Ryan Skinnell’s *Conceding Composition* redirects our historical view of rhetoric and composition courses, notably first-year writing, to consider larger factors such as the institution itself and governmental policies.

Skinnell’s main argument asserts that first-year composition (FYC) was created and maintained as a concession to establish credibility of a given institution, demonstrate college-level courses and standards, and/or advance a school beyond its original purpose. The easiest example of this would be the transformation of a “normal” (or teacher-training) school to a university. To better illustrate this example of concession, normal schools had “normal” writing courses that were conceded or given up in favor of “college” FYC courses (72). This alteration would advance a school’s agenda away from the normal model to a more university-like model (72).

By understanding it this way, that is, as “a symbolic token manipulated as necessary to curry educational, promotional, or political favor,” readers recognize how the act of concession is useful as a concept to understand how composition has helped establish and grow our colleges and universities (14). Skinnell suggests schools needed composition to gain accreditation, and as such, composition became a gateway to that accreditation, but also to governmental funding and to potential students, which all drove school growth. This became a cycle that was affected by several factors. For example, the GI Bill created an influx of ready students (and funding) for schools, which also helped create our modern university system and, likewise, created competition among potential schools for GI students.

While some R/C folk pay limited attention to first-year composition courses, Skinnell argues that without them the university would not be what it is today. He provides truncated histories of several schools that demonstrate his point, but he relies most heavily on Arizona State University and its many progenitors, including its history as a normal school and a teacher’s college. Through these collective histories, Skinnell shows that as universities grew, so did the educational demands placed upon them. One part of those demands was good writing, because to be an “educated” person partly meant being able to write well. Schools needed to include evidence of college-level skills such as advanced writing and mathematics, and composition’s inclusion and development provided, at least in part, this evidence. In other words, “we are teaching writing skills to show you we are generating educated students.”

Beyond my respect for Skinnell’s
perspective and insight, I do have some minor quibbles. At times the writing is overly verbose, which readers get used to, but it’s occasionally distracting enough to mention. At other times, he spends a painfully long time telling readers what he will do or simply grants a point to make it a given. As such, he occasionally falls into a circular argument of “it” is because “it” is, and he acknowledges our field has sometimes fallen into this thinking too. In this way, Skinnell may be perceived as taking an easy way out of the conundrum(s) he’s created. Likewise, the text would be best served by more research, digging in and finding a few more connective answers. However, Skinnell acknowledges these flaws (on page 47), and readers should accept them. These concessions will and should, I hope, create a stir that encourages others to come from similar perspectives, because they are not well explored from our perspective and are too often assumed. In this respect, he has done us a great service.

There has been a small resurgence of composition history works, such as Nathan Shepley’s *Placing the History of College Writing*. Skinnell comes from the perspective of discovery and invention. In doing so, his goal is to provide a new position to view an old history or, as he explains, a genitive history, and in this, he succeeds. Across five chapters, Skinnell illustrates a version of composition’s history that cannot be ignored, nor should it.

**Work Cited**


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**Cultivating New Voices among Scholars of Color Program, 2018–2020**

The NCTE Research Foundation’s Cultivating New Voices among Scholars of Color (CNV) program is designed to provide two years of support, mentoring, and networking opportunities for early career scholars of color. The program aims to work with doctoral candidates and early career postsecondary faculty of color to cultivate the ability to draw from their own cultural and linguistic perspectives as they conceptualize, plan, conduct, write, and disseminate findings from their research. The program provides socialization into the research community and interaction with established scholars whose own work can be enriched by their engagement with new ideas and perspectives. The 2018–2020 CNV program participants are listed below:

Sara P. Alvarez, Queens College (CUNY), NY  
Lucía Cárdenas Curiel, Michigan State University, East Lansing  
Wintre Foxworth Johnson, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia  
Justin Grinage, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis  
Davena Jackson, Michigan State University, East Lansing  
Lydia Kanu Kiramba, University of Nebraska, Lincoln  
Saba Khan Vlach, University of Texas at Austin  
Kira LeeKeenan, University of Texas at Austin  
Maria Leija, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
Teaira Catherine Lee McMurtry, Milwaukee Public Schools, WI  
Joaquin Muñoz, Augsburg University, Minneapolis, MN  
Arturo Nevárez, University of California, Riverside  
Tiffany Nyachae, Buffalo State University (SUNY), NY  
Ah-Young Song, Teachers College, Columbia University, NY

**Promising Researcher Award Winner**

The recipient of the 2018 NCTE Promising Researcher Award in Recognition of Bernard O’Donnell is **Cati de los Ríos**, University of California, Davis. She describes her work as follows:
Dr. de los Ríos is an assistant professor at University of California, Davis’s School of Education. She received her PhD in English Education from Teachers College, Columbia University, in 2017 and is a former school teacher in California and Massachusetts. Cati’s research spans a number of phenomena, including Chicanx and Latinx adolescents’ critical and close readings of corridos, multimodal and translingual literacies, youth community engagement, and the civic literacy practices extant in secondary ethnic studies classrooms. Cati is a Ford Foundation Fellow and part of the 2014–2016 cohort of NCTE’s Cultivating New Voices among Scholars of Color program. Her dissertation on the Common Core State Standards–aligned literacy activities in a secondary Ethnic Studies course in California recently won two 2018 AERA Outstanding Dissertation Awards. Her latest scholarship can be found in *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, and *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*; she has a forthcoming piece in *English Education*.

The Promising Researcher Award is sponsored by the NCTE Standing Committee on Research. Submitted manuscripts are evaluated based on their statements of research problems, reviews of relevant literature, methodology and data analysis, grounding of evidence, significance of results, and clarity and style.

For more information on the NCTE Promising Researcher Award, go to http://www2.ncte.org/awards/promising-researcher-award.

**Diana Hacker TYCA Outstanding Programs in English Awards for Two-Year Teachers and Colleges Call for Submissions**

This annual award honors two-year teachers and their colleges for exemplary programs that enhance students’ language learning, helping them to achieve their college, career, and personal goals. Categories for submission for the 2019 award, in both credit and non-credit programs, are as follows: *Reaching across Borders* (Partnerships with Business; Partnerships with High Schools, Colleges, and Universities; Service Learning; Interdisciplinary Programs; Distance/Distributed Learning; Writing across the Curriculum; and Community Outreach); *Composition Programs and Writing Studies* (Academic Writing; Basic Writing/Developmental English; Professional Writing/Technical Writing/Digital Writing; Creative Writing; Writing Centers; Integrated Reading and Writing Programs); *Fostering Student Success* (Transfer and Honors Programs; Serving Special Populations; Innovative Methods of Instructional Delivery; Mentoring and Tutoring Programs; Accelerated Learning Programs/Studio Programs, Learning Communities, Online/Hybrid/Multimodal Learning; Assessment/Placement Programs; Programs Promoting Equity and Inclusion); and *Excellence in Teaching* (Programs Teaching Literature and Innovative Methods of Instructional Delivery; Collaborative College and Community Cultural Arts Programs or Events; College Literary Arts Programs). The programs may be exclusively English programs or combination programs with other disciplines, college services, or community and workplace groups. Colleges may enter a program in more than one category, if appropriate, but each entry must be submitted separately, and no program will receive an award in more than one category. The colleges selected for the awards...
and for honorable mention will be honored at the TYCA Breakfast at the CCCC Convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in March 2019.

The programs will be judged on the following criteria: (1) sensitivity to the educational, cultural, and ethnic needs of diverse students; (2) innovative strategies for improving student learning that can be shared so that other teachers and colleges can benefit by adopting or adapting them; (3) evidence of success in improving student learning; (4) collaboration among those who participate in or are affected by the programs; and (5) pedagogy informed by sound theory and practices.

Applicants must submit a completed online submission form, a brief description of their program (60 words or less), and a detailed explanation of the program’s goals and impact (1,000 words or less). Submission materials must be submitted by November 10, 2018. Please visit http://www2.ncte.org/awards/tyca-diana-hacker-outstanding-programs-in-english-award for more information and to submit the nomination online. For additional information, please contact Linda Walters-Moore, NCTE, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801-1906; phone 800-369-6283, ext. 3632, or tyca@ncte.org.

Call for Nominations

The CCCC Stonewall Service Award is presented annually and seeks to recognize members of CCCC/NCTE who have consistently worked to improve the experiences of sexual and gender minorities within the organization and the profession. Nominations should include a letter of nomination, three to five letters of recommendation, and a full curriculum vitae. Please send nominations to cccc@ncte.org by November 1, 2018. Please visit http://www.ncte.org/cccc/awards/stonewall for further details.

The CCCC Tribal College Faculty Fellowship

The CCCC Tribal College Faculty Fellowship offers financial aid to selected faculty members currently working at tribally controlled colleges to attend the annual Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) Convention, March 13–16, 2019, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. We are offering two Tribal College Faculty Fellowships in the amount of $1,250 each.

Featuring more than 500 sessions focusing on teaching practices, writing and literacy programs, language research, history, theory, information technologies, and professional and technical communication, the annual CCCC Convention provides a forum for thinking, learning, networking, and presenting research on the teaching and learning of writing. With this fellowship, CCCC hopes to create new opportunities for tribal college faculty members to become involved in CCCC and for CCCC to carry out its mission of serving as a truly representative national advocate for language and literacy education.

How to Apply: By November 15, 2018, please submit an application letter (on institutional letterhead) describing who you are as a teacher and what you teach at your tribal college, what your research interests are, and what you hope to gain
from the experience of attending CCCC (how it could help you in your teaching or research). Send your application letter to the CCCC Liaison at cccc@ncte.org.

**Selection Criteria:** A selection committee will review applications for the Tribal College Faculty Fellowship and award the fellowships based on overall quality of the application letter. You do not need to be a presenter at CCCC in order to qualify for this award.

**Help Shape NCTE Positions by Submitting a Resolution**

If you have concerns about issues that affect your teaching or if you’d like to see NCTE take a stand on a position you support, you have an opportunity to be heard! Propose a resolution that may be voted on at NCTE’s Annual Convention.

For details on submitting a resolution, to see resolutions already passed by Council members, or to learn about proposing position statements or guidelines other than resolutions, visit the NCTE website (http://www2.ncte.org/resources/position-statements/) or contact Lori Bianchini at NCTE Headquarters (800-369-6283, ext. 3611; lbianchini@ncte.org). Resolutions must be postmarked by October 15, 2018.