

## Call for Proposals

# **Professionalizing Multimodal Composition: Faculty and Institutional Initiatives**

Edited by

Shyam B. Pandey, Purdue University

Santosh Khadka, California State University Northridge

Multimodal composition can be defined as communication practices employing more than one mode that work synergistically in a meaning-making process. It has been associated with multiple forms of representation, such as images, web pages, movies, sound, and graphics in addition to print, both in isolation and in combination. Multimodal composition is becoming increasingly popular in writing classrooms these days because faculty and students have come to recognize that old and new technologies have enabled, and even demanded, the use of more than one composing mode to communicate, solve problems, and keep up with the latest discourse (Lutkewitte, 2014). As such, in the last two decades, many faculty members, scholars, and administrators from various institutional contexts and disciplinary perspectives have consistently advanced their positions on multimodality. However, as different faculty members and programs are situated in their own specific institutional contexts, their recognition and implementation of multimodality varies drastically.

In fact, as Santosh Khadka and Jennifer Lee in their recently edited book, *Bridging the Multimodal Gap: From Theory to Practice*, succinctly note: “Attempts at implementing multimodal approaches are sporadic at best” (2019, p. 04). They further maintain that despite increased productivity in scholarship, attempts at integrating multimodal/digital projects into the curriculum have been limited to a handful of individual faculty and programs across the country. This glaring gap between theory and practice can be attributed to a number of factors, including complex and differing understandings of what writing is and what goals the writing courses should have, varied professional development opportunities for faculty across institutions, and wide ranging programmatic and institutional support for faculty to pursue multimodality in their scholarship and in their classrooms.

To bridge this theory-praxis gap, institutional, programmatic, and faculty level initiatives to professionalize writing instructors to engage multimodality is a must. Specifically, there is a pressing need for more in-depth study on: 1) faculty impetus or preparedness to take on

multimodality in their courses; 2) institutional support and initiatives to professionalize faculty to incorporate multimodal composition in their curricula; and 3) faculty (TAs, part-time, full-time) and administrators' feelings of security/insecurity when encountering and embracing multimodality in different levels of their writing courses and/or programs.

The goal of this Edited Collection is to bring together some implementation perspectives and practices of multimodal composition in various contexts and programs by discussing writing faculty preparedness in undertaking multimodal/digital composition at different levels of higher education. With a primary focus on professionalizing multimodal composition, this collection will explore the individual faculty and programmatic as well as institutional initiatives to human resource development to embrace and enact multimodal composition in various writing courses and programs. We invite proposals for essayistic and empirical works that address, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- It has been almost two decades since Cynthia Selfe (2004) warned, “If our profession continues to focus solely on teaching alphabetic composition—either online or in print—we run the risk of making composition studies increasingly irrelevant to students engaging in contemporary practices of communicating” (p. 72). What progress have we made since then to embrace and implement multimodality in our writing programs? How do university, department or writing program administrators go about professionalizing multimodal composition in their respective units? What struggles and successes have they realized?
- How has multimodal composition been part of faculty development programs? Has it received any priority in faculty hiring processes?
- How are, can, and should graduate teaching assistants be trained to engage multimodality in their coursework, teaching, and scholarship? To what extent do they feel prepared to incorporate multimodality in their course syllabi upon completion of their degree?
- What challenges, struggles, and successes have been identified to integrate multimodality in First-Year Composition and other upper division writing or writing intensive courses across the curriculum or disciplines? How can writing faculty better integrate multimodality in their curricula?
- How are writing faculty trained to utilize multimodality to teach the diverse student population more effectively? How do the different variables, such as age, sex, class, access, abilities, literacy level, and socio-economic status of students play into the successes and failures of adopting multimodal composition pedagogies in writing classrooms?

- To what extent are writing instructors prepared to implement multimodal pedagogies in multilingual and online spaces? What challenges and opportunities are identified in those spaces?
- What departmental and institutional challenges to and opportunities for studying and teaching multimodal composition exist in today's higher education settings? How can those challenges be turned into opportunities?

We welcome individual submissions, but also co-authored pieces by graduate students, faculty, and/or administrators that invoke the professionalizing experiences of various stakeholders in the rhetoric and composition, Writing Studies or closely aligned fields.

Please submit your 500-word proposal via this form: <https://forms.gle/NxLX2pyqDYciBt4KA>. Feel free to contact the editors, Shyam B. Pandey at [pandey24@purdue.edu](mailto:pandey24@purdue.edu) and Santosh Khadka at [santosh.khadka@csun.edu](mailto:santosh.khadka@csun.edu) with any queries.

### **Timeline**

29 February 2020: Proposals Submitted

30 March 2020: Notification of Acceptance/Rejection and Call for Chapter Manuscripts

31 August 2020: Manuscripts Due

30 October 2020: Response from Editors

30 December 2020: Revised Chapters Due

15 January 2021: Full Manuscript Submitted to the Publisher

### ***Editor Bios***

#### **Shyam B. Pandey**

Shyam Pandey is a PhD student in the Department of English at Purdue University. His research areas include multimodal composition, professional and technical writing, non-western rhetoric, digital writing, multilingual writing, and world Englishes. Shyam has published several articles in journals and co-edited two creative writing books sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Nepal. His works have also been published by MinneTESOL Journal, TESL-EJ, the Second Language Writing Interest Section of TESOL, and Multilingual Matters. He is currently co-editing a special issue of a journal, and his collaborative chapter, "Introducing World Englishes to Multilingual Writers in a First-Year Composition Course," is forthcoming in an edited collection from Utah State University Press.

#### **Dr. Santosh Khadka**

Santosh Khadka is an Associate Professor of English at the California State University Northridge. His research areas include multimodal composition, digital writing, and transnational rhetoric. He has authored a monograph, *Multiliteracies, Emerging Media, and College Writing Instruction* (Routledge, 2019), scores of journal articles, and co-edited two volumes on multimodality: *Bridging the Multimodal Gap: From Theory to Practice* (Utah State UP, 2019), and *Designing and Implementing Multimodal Curricula and Programs* (Routledge, 2018). He is currently working on his second monograph and co-editing a special issue of a journal and two new books.