

Rachel Gramer  
Administrative Philosophy

As a writing program administrator (WPA), I am committed to feminist mentoring interactions that articulate and expand, rather than flatten or conflate, the complex intellectual activities we perform when we create texts and experiences, participate in literate activity, teach and learn, and advocate for first-year writing (FYW) programs, teachers, and students. I rely on these (abbreviated) principles.

**Capacious understandings of writing and learning:** Capacious definitions of what counts as writing—and writing education—allow people to build structures of support that activate and value (rather than occlude or marginalize) the complexities of literate activity: the systems, tools, and embodied experiences that mediate how we learn and/to write and teach writing in contemporary institutional and cultural conditions for working, learning, and living.

**Transparent communication and decision-making:** In my COVID-impacted time at ISU, transparency has been a vital feminist activist tool during pandemic moments of crisis and risk communication for providing online writing course development and support, making decisions based on instructor feedback and concerns, advocating for hiring and instructor autonomy, and responding to shifting institutional policies, procedures, and instructional modalities.

**Visibility and multimodal making:** To contribute to making diverse writers, teachers, and writing and learning practices visible, I value multimodal making in writing teacher mentoring, professional development, and newcomer onboarding. At ISU, I have encouraged and created explicit space, time, and resources for making a range of artifacts for teaching undergraduate writing students; visualizing the complex work of teaching at a new institution; and interviewing peer writing teachers as a research, co-learning, and community-building activity.

**Co-learning and collaborative leadership:** At ISU, I mentor a team of doctoral students in our collective work of supporting writing teachers' learning and practice. Together, we model co-learning as a tool for sustainable practice in increasingly demanding institutional conditions: communicating with newcomers, mentoring peer GAs, training new employees, researching institutional practices, facilitating and structuring professional development, planning teaching and community-building events, and creating and curating teaching materials.

**Rhetorical listening in action:** As a feminist WPA, I value rhetorical listening, or trying to “stand under” other discourses and others' stories in order to better understand the positions and perceptions from which people are acting (adapted from Krista Ratcliffe's *Rhetorical Listening*). In practice, I enact and make visible the rhetorical listening and transparency I value by: (1) eliciting and processing teacher input for all GAs in the Department of English (and not just the Writing Program) during times of COVID crisis and continued risk mitigation; (2) sharing the processed results of instructional surveys with department leadership, all writing teachers, and all department GAs; (3) making decisions about instructional modalities, professional development, and structures of support based on teacher input and feedback; (4) communicating rationales for decision-making in relation to available resources; and (5) creating and circulating new resources that respond to teachers' shifting concerns and needs.

**Equity across all activities:** My administrative goal is to use the above (abbreviated) principles to advocate for and create more equitable situations for writing teachers across all activities: onboarding communication, mentoring, professional development, curriculum design, and administrative decisions, to name a few. At ISU, this work explicitly supports transnational and domestic teachers living and working in intersections of systemic oppression—hopefully in ways that all writing teachers directly enact with multiply marginalized undergraduate writers equally deserving of educational equity.