf audiences, audiences with traumatic brain injuries, etc.). They may provide rich visual description or speak-aloud functions in online media for those who cannot see or easily process text (including those with visual impairments and some learning disabilities). Teachers working in face-to-face, hybrid, and online classes may employ digital media in their instruction to improve learning for all students, but especially for students with disabilities or learning differences. While all such approaches cannot be listed here, this use of digital media seeks to fully include and empower all scholars, teachers, and students.

### **Guidelines for Review Committees**

It is important that tenure and promotion committees work with departmental hiring committees to ensure that expectations for work with digital media and online teaching, scholarship, and service be communicated to prospective new hires. Further, prospective hires should be informed about whether and how work with digital media and online teaching, research, and service will be considered in the tenure and promotion process.

Hiring, reappointment, tenure, and promotion committees must work flexibly to find ways to acknowledge digital media work done by candidates, because the pace and scope of technological change make it difficult for any set of guidelines to account completely for the ways the technology (and thus the work done with it) is redefining our profession.

The following general guidelines are designed to aid committees in assessing work with digital media. In such assessments and evaluations, we find it important that:

- the candidate's work be evaluated in the medium and native environment in which it was intended to be viewed. Printing off web pages, for example, is a poor substitute for evaluating those pages online.
- the candidate's work be evaluated with respect to local conditions on campus. For example, early adopters of a particular technology on a campus generally face more obstacles than those who come later. Similarly, on campuses where support for technology is limited, individuals who work with digital media may gain experience through challenges with implementation and troubleshooting that benefit colleagues later.
- members of review committees educate themselves about the candidate's work, and embrace the opportunity to understand new work in digital media, the candidate's specific uses of it, and the significance of such work.

The following guidelines provide additional recommendations for assessing digital media in teaching, research, and service.

### **Teaching**

Online and hybrid courses require significant preparation of digital materials, as well as intensive work on best practices for offering and evaluating online student work. This work can provide key innovations in teaching and student learning, and the additional pedagogical investment and time devoted to preparing these materials should be accounted for in reappointment, tenure, and promotion reviews. If qualified reviewers are not available on the candidate's home campus, outside reviewers should be asked to provide observations and evaluations of the candidate's online teaching, e.g., online course management, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), course websites, discussion boards, or blogs.

Courses offered in the classroom often have substantial and significant online components, such as course websites, electronic portfolios, and blogs, which extend student learning. Candidates who teach in traditional classroom settings, but who employ digital media technologies as a part of their course instruction, should receive assessments of their pedagogical use of digital media as a part of the review of their teaching.

### **Research**

Intellectual work with digital media should demonstrate similar academic standards as other scholarly endeavors: it should be innovative (offering new research, insights, processes, or discoveries; or providing potentially productive syntheses of existing research), subject to scholarly peer review, and distributed in appropriate venues.

Intellectual work with digital media should be evaluated by experts who are knowledgeable about the use of that technology. If qualified reviewers are not available on the candidate's home campus, outside reviewers should be asked to provide evaluations of the candidate's digital media work, e.g., instructional software, video productions, tool innovations, or digital scholarship.

### **Service**

Department administrators should ensure that the full scope of service performed by candidates who specialize in work with technology and digital media is apparent to the institution's review committees. While digital media scholarship may be highly visible, digital media service may be less visible to department colleagues as it typically involves solitary work managing department and organizational websites, as well as developing and maintaining listservs, databases, archives, surveys, and online forums.

For more information, see the "Tenure and Promotion Cases for Composition Faculty Who Work with Technology" website at [/cccc/committees/7cs/tenurepromotioncases](http://cccc/committees/7cs/tenurepromotioncases).

### **Guidelines for the Candidate**

It is crucial for candidates whose teaching, research, or service relies on or incorporates technology to clearly articulate the nature and value of their work, and not to assume a review audience that is already familiar with certain technologies. Such guidance begins

during the hiring process and continues through the review process for reappointment, tenure, and promotion.

During the hiring process, when candidates first negotiate for new academic positions, they should ask about whether and how credit for use of technology in teaching, service, and digital media scholarship is awarded in the reappointment, tenure, and promotion process. They should also inquire about resources and support for work with technology, meeting with technology support services, if necessary, during the campus visit, and negotiating hardware and software packages as a part of the job offer.

Candidates should be prepared to explain and advocate for the value and complexity of their work with digital media, rather than offer only the final “product” (such as a website, social media platform, interactive research article, etc.) for review.

It is important that candidates find ways to situate their work in terms of the traditional areas of teaching, research, and service, and also to explain the ways in which their work overlaps with or redefines those categories. The burden of understanding work with digital media, the candidate’s specific uses of it, and the importance of such work is the responsibility of the committee, but the candidate is uniquely positioned to argue for the merit and innovation of an approach.

It is important for candidates to find others on campus who also work with technology, and to network with those colleagues. Faculty outside of the candidate’s own department can help to contextualize digital media work in terms that are important to the institution as a whole and can attest to the value of the work done by the candidate.

Finally, candidates for new academic positions, reappointment, tenure, and promotion should also familiarize themselves with professional statements, like this one, about the increasing importance of digital media work within the field of composition. Professional statements like those below can help candidates for new positions, reappointment, tenure, and promotion better articulate the value of their work, locate that work within current conversations within the field, and provide review committees with guidelines for evaluating their work with technology. Links to some of those statements are included below.

Conference on College Composition and Communication

- [Beginning Composition and Rhetoric Faculty Guidelines](#)
- [Scholarship in Composition: Guidelines for Faculty, Deans, and Department Chairs](#)
- [Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction](#)
- [Position Statement on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in Digital Environments](#)

Two-Year College English Association

- [Research and Scholarship in the Two-Year College](#)

National Council of Teachers of English

- [Position Statement on Multimodal Literacies](#)
- [Policy Research Brief on 21st-Century Literacies](#)
- [Conference on English Education Beliefs about Technology and the Preparation of English Teachers](#)

Council of Writing Program Administrators, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Writing Project

- [Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing](#)

Modern Language Association

- [Guidelines for Evaluating Work in Digital Humanities and Digital Media](#)

American Association of History and Computing

- [Tenure Guidelines](#)

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