Composition pedagogy for the 21st century: a culturally inclusive model

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COMPOSITION PEDAGOGY

FOR THE

21ST CENTURY:

A CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE MODEL

By

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Abstract

As cultural and racial demographics continue to diversify across college campuses, the First Year Composition (FYC) classroom becomes a site wherein faculty can engage in transformative pedagogical strategies to maximize ways in which students’ culturally diverse backgrounds can influence their rhetorical strategies in meaningful ways. However, a critical analysis of FYC and factors influencing its design and impact demonstrate that, to a large degree, faculty are not implementing pedagogical strategies that incorporate cultural rhetorics in strategic ways. This critical analysis sought to understand the significant factors hampering faculty desire and ability to deliver Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy (CIP), which is a pedagogical approach inspired predominantly by the “Students’ Right to Their Own Language” resolution, as well as scholarship from Critical Race Theory, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, and Cultural Rhetorics. In confronting challenges to implementing CIP, recommendations are offered by way of pedagogical strategies, faculty training, and graduate student preparation. Limitations are acknowledged; however, suggestions are offered regarding steps recommended towards truly honoring students’ language and expanding students’ rhetorical strengths. Keywords: Cultural Rhetoric, First Year Composition, Pedagogy, Critical Race Theory, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy
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Chapter One: Who Stole the Soul?

Composition scholars frequently find ourselves adjusting our pedagogical stances to reflect the perpetually changing requirements and expectations of First Year Composition (FYC) students and to maintain currency with the latest pedagogical trends. As a result of evolving scholarship and social demands, compositionists have successfully generated strategies of integrating technology, social media, and multicultural texts into various curricula, and that just scratches the surface of the field’s evolution. However, in efforts to create more culturally inclusive classrooms, we have been less successful in probing our perceptions as to what constitutes academic writing in ways that cultivate students’ cultural rhetorics\(^1\), a loaded term to be sure. In the current context, cultural rhetoric refers to culturally informed communicative practices, ideologies, and epistemologies that reflect cultural values and identities, similar to Steven Mailloux’s employment of the term as “the political effectivity of trope and argument in culture” (Gilyard and Taylor 30). Mailloux is concerned about ways in which specific cultural rhetorics occupy marginal spaces within English Studies as a discipline, and that positioning mirrors cultural rhetorics’ scarcity in Composition pedagogy. I’ve experienced the impact of that scarcity as both student and teacher, and to call it concerning is an understatement.

To that point, scholars in Linguistics, Composition, and Education, such as Geneva Smitherman, Geneva Gay, Elaine Richardson, and Keith Gilyard, have critiqued methods by which Composition instructors – many of whom are not familiar with Composition scholarship

\(^1\) A number of scholars have used this term, but not necessarily the way I’m employing it here. My use derives from Elaine Richardson’s discussion of ethnic rhetoric, which refers to ways in which one’s ethnicity influences his or her communicative strategies. I find it useful to expand the discussion to culture in general, as communicative values are informed by several aspects of one’s identity, including gender, race, class, religion, etc., and so I couple Richardson’s use of ethnic rhetoric with Steven Mailloux’s use of cultural rhetoric.
surrounding language rights\(^2\) – teach Composition with an unwavering emphasis on Standardized Academic English (SAE). At issue are pedagogical strategies that exclude “other” Englishes while implicitly, and in some cases explicitly, devaluing non-standardized English and the cultures of those who employ them. Smitherman, for example, describes some of the methods used by Composition instructors as “eradicationist” strategies that function to eliminate any other language variety aside from SAE from school settings (14). Other scholars have critiqued this strategy for failing to acknowledge the multiple purposes for writing and the fluctuations of expectations across contexts (Horner, Lu, Jones Royster, and Trimbur 306). However, advocates of SAE typically attempt to minimize the negative impact of teaching SAE by emphasizing its benefits, such as enabling students to gain greater access to power and success in America. This point is actually echoed by several scholars who promote language diversity, as they suggest that developing proficiency in the “Language of Wider Communication” (Fishman 113), or LWC, benefits everyone.

Unfortunately, the process of encouraging students to rid themselves of their cultural rhetorics as the price for assimilating into mainstream academic culture can be damaging on a psycho-social level in terms of what it does to one’s perception of one’s culture and, by extension, one’s sense of self. In fact, in a study on the impact of racism on minority student achievement, Education scholar Karen McClean Donaldson describes the behaviors and attitudes of students who felt that their ethnicity was not represented in the curriculum. MacLean’s study indicated that “[the students] felt cheated and disrespected, because they were aware that their cultural groups made major contributions to the United States but were still ignored in the curricula” (27). Maclean

\(^2\) Research done by Elaine Richardson indicates that a number of scholars are unfamiliar with Composition scholarship surrounding language rights. I reference that study in Chapter 3.
further indicated that students’ perceptions of their experiences contributed to their negative attitudes towards education and increased drop-out rates (27). In addition, while the dominant practices of elevating conventional standards of academic writing may be popular, it must be noted that prominent Composition and Linguistics scholars, such as Geneva Smitherman, Keith Gilyard and Elaine Richardson, have identified several negative consequences associated with limiting students’ sense of voice in the writing classroom, including promoting self-silencing and diminishing students’ sense of self. Additionally, critical race theorists have addressed ways in which reinforcing monocultural values contributes to the perception of oppressive experiences as normal and further perpetuate racist and classist values (Ladson-Billings 29). There is also the pragmatic perspective that the lack of opportunities to incorporate cultural rhetorics into academic writing limit the rhetorical choices available to all students, not just the culturally marginalized.

Still, addressing the needs of the historically marginalized is critical in this moment considering that our modern students occupy an increasingly culturally diverse world requiring them to communicate in ways that extend beyond traditional perceptions of rhetoric. Across the nation, “[b]etween 1990 and 2013, Hispanic enrollment nearly quadrupled (from 0.7 million to 2.9 million students) and Black enrollment more than doubled (from 1.1 million to 2.5 million students), while White enrollment increased 7 percent (from 9.3 million to 9.9 million students)” (National Center for Education Statistics 93). In addition, “[b]etween 2013 and 2024, female enrollment is projected to increase by 15 percent (from 9.8 million to 11.3 million students), and male enrollment is projected to increase by 9 percent (from 7.7 million to 8.3 million students),” (92)³ which suggests that the cultural landscape of our classrooms is becoming progressively

³ The National Center for Education Statistics, which functions under the U.S. Department of education, did not collect data on the LGBTQ community or collect data distinguishing students by religious affiliation. However, it did note that there has not been a significant increase or decrease in Native American students over the years (93).
diverse. However, students’ cultural rhetorics, continuously struggle to find legitimacy in many of our first year writing courses (Kynard, Richardson, Perryman-Clark). For instance, a study performed by Karmen Kynard found that some Composition assessment tools actually punish students for incorporating their cultural rhetorics into their academic writing (“Writing While Black”). Thus, even with instructors implementing creative approaches to teaching composition, their best efforts can be undermined by learning outcomes dictating the skills students should master by the end of a semester, or, in some cases, a two-semester sequence. Based on learning outcomes statements, which in many cases are disseminated by collegiate organizations such as the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and Writing Program Administrators (WPA), the goals of many of our FYC classrooms include commitments to “critical thinking, reading, and composing” (WPA Outcomes Statement), but do not speak to the acquisition of rhetorical strategies across cultural contexts. That absence makes me wonder what “Standardized English” would look like if it incorporated the rhetorical traditions of Indigenous peoples, Native Americans, Africans, and other groups whose voices were historically ignored or otherwise dishonored. Beyond racialized identities, what about other cultural rhetorics such as feminist, womanist, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) community, and other groups whose perspectives are typically not validated or reflected in mainstream culture?

Consider feminist rhetorics, for instance, of which there are numerous reflecting various feminist ideologies. Several feminist scholars have taken issue with the dominant space that argument occupies in mainstream Composition classrooms and textbooks. In her discussion of “Invitational rhetoric,” which is “a feminist alternative to traditional means of persuasion [,] ‘rhetor and audience alike contribute to the thinking about an issue so that everyone involved gains a greater understanding of the issue in its sublety, richness, and complexity’” (Foss and Griffin qtd
in Kirtley 340). Instead of engaging in discourse to persuade audiences, which has been associated with the desire to control one’s audience and is viewed as patriarchal (Kirtley), invitational rhetoric seeks to promote understanding in ways that invite one’s audience to explore the rhetor’s perspectives without the pressures of having to make a choice to ascribe to the rhetor’s values or relinquishing one’s existing values.

Another component of feminist rhetoric that is less concrete in its manifestations is its intentional othering; that is, its desire to dismantle oppressive structures that take the form of mainstream normalcy. For example, in her examination of the writing of feminist authors Luce Irigara, Gloria Anzaldua, and Donna Haraway, A.T. Nuyen notes the following:

[T]hey share something in common, and in common with the styles of many other feminist writers: They are all disruptive and unsettling – and one might say deliberately so. Their different styles typically involve the mixing, or ‘hybridization,’ of different concepts and categories, the blurring of familiar distinctions and oppositions.

(70).

Nuyen refers to the ways in which various feminist authors fluidly combine academic discourse with poetic abstractions and, in some cases, different languages, suggesting that mainstream written discourse is a “contested space” (Powell) for many feminist writers.

The above examples briefly represent some of the cultural values unaccounted for in the CWPA or AAC&U\(^4\) learning outcomes statements; there are no categories honoring rhetorical savvy or celebrating writers’ abilities to effectively combine rhetorical patterns in ways that reflect

\(^4\) These statements are examined in Chapter 4.
their identities and/or their unique ideological perspectives (CWPA, AAC&U). What we do have, which will be explored further in Chapter Four, are statements that allow for more cultural inclusion should instructors choose to incorporate such content, but nothing that would require them to do so. And without that expressed commitment to cultural inclusion, students are potentially left with monocultural classrooms reinforcing traditional conceptions of SAE.

Beyond my perception of SAE as a monolingual and monocultural relic, its shortcomings are evident in other areas. Not only do current perceptions of SAE limit rhetorical discourse features as I’ve illustrated above, SAE also represents an element of a hegemonic culture of power that functions to preserve a specific status quo with respect to maintaining mainstream values. By recreating what Michael Eric Dyson calls “mind-numbing sameness,” (“I Stand Alone”), which describes a constant bombardment and reinforcement of mainstreamed cultural norms, components of SAE as they are widely enacted in many FYC courses contribute to the conditioning of students to value the standards of mainstream society lest they experience the stigma of their marginalization. From course objectives, to selected readings, to writing assignments, to grading and assessment practices, students learn to ascribe to the values of mainstream society by having those same values reproduced and reinforced in their FYC curriculum. That is not to say that current practices that reinforce traditional Eurocentric values are inherently bad; there is much value in learning the conventions of the LWC. However, one must also consider if there is value in learning rhetorical practices beyond SAE and if there is potential danger in maintaining the current standards.

According to Critical Race Theorists (CRiTs), the standards reflecting mainstream values represent what they call the “Master Narrative,” which functions to promote a specific perspective that maintains the hegemonic status quo for those in position of power, “[supporting] the
maintenance of dominant groups” (Stanley). The Master Narrative applied to Composition paints SAE in a positive light and demonstrates its necessity in various aspects of society through a variety of systems, such as the media and educational institutions, which encourages members of society to ascribe to its values, ultimately contributing to the maintenance and longevity of those values. However, that narrative does not include stories of the disenfranchised, nor represent their documented negative experiences in correlation to their acquisition of SAE, such as those mentioned in MacLean’s Donaldson’s study. As such, CRiT’s recommend that scholars create “counter narratives” that function to offer alternative versions of specific phenomena that challenge mainstream accounts, or master narratives. For instance, CRiT and Education scholar Gloria Ladson-Billings refers to what she calls “master scripts” that render African American students “deficient” when they fail to demonstrate proficiency in specific academic areas, without interrogation of pedagogical strategies and/or assessments as inadequate or racially and/or culturally biased (Ladson-Billings 29-30). Counter narratives, in these cases, would highlight the problematic nature of curricula, shifting the conversation from one about preparing “deficient” students for academic success to one about revisiting existing culturally informed, and, by many accounts, biased criteria that supposedly determine students’ academic potential.

Furthermore, Compositionist Aja Martinez, offers what she refers to as “counterstory,” also known as counter-narrative, “as a contribution of other(ed) perspectives toward an ongoing conversation in the field about narrative, dominant ideology, and their intersecting influence on programmatic and curricular standards and practices” (Martinez 33). Arguing that Chicana@ experiences are often absent from composition scholarship, Martinez offers counterstory to legitimize a specific marginalized perspective in efforts to explore the existence and impact of

5 Martinez uses “Chicana@” to refer to males and females in America of Mexican descent.
racist components of Composition pedagogy that have been so dominant and common to be rendered “normal.” Such components, indeed, reflect a specific Master Narrative, or what some CRiTs refer to as “stock stories” (Martinez 38). CRiTs examine marginalized experiences to counter dominant perspectives that seemingly disregard culturally marginalized voices. In her counter-story, Martinez describes the experiences of a Mexican doctoral student she calls Alejandra who doesn’t speak much in class while she absorbs the course content, and when she does speak, she feels that her professors and classmates disregard her or minimize her contributions, particularly with issues surrounding race. She “…felt defeated. So silence became [her] refuge” (48). On the other hand, Martinez’ stock story of the same event describes Alejandra’s professors’ interpretation of her silence as a reflection of her lack of comprehension of the course content. They also don’t “get” Alejandra’s research agenda, especially with respect to racial politics and question whether she is a “good fit” for their doctoral program. They ultimately decide that she is not (44). Martinez provides the stock story and counter-story to highlight the dangers of imposing meaning on phenomena without considering alternative perspectives. And while that example exemplifies discrepancies in interpreting body language and other human behaviors, contradictions between stock story and counter story also apply to ideologies. For instance, Martinez discusses the emphasis of logos over pathos in academia, while noting that “For people of color, the personal as related through narrative provides space and opportunity to assert our [her emphasis] stories within, and in many instances counter to, the hegemonic narratives of the institution” (50-51). Thus, the argument can be made that pedagogical approaches that minimize narrative value may not adequately assess contributions of students of color.
My own counter-narrative speaks more poignantly to the problems with SAE in mainstream FYC. Because my experiences represent my subjectivity as both Master and Counter Narrator, at times my writing reflects both identities: the Master Narrator reinforcing SAE and the Counter Narrator resisting the hegemonic system. Nonetheless, for the purposes of this example, I will allow the counter-narrator to dominate the discussion. In the spirit of scholars such as Geneva Smitherman, Keith Gilyard, and Elaine Richardson who have published academic texts employing their cultural rhetoric, specifically African American Rhetoric (AAR⁶) with success, I offer the following account of my experience in FYC as both student and teacher incorporating AAR, along with annotations describing the rhetorical device:

(Narrative/testifyin) On my first day of English class as an official college freshman, I brought with me my pen, notebook, and years of multifaceted conditioning. I was well-adjusted at performing my identity as an African American female, number five of seven daughters, and Muslima growing up in Western New York. My parents were “working class,” and we often changed residences as our economic status improved. But that also meant changing schools frequently, providing opportunities for me to cultivate my identity as “student.” In that role, I learned to give teachers what they wanted, and I excelled, at least by the standards of the schools I attended, which, as it turned out, weren’t very high standards at all. I remember writing and delivering speeches in my capacity as 7th and 8th grade class president, and again as Junior and Senior class president. I used some of the poetic tone influenced by my mother, who was an avid Nikki Giovanni admirer, and some of the sermonizing and repetition of my father, who was the Imam of the mosque we attended. My work was celebrated; I was even invited to take AP English

⁶ African American Rhetoric is a loaded term that has also been referred to as African American Vernacular English, Ebonics, and Black English, and it can refer to actual language (phonology), grammatical structures (syntax), or rhetorical features. Most scholars specify which aspect of AAR they are referring to avoid confusion.
with 5 other students during my senior year of high school, which was a big deal for us at the time. You see, my school didn’t have an AP teacher; we had to take the course through “distance learning”; we would logon to hear our teacher, who was physically at another school. We also had other students in our physical classroom who were taking another class with another teacher. The logistics weren’t perfect, but taking the course itself meant, to us, that we were above average, and filled us with confidence in our abilities. We assumed that our performance up to that point landed us a position in that class, and for me that meant using what I saw as my unique voice informed by poetry, oration, and my experiences as a young black woman from the inner city.

However, my confidence was shattered when I entered college. There I was taking FYC at a state college in Buffalo, NY, and I couldn’t understand what I was doing wrong; I was constantly frustrated in my attempts to fit my writing into a mold that I felt limited and suffocated [hyperbole] the life out of each sentence, each clause, and each word I penned. Every first person and second person pronoun disappeared behind armies of red ink (figurative language), and I was told by my instructors that personalizing my writing through poetic language or repetition was “not appropriate for academic essays.” My writing handbooks reaffirmed that “For most academic and professional writing..., more formal language is appropriate,” (Lunsford 292) though definitions of “formal” were never provided. Furthermore, references to personal experiences as support, or “testifyin” (Smitherman Talkin and Testifyin 150), were not considered valid, and at most could function as subordinate to empirical research or appeals to authority. I was not told (anaphora) about an appropriate context for my preferred rhetorical choices, nor was I given

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7 The concept of formal is significant because it is a reinforcement of a Eurocentric perception of formality. The concept of the black formal language varies from the implied denotation of the term “formal” that is often associated with mainstream values.

8 Authority here reflects a very specific perception of authority, and may not necessarily reflect the students’ perspective. For example, cultures that value instinct, nature, and/or a “higher power” as sources of authority will not have those values validated.
any suggestions on how to maximize my use of said devices; I was only told (anaphora) that it was unacceptable.

(Testifyin) However, a part of me knew that it was effective. Though I could not refer one to any textbook showcasing ways in which my rhetorical choices could be effective or even preferred across contexts, I could (anaphora) reference my father, an Imam⁹ in a Muslim mosque. I could (anaphora) speak to his sermonizing as a manifestation of pathos, inspiring the brothas and sistas (Ebonics) to elevate their lives. He told his own story, or testified, as proof that anything is possible. I could reference Nikki Giovanni’s “The Great Pax Whitie,” complete with the static from my mother’s vinyl, and I could speak to what that album did for my mother and for me in terms of helping us identify and cope with racism in America. More importantly, I could reference my own writing that I had delivered amongst my peers, quoting from popular hip hop songs and throwing in poetic devices like alliteration and abstract language. I remember receiving applause for my efforts. But now, criticism.

So I adjusted. The writing I produced from then on reflected an identity with which I did not identify; I felt that I had to communicate through a voice that was not my own. Over time, though, I learned not only to excel at writing through this standard, but also to help others become proficient at it; I became a writing tutor and reinforced the very rules that I had such a difficult time accepting. I encouraged students to silence their home language and focus on developing a deeper appreciation for SAE that constituted the “writing that passes as currency in the academy,” (Bartholomae 479) and represented the ideal of oral and written communication within academia. Although I was not conscious of it at the time, historically, manifestations of the “ideal text”

⁹ A spiritual leader of Muslims in the Islamic faith
displayed rhetorical, grammatical, and stylistic features associated with the socially and economically privileged in society (Bizzell, CCCC). Yet, through constant reinforcement, I internalized the values of mainstream discourse, although I was by no means a member of society’s privileged, which probably explains why I never fully identified with it. I never used it in oral discourse; it was used almost exclusively for academic essays. Still, I never questioned its value. And, although I recognized that American colleges and universities were comprised of several cultural groups across social and economic communities, my conceptions of academic discourse did not alter to reflect this population of students.

In a nutshell, I adapted. My nouns and pronouns became third-person, and my examples referenced research from published sources, not personal or communal experiences. Now, everything that I wrote looked like everything everyone else had written, which disconnected me from my writing but allowed me to earn A’s in my writing classes. I removed my “self” from my writing and recreated clones of sample essays with changes in names, places, and dates. The Stepford Essay\textsuperscript{10} – I created that and helped other students create it as well. I stole the soul from their writing, as my soul was stolen from mine. Nevertheless, these unfortunate, though significant, experiences inspired me to help students on a grander scale by furthering my education in graduate school in hopes of one day becoming a college professor.

That meta-narrative summarizes my undergraduate experiences with SAE. Beginning with FYC, my classmates and I were taught to value SAE through eradicationist methods that failed to acknowledge the value of non-standardized discourse features. Ultimately, like scholars before me, I learned to adapt and experienced the “success” of valuing and mastering SAE so much as to

\textsuperscript{10} This term is based on the “Stepford Wives,” who were fictional characters known for their submission to strict standards that robbed them of any individuality or power.
devote my graduate career to learning how to help others value it. However, what I lost along the way has taken years to recoup with respect to valuing rhetorical traditions of several cultural groups and locating methods of regaining what I lost of my own AAR. Even as I write these words, battles ensue within my intellectual psyche as to which language is most appropriate. Mikhail Bakhtin’s phrase “always already” (Irvine) perfectly describes my writing process as an exercise in translation, as I am always already translating the language and expressions of my cultural consciousness, rich with tropes and metaphors begging to be invited into the academy. I am left writing and speaking what I almost mean because I’ve been deprived of the tools to explore other options.

Furthermore, I suspect that I would still be reinforcing limited perceptions of academic and formal writing had it not been for the American Ethnic Rhetorics conference at Pennsylvania State University that I attended near the end of my graduate coursework in 2001. That conference introduced me to the idea that there is value in multiple rhetorical choices depending on audience and context. In addition, it served to validate my frustrations at feeling obligated to self-silence, and it inspired me to create a more culturally conscious curriculum for my own FYC students. Instead of reinforcing what I saw as a culturally restrictive composition pedagogy, I wanted to seek ways of empowering students to utilize their own rhetorical heritage along with mainstream SAE. In this spirit, I began researching the feasibility of what I call culturally inclusive pedagogy (CIP).

Creating a culturally-inclusive Composition pedagogy would not merely function to satisfy my desire to rectify a wrong that I felt was inflicted upon me personally, although that was my initial motivation. A deeper examination of Ethnic Rhetoric (ER)--which is a type of cultural rhetoric housing AAR, Chinese rhetoric, Native American rhetoric, and other rhetorics associated
with one’s ethnicity or national identity—revealed that my experiences as a student were not so rare, and were, in fact, common place amongst writers from culturally diverse backgrounds who grappled with negotiating the values of home with those of the academy. Composition theorist and linguist Elaine Richardson reminisced that as an undergraduate student of composition, “It wasn’t long before I figured out that I could succeed by relinquishing my language variety and my history, experience, culture, and perspective for theirs” (African American Literacies 2). This was no admission of her home language being less effective or valuable than that of the dominant academy, but an acknowledgement of the low status her home language occupied within the academy. Richardson’s statement illustrates one of the consequences of eradicationist methods in practice; like myself, she essentially silenced her home language to succeed in her courses. This sentiment of silencing one’s language has even impacted Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. According to Richardson, Justice Thomas has acknowledged that insecurity about his Gullah11 language has on occasion caused him not to speak much in his capacity as a Supreme Court justice (“Race, Class(es), Gender, and Age” 40). What’s highlighted here is that even beyond the college classroom, many individuals who have been encouraged to view their home language as inferior to the mainstream carry insecurities related to those language differences throughout their lives. I can recall my own silencing in college classes as an undergraduate and graduate student, as I was painfully aware that my preferred rhetorical choices did not reflect mainstream academic values. When I would venture to speak in classes, I would only do so in classes with other black students (which were few and far between) or after carefully translating my Black English into SAE in my

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11 “Gullah” refers to “what linguists call an English-based creole language. …[Linguists] today view Gullah, and other creoles, as full and complete languages with their own systematic grammatical structures” (Opala).
mind. Self-silencing was my default until I learned that my cultural rhetorics were valuable and not markers of deficiencies.

Highlighting the significance of cultural rhetorics does not function to diminish the significance of academic discourse, nor to imply that mainstream students don’t experience a similar process of translation. Many students feel the pressure to conform to SAE, even though they may not be ethnic minorities. Larger questions exist surrounding what many characterize as the social elitism of SAE, and those concerns should be further explored. However, my specific argument for the current project is that when teaching FYC, monocultural and eradicationist methods limit opportunities for a critical examination of academic discourse, in terms of historically contextualizing its roots to better understand how its standards were established and considering ways in which cultural rhetorics can be implemented to perform academic tasks, especially given the amount of scholarship published over several decades advocating culturally inclusive pedagogy. In addition to African American rhetoric, other cultural rhetorics have been under-theorized and/or rendered inappropriate for academic discourse. Thus, I advocate a pedagogy that would call for a more thorough examination of all cultural rhetorics and their potential impact on academic discourse. Ultimately, I believe the academy and its students would benefit from a broader understanding of written communication across cultures and contexts.

Though I contend that CIP would benefit all students, I also believe that it is absolutely necessary to our population of ethnic and cultural minorities. Achievement gaps between minority students and white students exist across a number of academic subjects, including literacy skills. Elaine Richardson cites several scholars in her acknowledgement that “The written literacy acquisition of students from the African American Vernacular English (AAVE) culture is not on par with that of students from the dominant culture (Applebee, 1986, 1990; Chapman-Thompson,
AAVE students are still placed disproportionately in college-level remedial writing courses (Rose, 1989)” (“Critique on the Problematic” 197). In addition, “Current research has suggested that the racial ‘achievement gap’ in literacy learning is more likely caused by teachers’ lack of acceptance of AAVE than by bidialectical students’ confusion over the features of SE (Godly, Carpenter, & Werner, 2007; Goodman & Buck, 1973) […] When bidialectal students perceive that dialects such as AAVE are unacceptable in classrooms, that perception can lead to a decline in academic motivation and reduced literacy learning (Dickar, 2004)” (Godley and Escher 705). Here, scholars are suggesting that success in acquiring SAE can be directly linked to positive perceptions of one’s home language in the classroom, which they link to increased academic motivation. Furthermore, there is “evidence that performance gaps between [mainstream and non-mainstream students] are due in part to the different language and cultural patterns that non-mainstream students bring to the classroom…,” (Scott, Straker, and Katz xvii), which supports Geneva Smitherman’s observation that mainstream students reap the benefits of their cultural perspectives being reflected in the curriculum, while non-mainstream students do not (xviii).

Beyond the scope of culture in ethnic terms, the 2005 National School Climate Survey “indicated that ‘LGBT students were five times more likely to report having skipped school in the last month because of safety concerns than the general population of students’ (‘GLSENS’s 2005 National School Climate Survey’)” (Fox 498) The more recent 2011 survey states, “Less than half (43.4%) of students in schools with an inclusive curriculum felt unsafe because of their sexual orientation, compared to two thirds (67.5%) of other students” (GLSENS’s 2011 National School Climate Survey). Queer theorist Catherine Fox reflects on the significance of this data, contending “The exigency of physical safety is a necessary and productive place to begin imagining how to create conditions where queer folks can learn, teach, and research” (498). As we reflect on the
“multi” of multiculturalism, scholars and practitioners are tasked with the responsibility of enacting culturally meaningful pedagogy that acknowledges and respects students’ points of view and contributes to their level of engagement, which could contribute to increased student achievement. The research has indicated that the absence or minimal presence of CIP potentially contributes to achievement disparities between mainstream students and “others.”

While the mere existence of cultural and language differences in a vacuum does not necessarily account for academic achievement disparities, how teachers and students negotiate these differences should be further explored. Scholars have, however, documented the potential damage to minority students (beyond academic achievement) due to the constant reinforcement of ethnocentric ideals that continue to devalue non-mainstream students’ sense of self, whether implicitly or explicitly. In a case study designed to explore “writing anxieties and linguistic insecurities,” researcher Rochelle Holland describes a subject “Mary” who “loves” her personal writing, but

her fears about expressing herself in standard English are in sharp contrast to her writing performance at home. The different language codes, used for self-expression, compete and conflict – rather than complement each other – and this creates a condition of linguistic anxiety and insecurity that may undermine a student’s self-confidence, self-esteem and self-identity in academic settings when writing, and eventually in cultural settings when communicating (Baxter & Bucci, 1984)” (279).

In many cases, students are not being encouraged to maintain any sense of pride in their home language unless that language closely reflects SAE. Instead, they are encouraged to rid themselves
of the language practices that many instructors feel hinder students’ potential for success. Geneva Smitherman acknowledges that perspective:

In all fairness, I suppose, one must credit many such correctionist English teachers for the misguided notion that they are readying Black students for the world (read: white America). The rationale is that this world is one in which Black kids must master the prestige dialect if they are to partake of that socio-economic mobility for which America is world renowned. (“English Teacher” 61).

Those acknowledgements were true in the 1970’s when Smitherman’s article was published, and they are true today. However, articulating the reality of a situation does not equate with an endorsement of it, and many scholars have taken issue with the correctionist pedagogies that render non-SAE inferior to SAE. For instance, Donald McCrary argues that “It is counterproductive to our notion of critical literacy and multiculturalism to have students believe that any aspect of their language or culture is inferior and unintelligent” (90). Moreover, researcher’s Hanley and Noblit’s Literature Review on Culturally Responsive Teaching revealed the following:

[It] was once assumed that once [African American, Latin, Asian, and Native American] students were assimilated into White society, academic success would follow. It was assumed that what would serve students best was to give up their culture as part of being schooled. More recently, the research literature has come to regard this logic as subtractive. When schools work on this assumption, they negate the students’ cultures, denying the students the key resource that they bring to education. (4)

Hanley and Noblit are suggesting that assimilation by means of catering to the values of the dominant group, by what some have referred to as “eradicationist” methods that “attempt to
obliterate” (Smitherman 61) non-standard dialects, removes any opportunity for students to employ their own cultural tools, and in fact renders such tools useless, inferior. Therefore, implementing CIP is a necessary component of any curriculum that functions to elevate the experiences of our culturally diverse students.

The Initial Suspects: Eradicationists, “English Only,” and Textbooks

Unfortunately, eradicationist trends dominate the current academy, as we see mutations of them covertly, and in some cases overtly, influencing Composition pedagogy in ways that are detrimental to our students’ growth as writers and citizens in a global society. English Professor and Composition scholar Patricia Bizzell contends that “Because academic discourse is the language of a community, at any given time its most standard or widely accepted features reflect the cultural preferences of the most powerful people in the community. Until relatively recently, these people in the academic community have usually been male, European American, and middle or upper class” (1). However, even though our classrooms have become far more culturally diverse, Composition pedagogy has not changed on a grand scale to reflect this reality12. And there have been calls to do so. Linguist Donald Lloyd argued for more diversity and less attention to “correctness” in Composition instruction and textbooks back in 1951:

Emphasis on ‘correctness’ –at the expense of practice in reading and writing, at the expense of a fluid, knowledgeable command of our mother tongue –is responsible for the incompetence of our students in handling their language, for their embarrassment about their own rich native regional dialects, for their anxiety when they are called upon to speak

12 Evidence of the current state of Composition as culturally limiting is reflected in current textbooks, learning outcome statements, and assessment criteria, each of which will be further examined throughout the chapters.
or write, for their distaste for ‘English,’ and for their feeling that the study of English is the study of trivialities which have no importance or meaning outside the English class.

(Lloyd 12).

Lloyd’s concern speaks to what Supreme Court Justice Thomas experienced some 50 years later in 2000. In essence, Justice Thomas was unable to perform his official duties to his full capacity because of the stigma attached to his home language, a stigma that Composition instructors reinforced in 1951, and many are consciously or unconsciously reinforcing today. The emphasis on “correctness” in textbooks reflects eradicationist ideals that elevate a very specific notion of correctness, leaving no room for competing ideologies and contributing to self-silencing.

However, Lloyd’s suggestions were unpopular, and one of the reasons is because many scholars have operated under the assumption that students whose home language and values differed dramatically from the mainstream were considered “culturally disadvantaged” (Ford, 99). In fact, in 1964, a grant-funded study was sponsored by the US Commissioner of Education because, amongst other misconceptions, it was suggested that this population of students were not likely to be successful academically. And, if the students did possess unique attributes that allowed them to somehow earn a college degree, they were not likely to enter graduate school. It was believed that “These students, though talented, remain culturally disadvantaged because they have never developed the skill to read with ease and pleasure, not to express themselves effectively in speech or writing” (99). Like the authors of this study, many scholars applied the deficit approach to teaching, wherein instead of recognizing that students possessed cultural differences that

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13 “Culturally Disadvantaged” in this context referred to “Negroes from the rural South, ‘Hill Whites’ from the Appalachian upland, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and Reservation Indians,” though “[the] students involved in this experiment were selected from the predominantly Negro student body of Morgan State College, Baltimore, Maryland” (Ford, 99-100).
enabled them to communicate effectively using nonstandard practices, scholars believed they possessed cultural deficiencies, hence the term “culturally disadvantaged.” Education scholars Django Paris, H. Samy Alim, and Gloria Ladson-Billings, to name a few, reference deficit pedagogies as central to their creation of alternative pedagogies, as the scholarship surrounding deficit approaches illustrated ways in which those strategies were “untenable and unjust” (Paris and Alim 87).

With an increasing number of African Americans and other ethnic minorities entering college as a result of the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s, scholars and educators across disciplines were trying to figure out how so-called “culturally disadvantaged” students could speak and write successfully in SAE. Some linguists recognized a problem inherent in the deficit approach: students who spoke and wrote through non-standard dialects, specifically “Black English,” were employing a legitimate language, though it wasn’t always recognized as such. In 1971, linguists Wolfram and Whitman declared that “Black English is a fully formed linguistic system in its own right; it cannot simply be dismissed as an unworthy approximation of Standard English” (2). Their sentiments were not unique, as other scholars, such as Geneva Smitherman, and author James Baldwin acknowledged the legitimacy of Black English as well. Smitherman actually employs “Black English” in her professional writing to illustrate its efficacy in communicating academic ideas (Smitherman “Soul and Style.”) Furthermore, James Baldwin’s essay “If Black English Isn’t a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?” illustrates ways in which Black English operates in much the same ways as dialects of other languages, such as French (para 2). He further argues “A language comes into existence by means of brutal necessity, and the rules of the language are dictated by what the language must convey,” (para 7) [Baldwin’s emphasis] suggesting that African Americans evolved the English language to accommodate their needs and
circumstances. However, even with these and other acknowledgements, most scholars still recommended that students eradicate manifestations of Black English, and any other “dialect,” in place of SAE. In fact, in a 1972 study commissioned by the U.S Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, researcher LaVerne Hanners argued, “It is desirable that all college students have a command of Standard Written English, be his spoken dialect whatever it will” (3). Most scholars agreed that students needed to gain proficiency in the established standard, but there were questions as to what could be sacrificed in the name of SAE.

Smitherman and, later, Gilyard referred to “eradicationist” methods of teaching SAE, wherein students were rewarded for ridding their academic discourse of any dialect interference, or what Smitherman refers to as “[attempts] to obliterate Black English” (“English Teacher” 61). However, the process wasn’t fully interrogated, as students’ sense of cultural identity was impacted, as mentioned in MacLean’s study. The process of devaluing students’ language while still acknowledging that said language was legitimate sent mixed messages. Because there was no discussion of any appropriate context for “dialect interference,” all of the lip service about legitimatizing non-standard dialects did nothing for actually addressing them in any empowering way in the classroom. The reinforcement of SAE at the exclusion of all other dialects continued to devalue non-standard dialects in the classroom. However, at a time when more ethnic minorities than ever were entering college classrooms, scholars needed to address the needs of these students to help them become more competitive as students and professionals without compromising the value of their cultural identities. This backdrop yielded the 1972 Committee on College Composition and Communication’s resolution that addressed the field’s position on language.

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14 Dialect interference refers to the degree to which one’s dialect manifests itself in the composing of SWE (standard written English)
rights in the classroom. The “Students’ Right to Their Own Language” (SRTOL) resolution, which was painstakingly revised and published in a 1974 edition of *College Composition and Communication*, resolved the following:

We affirm the students’ right to their own language patterns and varieties of language – the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style. …The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another. …We affirm strongly that teachers must have the experiences and training that will enable them to respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language. (710-711)

This resolution specifically called on scholars to become familiar with the language traditions of “other” cultures and to use better judgment when responding to this population of students. There was also a background document published highlighting significant research on language and language diversity (Smitherman, “CCCC's Role” 360). But efforts to validate students’ non-standard languages didn’t stop there; dissension continued, as evidenced by a 1979 key court case in Ann Arbor Michigan.

In the *Martin Luther King Junior Elementary School Children v. Ann Arbor School District Board* court case, 15 students and their parents filed a lawsuit against the school district citing, among other things, that the “teachers at the school stigmatized Black English speakers. Citing subchapter IV A, Bilingual Education (20 USC 880b), of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Title VII), lawyers for the children maintained that the school failed to provide supplementary

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15 According to Smitherman, the version of the resolution published in 1974 included a great deal of compromises, emphasizing that many felt the resolution wasn’t as strong as some would have hoped, while others felt that the resolution went too far. The 1974 version reflected concessions made on both sides.
bilingual education and therefore denied the children an equal educational opportunity” (Swearingen and Jacobs 113). Judge Charles W. Joiner ruled:

on the basis of failing to overcome language barriers, the Ann Arbor School District had violated the children’s right to equal educational opportunity. Though Black English was not found to be a barrier per se, the institutional response to it was a barrier. In short, this ruling affirmed the obligation of school districts to educate black children and served to establish, within a legal framework, what has been well documented in academic scholarship: Black English is a systematic rule-governed language system developed by black Americans as they struggled to combine the cultures of Africa and the United States. (Smitherman “What Go Round” 43).

Like the SRTOL resolution, Judge Joiner highlighted the need for instructors to become more familiar with the language varieties of the students, and to use that insight to teach SAE. However, even though several linguists testified during this trial to reaffirm the position of Black English as a legitimate language, public opinion remained largely unchanged. In fact “…[responses] to the Black English Trial from community members ran almost four to one against the proposition that there was any problem other than cultural deprivation” (Swearingen and Jacobs 116). Although the primary population impacted by this decision was elementary school students and educators, it reflected a sentiment held by Americans in general. The reality was that, although the “Students’ Right” resolution reflected a tone of compromise in the field, there were many scholars who were blatantly against it. “There were calls for the resolution to be rescinded and the background document recalled” (Smitherman, “CCCC's Role” 362). For instance, in 1975, Ann Berthoff suggested that the linguistics research referenced in the background statement provided no relevance to Composition instruction. Berthoff further argued, “Declaring that everyone has a
‘right’ to his own ‘language’ is sloganeering, very close in spirit and rhetorical form to anti-Communist manifestos and other varieties of response formulated according to a notion of ‘public relations.’” (Berthoff and Clark 217). On the other hand, William Clark of the University of Iowa disapproved of the resolution, arguing that it did not go far enough in addressing language rights of non-standard speaking students. Clark argued, “Doubtless the committee members decided in the end to trade nobility for student employability” (217). As evidenced here, the dissension extended from those who felt the resolution went too far in extending so-called “language rights” to those who felt that the resolution did not go far enough.

Still, many scholars supported the resolution, acknowledging the benefits of composing in SAE while empowering students to value their own dialects. However, there was no unified pedagogy dispersed as to how to implement this resolution. As years passed, it became clear that the resolution alone would not be enough to create the type of transformative approaches and attitudes towards teaching that many proponents of the resolution were hoping for. Instead, disparate scholars fulfilled what each saw as the spirit of the resolution by engaging in teaching strategies that embraced cultural diversity in place of traditional composition pedagogy that implicitly devalued diversity by failing to address it at all. Elaine Richardson and Keith Gilyard, for example, published their study implementing an Afrocentric curriculum in an FYC program, as did Staci Perryman Clark.  

However, these strategies were more or less performed on an individual basis by individual practitioners, and there was no broad collaborative movement from college faculty or administrators to implement these strategies on a grand scale. Furthermore, debates surrounding

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16 I explore both of these curricula and others that were inspired by the Students’ Right resolution in Chapter four.
its legitimacy and practicality continued in the pages of *Conference of College Communication and Composition*, and very little was published in terms of pedagogical strategies. Adding to the mounting obstacles were political movements that countered the objectives of SRTOL, and the “English Only” movement is one example. “The English Only movement, […] began in 1981 when Senator S.I. Hayakawa sponsored a constitutional amendment to make English the official language of the United States. … By June 1992, sixteen states had declared English the official language” (CCCC 4). This meant that English would be the only language officially recognized for participation in official aspects of society on a federal and state level. “The measure would also prohibit federal and state ‘laws, ordinances, regulations, orders, programs, and policies’ from requiring the use of other languages. Its thrust was not only for English, but against bilingualism” (Crawford para. 2). Many Composition scholars, among others, opposed such movements, as “English Only” seemingly disregarded arguments advocating language rights by denying non-English speakers the opportunity to fully engage in all aspects of American society. Thus, the CCCC’s created a Language Policy Committee in 1987 that took an official stance against the “English only” amendment. The following year, this committee developed the National Language Policy, and in 1988 the Executive Committee of CCCC unanimously passed the following resolution:

**BACKGROUND**

The National Language Policy is a response to efforts to make English the "official" language of the United States. This policy recognizes the historical reality that, even though English has become the language of wider communication, we are a multilingual society. All people in a democratic society have the right to education, to employment, to social services, and to equal protection under the law. No one should be denied these or any civil
rights because of linguistic differences. This policy would enable everyone to participate in the life of this multicultural nation by ensuring continued respect both for English, our common language, and for the many other languages that contribute to our rich cultural heritage.

CCCC NATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY

Be it resolved that CCCC members promote the National Language Policy adopted at the Executive Committee meeting on March 16, 1988. This policy has three inseparable parts:

1. To provide resources to enable native and nonnative speakers to achieve oral and literate competence in English, the language of wider communication.

2. To support programs that assert the legitimacy of native languages and dialects and ensure that proficiency in one's mother tongue will not be lost.

3. To foster the teaching of languages other than English so that native speakers of English can rediscover the language of their heritage or learn a second language. (CCCC 3-4).

The language policy functioned to help unify the field in terms of articulating a specific stance on the “English Only” position, but it also revitalized attention to language and diversity in higher education. The “Students’ Right” resolution represented a monumental stride towards advocacy for language rights and the promotion of diversity and multiculturalism. But, having passed in the 1970’s, there was a sense that some of the momentum faded and had in fact been reversed with the passing years. Dissension still existed, though not as blatantly. According to Smitherman, “Negative reaction to the National Language Policy has been minimal” (369). However, as with any movement, without sustained engagement in the mission, progress will be
minimal. So it is no surprise that scholars and practitioners did not stop there with their calls for attention to issues surrounding the academic plight of minority students with respect to language.

In 1995, Geneva Smitherman authored a retrospective of the “Students’ Right” resolution, arguing that “Lip-service is about all most teachers gave it…” (25). She called for members of NCTE and CCCC to ascribe to the principles of the National Language Policy to give it renewed attention. Foremost, she was concerned with what the history of “lip-service” by the field would mean for minority students who, like herself, were being penalized for their language use in the classroom. She recalls being forced “to take speech correction, not because of any actual speech impediment, such as aphasia or stuttering, but because [she] was a speaker of Black English” (25). What is critical about Smitherman’s journey is that she went on to employ “Black English,” which had been unheard of for academic purposes specifically in Composition classrooms, in the academic journal *English Journal*\(^7\), illustrating its legitimacy across professional contexts. She, along with other supporters of “Students’ Right” and the National Language Policy, wanted the field to take a more proactive approach to upholding both resolutions.

And there have been improvements. Doctoral programs are doing more to engage students in conversations about diversity. For instance, the doctoral program at Syracuse University in Composition and Cultural Rhetoric “emphasizes research on the dynamic interaction of rhetoric and writing in a variety of cultural and historical contexts” (*Composition and Cultural Rhetoric*). In my own examination of published doctoral program data\(^8\), I’ve located 16 doctoral programs in total that offer courses in cultural rhetoric. However, that is out of 73 doctoral programs in Rhetoric and Composition, which suggests that less than 25% of doctoral programs in Rhetoric

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\(^8\) See Chapter Two for a more in-depth analysis of doctoral programs.
and Composition explicitly examine cultural rhetoric. Furthermore, though the courses are offered, they are not always required, which suggests that many doctoral students today are still graduating without necessarily engaging in conversations about language rights. “In fact, as the CCCC Language Policy Committee reported in its recent survey of members of the CCCC and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), many compositionists have never even seen the ink and paper – let alone the substance – of the ‘Students’ Right’ policy, as two-thirds of survey respondents were unfamiliar with the resolution” (Wible 443). The idea that so many scholars in the field would be unfamiliar with such a critical moment in Composition’s history is disheartening but not surprising given the priority that many Doctoral programs have given these movements.

Another potential factor to consider in gauging this lack of awareness of “Students’ Right” could be its lack of representation in college textbooks and handbooks. In the mid-1970s, there was actually a movement by the Language Curriculum Research Group (LCRG) to create a textbook based on principles of “Students’ Right” that was never published, although it was well researched during a five-year period and funded by research grants from the Ford Foundation:

[The English as a Second Dialect] exercises in its textbook manuscript[…] show how the group members bridged sociolinguistics research on [Black English Vernacular] with composition studies; the reading materials, writing assignments, and classroom projects incorporated into the textbook manuscript […] make BEV and African American culture significant subjects of study in the writing classroom; and the LCRG’s efforts in teacher training […] prompted teachers to reflect on their attitudes toward racial and linguistic difference. (Wible 445)
Although this text could have potentially transformed composition instruction and improved the educational experiences of students, its impact was never fully realized as it was never published, and no text like it has been published in over thirty years since its creation.

Currently, according to textbook publisher Cengage, one of the best-selling college handbooks of all time is *The Hodges Harbrace Handbook*, and although it is a text built upon the error analysis critiqued in the 1950’s by Donald Lloyd, it reflects many traditional and contemporary practices of FYC:

John C. Hodges obtained federal funding to support his study of the frequency of errors in college students’ essays. He collected 20,000 student penned papers, counted and analyzed the errors in those papers, and created the taxonomy he used to organize the original Harbrace Handbook of English. Harbrace has remained one of the most definitive college composition textbooks, embraced by English Composition instructors at both two- and four-year colleges and universities and career colleges. (Cengage Learning)

Although the publishers go on to note directions wherein the text has evolved, revisions of the text over the years do not reflect the spirit of SRTOL and instead emphasize traditional perceptions of academic discourse. For instance, there is no section or content on cultural rhetorics or cross-cultural purposes for writing. There is a small section providing advice for “multilingual learners,” but that advice is primarily grammatical, and there is no indication that the author recognizes any non-traditional/multicultural strategies or contexts for writing. Such is also the case for Diana Hacker’s *A Writer’s Reference*, which is Barnes and Noble’s best-selling handbook and, interestingly, a text I’ve been required to order for my own students over the years. Though Hacker’s text does include content specific to English Language Learners (ELL) and
acknowledges non-standard English forms, this content does so in the context of reinforcing the dominance of traditional academic discourse.

While it is important to note that instructors should not rely on a textbook or handbook to dictate the content of their courses or influence their teaching philosophies, it is also important to note that many FYC instructors do not hold Doctoral degrees or even have Master’s Degrees in Rhetoric and Composition. In fact, the Modern Language Association referenced a 2007 ADE staffing survey detailing exactly who teaches the majority of courses in Higher Education by academic rank, educational background, gender, and other factors. One finding indicates that the majority of FYC courses at doctoral and research institutions are taught by graduate students (42.9%), followed by part time/adjunct instructors (30.6%), full-time non tenure track faculty (23.4%), with full time tenured track faculty teaching just 3.1% (“Education in the Balance” 30). The survey also shows that of the part time English faculty members surveyed at Four-Year institutions, 18.2% held Doctoral degrees, 51.9% held Masters degrees, 15.8% held Masters in Fine Arts degrees, and 10.5% held Bachelor’s degrees, while 3.6% held “other” degrees (51). What this data suggests is that the majority of FYC courses are not being taught by those most qualified to teach it. Additionally, in the absence of doctoral course content guiding instructors’ pedagogical choices, textbooks and handbooks become critical tools for building class curricula.

Moreover, if the survey regarding ignorance of SRTOL is any indication of what happens on a grander scale and 2/3 of our instructors are indeed unfamiliar with SRTOL, there is no reason to assume that instructors are going out of their way to incorporate any linguistically conscious content into their curriculum, especially since very few Doctoral, much less Master’s, programs in Composition offer and/or require courses that engage in those conversations.
However, my 17 years of first-hand experience teaching FYC reinforces why knowledge of SRTOL is so significant. As previously stated, classrooms today are even more diverse than they were when SRTOL was published; we literally have students, particularly in our online classes, who may live in other countries and speak several languages. Modern students experience cross-cultural communication daily and they benefit from understanding the rhetorical patterns of not only various ethnic groups, but cultural groups as well, such as youth vernacular and hip-hop culture.

When I don’t create a space for students to explore the various rhetorical choices that extend beyond the standardized version, the world does not collapse, my students do not riot, and they, in fact, show gratitude for feeling more empowered to communicate effectively in the academy. The same is the experience of many of my colleagues. However, because numerous students and faculty have been conditioned to value one view, one perception of SAE, they value it until they realize that other options exist that can be just as effective, and in some cases more so, at fulfilling various writing tasks. Many FYC students have no knowledge of any language being validated in college beyond the current SAE. Thus, they have no indication that they’re missing anything. Furthermore, most students have not experienced the privilege of having their own language validated, so they have no idea that it is their right. Perhaps if there was more awareness, my students would complain, as they should, at receiving an abridged version of Composition instruction, particularly in this 21st century global society that claims to embrace diversity.

When I don’t create that crucial space for students to explore so-called “alternative discourses,” the students miss opportunities for growth, and I, as the instructor, miss opportunities to enact the culturally inclusive policies that could potentially transform the future of academic written communication. When I fail to provide opportunities for students to complete academic
assignments using alternative discourses, I’ve missed the opportunity for that student to sharpen their existing tools to potentially create unique essays that translate into speeches capable to moving the most diverse audiences. Instead, reinforcing traditional pedagogy produces traditional essays that may be effective, but will likely appeal to a very specific audience mainly within the confines of academia. While historically, FYC functions to do just that, currently FYC should function to accomplish much more. Should my students need to appeal to culturally diverse communities, of which many of them are members, they will not have the abundance of tools prevalent in cultural rhetorics. More importantly, the students may find themselves mirroring my own experiences; they may graduate from college and begin to wonder why there was no space for their language. They may go to great lengths to remember what that voice was and try desperately to reclaim what was lost.

Unfortunately, on a grand scale students and instructors are currently missing these opportunities. In most cases, exploring cultural rhetorics is not required of FYC students any more than exploring cultural rhetorics is a requirement of Masters or Doctoral programs in Rhetoric and Composition. Furthermore, in addition to contending with eradicationist philosophies, limited resources, and ill-prepared practitioners, implementing CIP has taken a back seat to other issues in higher education, including assessment, Race to the Top, and Common Core.

The New Suspects: Assessment Strategies, Outcomes Statements, Race the Top, and Common Core

While scholars are publishing texts and studies surrounding the legitimacy of cultural rhetorics and more culturally inclusive Composition pedagogies, specific policies have surfaced that undermine that scholarship. Decades of policy statements, studies, and debates calling for
more diversity in Composition are being met with programs and guidelines that function to carve traditional perceptions of SAE into stone, compounding existing challenges to implementing CIP. One such challenge surrounds assessment strategies.

Before addressing the impact of assessment on students from diverse cultural backgrounds, it is important to note the inherent problems with assessment in general, including “… inter-grader reliability, single grader consistency, and ultimate accountability for the grades we assign” (Speck and Jones quoted in Huang 1). Further complicating the issue in the case of institutions that rely on students’ performance on high-stakes tests, typically a timed essay in response to a writing prompt, a great deal of controversy exists as to the validity of these tests for assessing culturally diverse student populations based on various points of contention, including the specific elements of an essay being valued by the assessment tool. Associate Professor and scholar Carmen Kynard argues that “the continued colour line in higher education and high-stakes testing limit writing instruction in such a way that students’ cultural rhetorics and political purposes for composing get prohibited” (4). Kynard further argues that “students who consciously employ rhetorical and intellectual traditions of Black discourses get penalized according to limited notions of academic writing” (4-5). Kynard’s characterization of current conceptions of academic discourse and discourse features valued for assessment purposes reflects outdated value systems that reinforce elitist ideals. Thus, even if instructors do their part in creating a curriculum that advocates cultural inclusivity, many institutions undermine the curriculum by requiring assessments and assessment tools that disregard the academic legitimacy of various ethnic rhetorics. Such assessment practices fail to acknowledge the existence of SRTOL or the subsequent “National Language Policy” published by NCTE and CCCC — organizations that function to disseminate respected pedagogical perspectives to be evaluated for classroom implementation. Too many assessment
practices disregard culturally inclusive pedagogy. Instead, “… major writing assessment measures in states like Texas, Illinois, New York, Oregon, and Kentucky have promoted a technical, mechanical, five paragraph essay form to which teachers have adopted their literacy pedagogies” (7). Furthermore, the lack of cultural inclusivity in assessment practices also speaks to the minimal space cultural inclusivity occupies in Outcomes Statements, since, in most cases, assessment tools are designed to determine the degree to which students satisfy their course learning outcomes.

According to Writing Program Administrator and Assessment Consultant Chris Gallagher, student learning outcomes, “are statements identifying what students will know or be able to do at the end of an activity, unit of instruction, course, or program of study” (44). When students view the learning outcomes in their syllabi, the assumption is that the statements reflect the skillset they will have acquired or cultivated by the end of the course. These statements are typically a requirement of all college courses and necessary for assessment and accreditation purposes. However, my concern is that they are problematic for, amongst other things, their omission of culture-based objectives. Consider the Council of Writing Program Administrators’ “Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition,” which reflects general practices in American First-Year Composition. As a widely respected organization in Composition, the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) composed the outcomes statement, which was “supported by a large body of research” (CWPA). This document also served as the basis for the “Framework for Success in Post-Secondary Writing.” “The Framework” was the collective product of the CWPA, National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE), and the National Writing Project (NWP), and it functioned to provide an account of college readiness by incorporating the perspectives of actual

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19 Outcomes statements have been critiqued for other reasons, including their emphasis on course deliverables (products) and low regard for process. However, my objective for the current project is not to critique learning outcomes in general, but to address the components of them that problematic from a culturally inclusive perspective.
college instructors, a voice they argue was missing from the establishment of Common Core guidelines, which supposedly provide a base of what students should know upon successfully exiting high school\textsuperscript{20}. With the support of prominent organizations within Composition, the CWPA Outcome’s statement was widely received in the year 2000, and has recently been updated in 2008 and 2014 (CWPA). However, a critical analysis of its components illustrates that although there can be benefits to implementing the outcomes statements, there is also room for potential problems, as the statement reflects a lukewarm commitment to Language Rights’ policies and their related position statements as expressed by NCTE and Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC).

The Outcome Statement (OS) is divided into four sections: Rhetorical Knowledge; Critical Thinking, Reading and Composing; Processes; and Knowledge of Conventions. Each of these sections includes several statements describing what students should display proficiency in by the end of the course, along with strategies for instructors to help students meet each objective. Of note is the fact that the document explicitly excludes any conversation surrounding standards, or “precise levels of achievement,” leaving that to individual programs and institutions. In addition, the document also falls short of encouraging composing practices that would appeal to culturally diverse audiences. Consider the statements themselves:

\textbf{Rhetorical Knowledge} […]

By the end of first-year composition, students should

- Learn and use key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts

\textsuperscript{20} A more thorough discussion of Common Core State Standards will be discussed within this chapter.
• Gain experience reading and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers’ and writers’ practices and purposes
• Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure
• Understand and use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences
• Match the capacities of different environments (e.g., print and electronic) to varying rhetorical situations

 […]

**Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing […]**

By the end of first-year composition, students should

- Use composing and reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts
- Read a diverse range of texts, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements, and to how these features function for different audiences and situations
- Locate and evaluate (for credibility, sufficiency, accuracy, timeliness, bias and so on) primary and secondary research materials, including journal articles and essays, books, scholarly and professionally established and maintained databases or archives, and informal electronic networks and internet sources
- Use strategies—such as interpretation, synthesis, response, critique, and design/redesign—to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources
Processes [...] 

By the end of first-year composition, students should

- Develop a writing project through multiple drafts
- Develop flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing
- Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas
- Experience the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
- Learn to give and to act on productive feedback to works in progress
- Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities

[... and] 

Knowledge of Conventions [...] 

By the end of first-year composition, students should

- Develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling, through practice in composing and revising
- Understand why genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, and mechanics vary
- Gain experience negotiating variations in genre conventions
- Learn common formats and/or design features for different kinds of texts
- Explore the concepts of intellectual property (such as fair use and copyright) that motivate documentation conventions
- Practice applying citation conventions systematically in their own work

(CWPA).
Former president of the CWPA Kathleen Blake Yancy celebrates the OS for the freedom they allow for curricular specifics – for different teaching styles, diverse pedagogies, multiple kinds of assignments, direct and indirect response strategies, and so on. What’s important, from an outcomes perspective, is the students’ final performance, and there is an implicit recognition within outcomes assessment that there are many legitimate ways to get to Rome.

(22-23).

Analysis of the OS suggests that Yancey’s sentiments are accurate. The section on Rhetorical Knowledge, for instance, is described as “the basis of composing [wherein writers] develop rhetorical knowledge by negotiating purpose, audience, context, and conventions as they compose a variety of texts for different situations” (CWPA). The freedom Yancey speaks of seemingly stems from the OS’ pattern of restraint in articulating specific curricular details throughout. Indeed, the OS wasn’t intended to provide prescriptive guidelines; instead, it emphasizes what students ought to demonstrate by the end of First-Year Composition in general terms. How instructors go about ensuring that students “[develop] facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure,” (CWPA) for example, is left to the instructors and institutions.

The absence of prescriptive details in general is not necessarily problematic; I agree that there is danger in creating a model curriculum elevating specific skill sets that may or may not reflect the populations being served and/or the variety of institutional missions. However, I am suggesting that the absence of specific language addressing cultural rhetoric and intra/international contexts for writing elevates dominant mainstream purposes for writing. “Rhetoric” unassigned
typically translates to mainstream liberal Euro-centric hegemonic heteronormative rhetoric, and while there is space within the OS for instructors to incorporate culturally inclusive content into the curriculum, there is also the space not to.

Language scholars Paul Matsuda and Ryan Skinnell further critique this absence in discussing their concern for what the OS means for second language learners. They argue that “Although the development of the [outcomes statement] ‘engaged quite literally over a hundred teachers,’ (Yancey, ‘Kathleen Blake Yancey Responds’ 379), and ‘managed to attain remarkable agreement among a very disparate but important group of leaders in the field’ (Elbow 178), second language writing specialists were not involved in the conversations out of which the document was formed” (230). As a result, according to Matsuda and Skinnel, the needs of non-mainstream students, including second language learners and others whose primary rhetorical values differ from the dominant mainstream, are not addressed, which can give the false impression that those concerns are insignificant or lower order concerns. However, attention to non-mainstream Englishes and cultural rhetorics is not only a necessity to non-mainstream students, but to all students in general. Matsuda and Skinnel reinforce this position when they claim,

As the English language continues to spread throughout the world and diversifies itself, it is becoming increasingly important for users of the dominant variety of English to learn to interact and negotiate with users of various Englishes. …[The] current WPA OS allows for such global applications of rhetorical principles, but because it does not explicitly include an understanding of linguistic and cultural differences that enable students to imagine the global rhetorical situations, it also allows teachers and students to neglect those possibilities.

(239).
Matsuda and Skinnel emphasize that culturally inclusive pedagogies are not simply a nod to second-language learners, but a necessity to any students communicating across the expanding cultural contexts for writing.

Writing Program Director William P. Banks echoes similar concerns surrounding the lack of emerging theoretical perspectives considered in the framing of the OS. Banks recommends approaching the revision of the OS from “other” perspectives that have been historically absent from such discussions in composition:

Such a space would not stop at the “intro” figures – important scholar-teachers like Murray, Elbow, Emig, Berthoff, Berlin, Lunsford, et al – but would put those figures into conversations with recent emerging work on queer rhetorics, ethnic rhetorics, cultural rhetorics, feminist rhetorics, as well as work from neurosciences, communication, visual studies, new media studies, and other theoretical and applied disciplines which have something to say about how writing and composing happen. (208)

Banks’ suggestion addresses the hegemonic practices in Composition that reflect the values and inclinations of mainstream society and continue to marginalize “other” perspectives. In this case, the OS does not explicitly deny the legitimacy of various counter-hegemonic cultural rhetorics or students and/or faculty who reflect those values. However, the absence of the conversation reflects yet another in a series of missed opportunities to place the needs of these populations front and center such that practitioners are not merely encouraged, but required, to meet their needs to the same degree as their mainstream counterparts.

The space that the sentiments of the OS occupy across FYW is extensive and manifests within grading rubrics, which function to evaluate the degree to which student master tasks designed to help them achieve the goals of the OS. While CCCC, NCTE, and WPA advocate
honoring language diversity in assessment practices, the writing rubrics themselves adopted by institutions leave a lot to be desired, even those supposedly reflecting the CCCCs position statement. For example, the SUNY writing rubric on assessment, which is purportedly in sync with the “final paragraph” of the CCCC position statement on writing assessment according to their website, states “Students will demonstrate their abilities to produce coherent texts within common college level forms,” and “Students will demonstrate the ability to revise and improve such texts” (SUNY). Those are the only two requirements and they admittedly allow space for students to write across language varieties and contexts. The same is true for the “Written Communication Value Rubric” that was developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, whose work was guided by National Council of Teachers of English/Council of Writing Program Administrators' White Paper on Writing Assessment and the Conference on College Composition and Communication's Position Statement on Writing Assessment. Their rubric includes the five following categories: “Context of and Purpose for Writing,” “Content Development,” “Genre and Disciplinary Conventions,” “Sources and Evidence,” and “Control of Syntax and Mechanics” (AACU). In and of themselves, the rubrics do a great job of reflecting the main objectives of FYC classes across America; most Composition instructors want their students to use “appropriate, relevant, and compelling content” and to “successfully execute a wide range of conventions” as suggested by the AACU rubric. Of concern on both rubrics is the lack of language specifically requiring students’ to demonstrate knowledge of and fluency in cultural rhetorics of any sort. Though the position statements specifically recommend honoring language diversity, there is no language in the rubrics accounting for that recommendation. While it is possible for individual practitioners to incorporate Cultural Rhetorics into the curriculum and use the rubrics to accurately assess their students and courses, once again the space exists for the option not to; instructors and
by extension institutions, have the option of continuing to elevate SAE by implementing assessment measures that don’t explicitly require them to uphold resolutions and policies that scholars have worked tirelessly to create. This fact is not surprising considering that the same criticisms apply to student learning outcomes and course objectives; assessments typically determine the degree to which students meet the criteria set forth as course goals. Without there being an explicit goal of demonstrating knowledge of cross cultural written conventions in learning outcomes, there is no reason to expect assessment tools to account for said knowledge. As argued by composition scholar Valerie Balester, “…we too often unwittingly perpetuate assessment practices that penalize students who employ language variety.” However, as long as outcomes statements and associated rubrics allow a space to de-legitimize non-standard English varieties, practitioners on a large scale will continue to further perpetuate this practice.

Another well-intentioned but poorly executed set of standards are the aforementioned Common Core State Standards (CCSS). CCSS are national standards established for Math and English Language Arts (ELA) “created to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, and life, regardless of where they live” (Common Core State Standards Initiative). In efforts to improve national academic standards and help American students compete academically with their international counterparts, CCSS were created to raise the bar on a national level. The intentions were laudable; increased commitment to improving the education of America’s youth signals a positive shift of the priority of education in America. However, the plan is imperfect for a wide range of reasons, many of which directly challenge the vision of a more culturally-inclusive Composition pedagogy. The following describes the Common Core ELA requirement for 9-12 grade, which, among other objectives, is designed to prepare students for college writing:
High school students will employ strong, thorough, and explicit textual evidence in their literary analyses and technical research. They will understand the development of multiple ideas through details and structure and track the development of complex characters and advanced elements of plot such as frame narratives and parallel storylines. Student writing will reflect the ability to argue effectively, employing the structure, evidence, and rhetoric necessary in the composition of effective, persuasive texts. Students will be able to construct college-ready research papers of significant length in accordance with the guidelines of standard format styles such as APA and MLA. Students in high school will have built strong and varied vocabularies across multiple content areas, including technical subjects. They will skillfully employ rhetoric and figurative language, purposefully construct tone and mood, and identify lapses in reason or ambiguities in texts. Students will recognize nuances of meaning imparted by mode of presentation, whether it is live drama, spoken word, digital media, film, dance, or fine art. Confident familiarity with important foundational documents from American history and from the development of literature over time will accrue before the end of grade 12. Students will graduate with the fully developed ability to communicate in multiple modes of discourse demonstrating a strong command of the rules of Standard English. Text complexity levels are assessed based upon a variety of indicators. (Georgia Department of Education)

To be clear, mastery of much of the requirements can potentially contribute to students’ academic success in college and beyond; I believe students should argue effectively, for example. However, most likely, the idea of arguing effectively is based on traditional perceptions of rhetoric, not cultural rhetorics. Students may not be rewarded for applying the African American rhetorical device of “testifyin” from personal experience, since that would not be considered “evidence” by
mainstream standards. Similarly, the objective of “demonstrating a strong command of the rules of Standard English [sic21]” clearly elevates the position of SAE, which does not necessarily reflect current scholarship in College Composition with respect to language rights. I wonder how a students’ choice to code switch to emphasize a point, as Geneva Smitherman is known to do in her published academic articles, would be received since it does not reflect the values of SAE. I can imagine it would not be received very well, even though the choice to employ it could improve readers’ comprehension of the text.

What we have, then, in the CCSS is yet another governmental policy that reinforces exclusionary practices that elevate SAE, ultimately discouraging practitioners from implementing CIP. For all the strides scholars have made over the past several decades in legitimizing alternative discourses, progress on a large scale has been insufficient. The standards set forth reinforce traditional values when it comes to cultural rhetoric and communicating in a global society. The same is true for Race to the Top, which works hand in hand with Common Core. Race to the Top [asks] States to advance reforms around four specific areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;

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21 The appropriate term should be “Standardized English,” and the constant reference to Academic Discourse as the standard reflects a specific perspective positing SAE as the standard against which all else is measured. However, this is not the sentiment held by CCCC, linguists, and countless scholars who have established decades ago that positions that languages hold in society are social constructions and no language or dialect is inherently better than another.
• Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
• Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

(United States Department of Education)

Essentially, Race to the Top rewards states for implementing Common Core effectively, and for teaching others how to implement it with success in their districts. Scholars have called for professional organizations in our field such as CCCC and NCTE to have a more vocal role in expressing the problematic nature of programs like “Race to the Top” and “Common Core”; they argue that these programs will likely exist for years to come, so our collective scholarly voices should contribute to and perhaps shape the narrative (Tinberg and Nadeau). To be clear, as with any other issue in Higher Education, there is no consensus as to the role CCSS and Race to the Top play in Composition instruction. I am suggesting, though, that implementation of these policies directly impact the culture of education in general in terms of what both students and instructors value and consider academic. Perceptions of college writing that inform these governmental policies are likely reflections of how most colleges view college writing, particularly First Year Composition. The reality is that even the most progressive scholars on language rights, including Smitherman, Gilyard, Richardson, and even the CCCC, ultimately recommend that students value SAE, though they argue that methods by which students are taught can be damaging. However, each argues that cultural rhetorics are as legitimate as SAE, with unique attributes valued by huge populations of people. Therein exists the dilemma; if cultural rhetorics are as legitimate as SAE, why isn’t it valued as valid academic discourse? With contention amongst our own scholars, it is understandable that governmental policies reflect traditional understanding of Composition in the absence of a unified alternative.
Obviously today’s Composition instructors contend with a number of controversial realities beyond our basic responsibility of helping students become stronger writers and critical thinkers. However, as illustrated throughout these pages, we have within us the power and responsibility to transform students’ experiences in ways that make writing meaningful for them both inside and outside of our classrooms. I contemplate the time I spent reintroducing myself to my own language traditions that I’ve grown to love, but was taught to deny and view as deficient or in need of repair. That is not to say that my writing was without flaw, but that is to say that there were missed opportunities to improve upon each rhetorical tradition I utilized, as they were all culturally informed. Crafting and implementing a culturally inclusive pedagogy can create a space for students and teachers to explore the complexities and intricacies of ethnic/cultural rhetoric, with the recognition that what we have come to know as “Standard English” is in fact a cultural rhetoric. Ideally, my contribution can add volume to the voices who have been screaming for implementation of decades-old sentiments. As the “language rights” movements become more fully realized, perhaps other components of higher education, such as assessment and teacher-preparation, will evolve as well to reflect that reality.

**The Plan**

Essentially, I hope to showcase that building CIP based on previous scholarship surrounding cultural rhetorics and language rights is fundamental to FYC, and our increasingly culturally diverse population of students makes addressing these issues now more crucial than ever. In demonstrating the limiting nature of current traditional Composition pedagogy, I hope to reinforce scholarship advocating an incorporation of culture and/or ethnic based curricula. Though I introduced some of the obstacles contributing to the current problematic climate of FYC, I hope
to showcase in the forthcoming chapters that creating a Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy (CIP) is necessary and viable.

In Chapter Two, I highlight ways in which the field of Composition has not adequately addressed the problem of monocultural FYC, including the lack of attention to significant policies surrounding language rights in Composition, the monocultural nature of prominent textbooks, and the limited amount of required courses that would address language rights and/or cultural rhetorics in graduate programs. In surveying the current state of the field, I note that scholars have committed to creating culturally diverse iterations of FYC for decades and I showcase some of the contributions scholars made towards that goal. However, I also note the challenge of expanding theoretical perspectives surrounding CIP when several components of the field reflect monocultural perceptions of FYC, limiting the scope and prominence of more culturally diverse FYC courses. The textbooks I examine, for example, demonstrate what publishers believe to be FYC priorities; however, they do not reflect scholarship surrounding language rights. Furthermore, a survey of doctoral programs in Rhetoric and Composition, which function to prepare FYC instructors, illustrate just how much emphasis is placed on issues of language and diversity in FYC. Thus, my goal in Chapter Two is showcase some of the factors that contribute to monocultural pedagogical trends.

Chapter Three then explores the scholarship that justifies the need for culturally inclusive pedagogy and provides the field with tools on how to enact it. This includes scholarship from Cultural Rhetoric, Ethnic Rhetoric, Critical Race Theory, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy.
Components of each of these bodies of research reinforce the need for more equity in education and exemplify ways in which ethnic/cultural minorities have been subjected to the academic values of Euro-centric ideals in detrimental ways. However, collectively these pedagogies can combine to form the inclusive version of academic writing that modern day students need and deserve.

Chapter Four articulates and provides a critical analysis of the CIP I propose, from the Course Objectives, to learning outcomes, to assignments, to grading and assessment, to student responses. I also include analyses of sample curricula from scholars who have documented their implementation of culture-based curricula. Though my objective is to highlight the feasibility of CIP through demonstrating how others have implemented it, I also acknowledge how my version of CIP differs from and builds upon the existing documented versions. My critical analysis helps provide the rationale for implementing CIP on a grander scale than what we currently see in FYC.

Finally, I conclude in Chapter Five by offering my own version of CIP, including and actual syllabus with course objectives, learning outcomes, assignments, grading and assessment. By providing concrete practical examples of CIP as it impacts each aspect of the curriculum, along with discussions of how each component reflects principles of CIP, I hope to provide a guide for other practitioners who want to implement CIP, but are at a loss of where to begin. Articulating specific aspects of this pedagogy in practical terms helps extend the conversation beyond a set of abstract principles to actual concrete deliverables that graduate students and practitioners can adjust to their needs. Furthermore, I also address limitations of both the curriculum and the overall critical analysis before making recommendations for future research.
I sincerely believe that implementing culturally inclusive pedagogy by incorporating cultural rhetoric into academic discourse will reflect a progressive and monumental shift in Composition that is long overdue. The research throughout these chapters justifies its necessity. Giving students access to rhetorical tools across cultures and contexts can potentially empower them in ways that afford them opportunities to better understand phenomenon beyond their cultural comfort zones. Furthermore, expanding our perceptions of academic writing to reflect those who actually employ it accommodates the diverse students in our classes who will write beyond the academy. Moreover, the academy itself has shifted and no longer houses only affluent white males. Thus, the “currency of the academy,” must shift to reflect more diverse students and faculty. With patience and dedication, I believe a culturally inclusive pedagogy will accommodate that shift.

**Acronym Chart for Chapter 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAR</td>
<td>African American Rhetoric</td>
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<td>CCSS</td>
<td>Common Core State Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIP</td>
<td>Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy</td>
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<td>CRiTS</td>
<td>Critical Race Theorists</td>
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<td>FYC</td>
<td>First Year Composition</td>
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<tr>
<td>LWC</td>
<td>Language of Wider Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAE</td>
<td>Standardized American English</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRTOL</td>
<td>Students Rights to Their Own Language</td>
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Chapter 2

Screaming Whispers:

The Perpetual Trending of Culturally-Inclusive Pedagogy

Guilt-ridden prose, afraid to take risks. I am afraid that my fragments will condemn me, yet I find no solace in the compound sentence, complete with its comma and coordinating conjunction, or maybe its semicolon with conjunctive adverb. Though I’ve memorized and reinforced these strategies of supposedly adding some degree of sophistication to one’s writing almost as a mathematical equation, I wonder if this is truly Composition. Still, I teach it as those before me have taught it, though the thought of teaching students how to eloquently employ a fragment or daringly display one’s dialect is far more motivating. Especially concerning is my demographic of students, many of whom share collective cultural capital that may be lauded amongst their peers yet excluded from their composing practices. Students who remind me of myself. However, feeling pressured by departmental and/or societal perceptions of correctness, I am typically more consumed with making sure students meet their Learning Outcomes, and in some cases pass their exit exams. And I wonder to what degree other instructors do the same.

Cultural-inclusivity is not a recent aspiration for Composition. As alluded to in Chapter One, scholars have devoted decades to advocating pedagogical models, primarily in efforts to improve experiences and success rates of minorities taking first-year composition (FYC). Studies have been published, articles have been written, calls have been made; yet, advocacy efforts persist, making this a perpetually trending topic. Thus, Chapter Two seeks to explore the field’s failure to address the contradictions between scholarship pertaining to language rights in Composition and mainstream practices that seemingly disregard, reject, or minimize that research.
Based on current scholarship related to implementing culturally inclusive pedagogies (CIP) in American colleges and universities, the main hurdles to employing CIP on a larger scale include reverence for Standardized American English (SAE), fragmented dissemination of documented pedagogical strategies for implementing a CIP curriculum, lack of knowledge among Composition practitioners of the resolutions that set the groundwork for CIP in Rhetoric and Composition, lack of graduate student preparation in CIP, lack of textbooks reinforcing the principles of the CIP, and lack of support for culturally-inclusive pedagogy by scholars and faculty. Because of said obstacles over the years, scholarship surrounding CIP goes through cycles of gaining and losing momentum, or trending, to use a term from popular culture. The hope is that addressing potential problems to implementation will help cultivate a pathway towards creating resolutions for practitioners to consistently implement CIP in First Year Composition.

**Challenges to Implementation:**

**Reverence for Standardized American English or Otherwise Reaffirming White Supremacy**

The “Students’ Right to Their Own Language” resolution highlights that the cultural landscape of Composition classrooms has shifted to include far more diverse linguistic representations than that of the 1960’s. Thus, idealized 21st century Composition classrooms ought to be perceived through this lens. Though significant pedagogical transformations take place in the pages of our journals via resolutions and special issues on diversity, traditional practices continue to influence mainstream Composition classrooms. A large body of scholarship across the disciplines of Education, Composition, and Linguistics, to name a few, supports the sentiment that multiple Englishes exist in America, each equal to the others as a valid form of communication, though the vast majority of scholarship in each of those disciplines supports the position of SAE
as the primary mode of discourse for academic writing. The SRTOL resolution itself calls for acknowledgement of dialect differences while emphasizing that various factions of society elevate SAE to a higher status than other dialects of written and spoken English. They argue, “…it is necessary that we inform those students who are preparing themselves for occupations that demand formal writing that they will be expected to write [Standardized American English]. But it is one thing to help a student achieve proficiency in a written dialect and another thing to punish him for using variant expressions of that dialect” (CCCC 15). The authors of SRTOL wanted to prepare students for employability; however, they did not believe that SAE was inherently better and suggested that English teachers take fuller responsibility for dismantling that myth.

However, characterizing the superiority of SAE as inaccurate is not a universal conception, though. Jeff Zorn, one of the most fervent supporters of SAE and critic of SRTOL and translingualism, endorses SAE, arguing that non SAE movements, specifically translingualism, are “blurring language and worsening communication” (“Translingualism: Tongue Tied in English Composition” 176). Because mainstream American society seemingly favors SAE in most formal settings, Zorn believes it is the responsibility of English Composition courses to teach it (176). Zorn also responds to critics who suggest that SAE lacks creativity, arguing instead that “bad essays” in general may lack creativity, but not as a result of SAE (179). Zorn’s critique emphasizes the sentiment that treating all languages as equivalent to SAE in the classroom potentially compromises students’ ability to successfully negotiate common public discourse contexts that require SAE. Furthermore, he suggests that the use of SAE by scholars advocating a more diverse model reiterates SAE’s rightful position as the most appropriate language for “complex lines of thought” (178).
Zorn is not the only scholar to advocate SAE. Shortly after SRTOL was published, Jean Hunt responded to Geneva Smitherman’s critique of English teachers’ apparent devotion to SAE. Hunt argued that many of her Black students understood the importance of learning SAE in helping them achieve social mobility (723). Gaining employment and passing the bar exam were reasons students offered for wanting to learn SAE, suggesting that these were contexts wherein their Black English (BE) would hurt them (723). William Paxton also voiced his support of SAE for the aforementioned reasons and for practical purposes, as well; Paxton suggested that trying to teach multiple dialects in a composition class would be near impossible, specifically for teachers in the south who encountered “standard Southern dialect, Black English …, Cajun, and Gullah” (252). Furthermore, Paxton argued that maintaining a standard would help ensure that students and faculty have a uniform method of communicating that also reflects the linguistic practices of mainstream America (252).

Allegiance to SAE also manifests itself outside of academia. Following the controversial Oakland School board resolution that recognized Ebonics as a legitimate language, not a dialect, prominent African American leaders used their platform to discuss their disdain for Ebonics. In response to the Oakland School Board advocating teaching Standardized English as a second language by acknowledging the legitimacy of Ebonics, civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson argued “You don’t have to go to school to learn to talk garbage” (“Jackson Criticizes Oakland Schools' 'Ebonics' Decision”). Here, Jackson’s characterization of Ebonics as “garbage” mirrors the opinion that many held and currently hold regarding Ebonics’ status in American society. Equally significant to Jackson was not only that students should devalue Ebonics, but also that they should ‘acquire SAE to gain greater access to jobs. Actor and comedian Bill Cosby, who

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36 Ebonics is also known as African American Vernacular English and Black English Vernacular
holds a doctorate in Education, also opposed the Oakland school board’s position regarding Ebonics, which he referred to as “igno-bonics.” Like critics before him, Cosby addressed potential problems in communication between those who speak Ebonics and those who speak SAE, and suggested there was danger in “legitimizing the street in the classroom” (A10). Similar criticisms were voiced by Maya Angelou, who feared that the emphasis on Ebonics would limit students’ proficiency in SAE, in turn limiting their potential for social mobility (“‘Black English’ Proposal Draws Fire”).

Criticisms from culturally diverse scholars and activists regarding language rights in the classroom also reflect a particular psycho-social conditioning based on what Critical Race Theorists identify as the normalization of racism, more specifically White Supremacy. Because of America’s history of elevating and rewarding manifestations of Whiteness; for example, use of language, physical appearance, religious practices, etc; Americans have been conditioned to value those same attributes of Whiteness as universal values and, by extension, to abhor “other” traditions and behaviors that function on the margins of mainstream whiteness. When this phenomenon is enacted by non-whites, it has been referred to as internalized racism, defined as “the ‘sujection’ of the victims of racism to the mystifications of the very racist ideology which imprison and define them” (Hall quoted in Pyke 552). Though that is not to argue that ethnic and cultural minorities who reject language rights’ advocacy in education do so solely as a result of their own internalized racism, it is worthwhile to examine the psychological impact of racism in terms of how one’s consciousness is shaped by systematic racist overtones in virtually every aspect of American society. As argued by Psychology Professor Suzette Speight, “racism is pervasive, operating at the interpersonal and institutional levels simultaneously, its effects are cumulative, spanning generations, individuals, time, and place …” (126-127). In this respect, acts of racism
extend beyond singular quantifiable moments with immediate consequences. Because its manifestations are varied and dispersed over time, its impacts are the same. One such impact is internalized racism as a result of cultural imperialism. “Cultural imperialism ‘involves the universalization of a dominant group’s experience and culture, and its establishment as the norm’” (Young as qtd in Speight). Thus, culturally marginalized critics whose main concerns reflect a desire to maintain the values of the dominant group may be enacting their internalized racism as a result of cultural imperialism.

The acts of racism can be further understood through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT), which contends that racism is so deeply embedded in the history of the United States that many have come to accept it as the norm. According to CRT scholar Edward Taylor, CRT scholarship is

… marked by a number of specific insights and observations, including society’s acceptance of racism as ordinary, the phenomenon of white’s [sic] allowing black progress when it also promotes their interests (interest convergence), the important [sic] of understanding the historic effects of European colonialism, and the preference of the experiences of oppressed peoples (narratives) over the “objective” opinions of whites. (Taylor 4)

This framework provides another viable explanation for the lack of instructors implementing CIP. To begin with the concept of “racism as ordinary,” Taylor explains “[White’s] political, economic, and education advantages are invisible to them and many find it difficult to comprehend the non-White experience and perspective that White domination had produced” (5). With respect to Composition instruction, traditional Composition pedagogy reflects an ideology
based on Eurocentric values (Bizzell, Powell, Smitherman, Matsuda & Matsuda), yet the idea of considering “other” values in creating new academic standards is often met with resistance. Instead of asking how academia or society can benefit from ethnic or cultural rhetorics, many scholars have defended traditional practices for the sake of maintaining the status quo, even while acknowledging that the status quo itself may reflect racist’s values. SRTOL, for example, acknowledges that, “… Boards of Education and Boards of Regents, businessmen, politicians, parents, and the students themselves insist that the values taught by the schools must reflect the prejudices held by the public” (CCCC “Students’ Right”). That those prejudices have become so commonplace as to become society’s norm such that many don’t view them as prejudices at all could contribute to instructor’s insistence on maintaining them.

“Interest Convergence” could also explain the reluctance to implement CIP, since it essentially suggests that Whites will have no stake in addressing any movement unless they can benefit from it as well. CRT argues, “… the interests of Blacks in gaining racial equality have been accommodated only when they have converged with the interests of powerful Whites” (Taylor 5). If this theory is correct, it could signal change on the horizon since American society is becoming more culturally diverse and everyone could potentially benefit from gaining a broader understanding of the rhetorical patterns of various ethnic/cultural groups. However, according to CRT, if there is no benefit to Whites in power, there will be no support of implementing systems beneficial to non-Whites.

The final two components – the historical and the use of personal narrative – of the CRT are for scholars who wish to apply this framework as a method of overcoming racist systems, but, again, constantly performing within these systems creates the conditioning that potentially contributes to resistance to CIP. The historical component of CRT speaks to understanding that
Composition, as we know it, has a history, and what many of us have come to value as written product is a result of colonialism and racism (Powell). CRT scholars argue that that particular history is seldom told. Because of what CRT scholars view as social conditioning based on access to specific versions of history reinforced in various areas of society, manifestations of “correctness” with respect to written English continuously reflect patriarchal Eurocentric values above all else, which contributes to maintaining the status quo in American society. Within the realm of Composition pedagogy, CRT suggests that scholars and practitioners may be influenced, perhaps subconsciously, by their social conditioning to maintain and protect the linguistic status quo, making it virtually impossible for many to even consider incorporating CIP, as it challenges the very foundations of the social narrative elevating patriarchal Eurocentric values.

The final component of CRT does not directly explain challenges to CIP implementation, but it does function to detail another obstacle: the perception of patriarchal Eurocentric values as normal or standard. CRT scholars advocate the use of narrative in that it “challenges the experiences of Whites as the Standard (Calmore, 1995)” (Taylor 8). The way many scholars in Composition refer to SAE as “standard” instead of “standardized,” while referring to non-SAE as “broken-English” or any other designation reinforcing its presumed inferior status, reflects the need for the counter-narrative that gives voice to the marginalized from their own perspective. CRT advocates narratives to provide an alternative perspective on different phenomena, in many cases helping to detail insights and additional explanations to counter dominant accounts. If, in fact, scholars and practitioners have not been privy to counter-narratives detailing the value of cultural rhetorics or the necessity of CIP, then they may be guided by what CRT calls the “Master Narrative,” which functions to maintain White Supremacy. The Master Narrative in Composition reinforces patriarchal Eurocentric values by rendering manifestations of Non-SAE as inferior,
rather than engaging in conversations about the legitimacy of various cultural rhetorics and their value across contexts. The Master Narrative ascribes value to grammatical correctness as it is reflected in the most popular handbooks without acknowledgment of grammatical constructions in non-SAE as effective or legitimate. Thus, adding to the lengthy list of why there is a lack of implementation of CIP, perhaps many have simply been too conditioned by the Master Narrative that established SAE as the only appropriate mode of discourse for academic writing. CRT scholars believe that the bombardment of the White patriarchal worldview is so prevalent in most aspects of society, including education, politics, and media, that it causes people to ascribe to its values unconsciously and to contribute to its legacy.

The significance of the CRT lens becomes increasingly apparent when considering the demographics of those actually tasked with teaching students. In a k-12 setting, statistics indicate that over 80% of teachers are white, and that percentage has been in place since at least the 1980s (US Department of Education 6). Similarly, among full-time faculty, white lecturers, instructors, and professors account for 75-83% of all full-time faculty (NCES “Race/Ethnicity of College Faculty). While one’s whiteness does not automatically render one’s pedagogical perspective limited or biased, there is the concern that the idea of one’s white privilege being threatened could contribute to one’s desire to maintain the status quo.

While some scholars may have reservations about challenging the space SAE occupies in Composition based on challenges to White supremacy, other scholars and activists are legitimately concerned with students’ capacity to successfully navigate through the social, political, and economic spaces that require proficiency in SAE for upward mobility. Viewing American society pragmatically, as opposed to what Zorn cynically refers to as “Diversity Utopia,” Zorn argues, “In Diversity Utopia, teachers, recruiters, employers, and editors will welcome linguistic difference,
but today they insist on persuasive, conventionally correct Standard English” (178). What’s interesting is the fact that the concept of a utopia is typically used to detail an ideal circumstance, whether it is a current reality or not. Thus, the acknowledgement of such a utopia suggests that there is an ideal reality that includes linguistic diversity, even though the current status quo undermines that ideal. However, catering to a standard primarily because it currently exists is understandable, but not admirable, especially for activists and educators who are typically responsible for gauging how realities should be, and taking steps towards reconstructing them. Still, the pressure from various factions of society to maintain the linguistic status quo contributes to the reluctance of practitioners to incorporate broader perceptions of rhetoric and composition.

**Lack of Teacher Preparation**

Though arguments exist discounting culturally inclusive Composition pedagogies, other reasons for lack of implementation have nothing to do with making the conscious decision to oppose the inclusive pedagogical framework. Some English instructors aren’t implementing pedagogy honoring language rights because they are simply unaware that there is such a thing as SRTOL or, by extension, any culturally inclusive framework for education. My own introduction to the Students’ Rights resolution was quite by accident while researching writing apprehension among African American students; thus, I consider myself one of the lucky ones. However, there are several other scholars who were not so lucky. In fact, Ethnic rhetoric scholar Elaine Richardson conducted a study in 2003 that, among a number of significant issues pertaining to the NCTE and CCCC member’s knowledge of language diversity, highlighted the degree to which educators simply did not know about SRTOL. Richardson created a survey that “sought to uncover the membership’s knowledge of and support for the CCCC/NCTE language policies ‘Students’ Right
to Their Own Language’ and the National Language Policy[^37]. About two-thirds of the members of NCTE and CCCC as represented in this sample were not familiar with these two organizational policies” (58). Furthermore, Richardson’s survey didn’t include Composition instructors who were not affiliated with NCTE or CCCC, so one can speculate that an even larger percentage of practitioners are unaware of the Students’ Rights resolution and/or the National Language Policy. If Richardson’s findings reflect a snapshot of the field, the vast unfamiliarity with language policies in our field helps explain some of the problems associated with implementing culturally-inclusive pedagogy, as teachers cannot realistically be expected to implement pedagogies of which they have no knowledge. That is not to say that knowledge of SRTOL would yield adherence to it; however, being presented with the resolution would allow teachers the opportunity to wrestle with its tenets and make informed decisions.

Beyond the lack of knowledge of SRTOL, some scholars suggest that the lack of commitment to implementing culturally-inclusive pedagogy relates to a lack of awareness of culturally inclusive pedagogy in general, of which SRTOL is a manifestation, arguing that new professors have been operating within their comfort zones instead. They argue “[more] often than not, faculty members have not been trained to seek out and infuse diverse readings and pedagogical methods into their courses…. Therefore, it is no surprise that graduate students enter the professoriate and recycle the content, knowledge, and teaching behaviors of their former professors” (Quaye and Harper 36). This sentiment has been echoed by other scholars, including professor and noted scholar of culturally responsive pedagogy Geneva Gay, who laments that “too many teachers are inadequately prepared to teach ethnically diverse students” (106).

[^37]: The National Language Policy was established in 1988 and updated in 1992 by CCCC. Essentially, it functioned to ensure that all language varieties were respected in the process of helping individuals gain proficiency in SAE (NCTE).
Characterizing teachers as “inadequately prepared” to implement culturally inclusive Composition pedagogies is not just an anecdotal observation; yes, my own experiences reflect that reality, but Richardson’s survey indicates their lack of preparedness as well. Moreover, a survey of American doctoral programs in Rhetoric and Composition indicates additional disparities, as represented in graph below (see figure 1).

Figure 1 illustrates both positive and negative attributes of 86 doctoral programs in Rhetoric and Composition. The programs were selected based on their representation in Rhetoric Reviews’ 2007 “Survey of the Profession,” which recognized 73 programs in Rhetoric and Composition, and Professor Jim Rodolpho’s “Rhet Map” (current as of September 2017) which lists of 92 Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition. After evaluating each program based on public data on each website, some programs were eliminated because of their absence of Rhetoric and Composition courses and/or their location outside of the United States, yielding a total of 86 doctoral programs. The purpose of evaluating the doctoral programs in Rhetoric and Composition was to gauge the degree to which programs designed to prepare future Composition/Writing instructors laid the groundwork for graduates to successfully teach culturally diverse students and/or implement culturally inclusive pedagogical strategies as informed by principles of culturally relevant/responsive/sustaining pedagogy, critical race theory, and/or ethnic rhetoric. To that end, I categorized each of the 86 programs based on the following characteristics:

1. Programs that offer a specialization in Cultural Rhetoric
2. Programs that offer a specialization in Linguistics
3. Programs require courses in Cultural Rhetoric, though they have no official program
4. Programs that require courses in Linguistics, though they have no official program
5. Programs that offer courses in Cultural Rhetoric as an elective
6. Programs that offer courses in Linguistics as an elective
7. Programs that offer courses in both cultural rhetoric and linguistics
as electives, and (8) Programs that offered neither specialized nor courses in cultural rhetoric or linguistics. Programs were assigned designations based on published program and course descriptions on each individual program’s website\textsuperscript{38}. Furthermore, each designation is influenced by the Students’ Right resolution that encouraged practitioners to become more knowledgeable of the variety of “Englishes” that students brought with them into the classroom. The resolution further suggested practitioners become more knowledgeable of some aspects of Linguistics in efforts to dismantle erroneous and unfounded linguistic hierarchies that may negatively impact students who speak non-standardized dialects of English.

My survey of doctoral programs yield a number of results. On a positive note, at least on the surface level of the data, 80\% of the programs evaluated offer courses functioning explicitly to prepare instructors to maximize the success rates of culturally diverse students. This statistic includes required course, elective course, and programs in both Linguistics and/or Cultural Rhetorics. Of the total 86 programs evaluated, 6\% of Rhetoric and Composition programs offer specialization in Cultural rhetoric, and approximately 4\% offer programs in Linguistics. The most significant contribution to the data was the amount of courses offered as electives: 32\% offer courses in cultural rhetoric as electives, while 20\% offer courses in Linguistics, and approximately 6\% offer electives in both.

However, though 80\% of doctoral programs in Rhetoric and Composition offer those courses, less than 5\% require that their doctoral students take courses in Cultural Rhetoric, and only approximately 9\% require courses in Linguistics. Those percentages do not include Rhetoric and Composition programs dedicated to Cultural Rhetoric and/or Linguistics, which total approximately 9\%. Thus, in total, approximately 23\% of doctoral programs in Rhetoric and

\textsuperscript{38} See Appendix A for full list of doctoral programs and their designations.
Composition require students to take courses in Linguistics and/or Cultural Rhetoric. Of the 75% of Rhetoric and Composition doctoral programs that require no Linguistics or Cultural Rhetoric courses, approximately 19% fail to offer courses at all in those areas. And of the approximately 57% of programs that offer electives in cultural rhetoric and/or linguistics, none of the courses are guaranteed to run. And, assuming that they do run, their status as “electives” means that students are not required to take them. While the number of courses offered overall reflects progress in the field, there is much more that can be done to ensure that future instructors are better prepared to teach diverse populations and help students in general communicate cross-culturally.

Figure 1

In addition to issues associated with cultural absences in doctoral curricula, some have questioned the preparation of Graduate Teaching assistants (TAs), who are expected to teach writing courses without being adequately introduced to or engaged in culturally-inclusive pedagogy. They suggest that, “[as] TAs clearly play a significant role in teaching students how to
write in the disciplines, WAC administrator-scholars need to turn their attention to disciplinary TAs, engage in discussion about pedagogical approaches for the training of TAs in the teaching of writing, and develop WAC TA professional development programs […] that address graduate instructors’ distinct pedagogical and disciplinary needs and concerns” (Rodrigue). Though this example speaks to preparing TAs in WAC programs, the larger conversation is about the inadequate training of TAs in general, many of whom are responsible for teaching First Year Composition. In fact, Richardson reached the same conclusion based on the results of her study mentioned above (62). Furthermore, Writing Program Administrator Paul Kei Matsuda echoes that sentiment in suggesting that WPA’s “create ongoing professional development opportunities for all writing teachers. Those opportunities may take the forms of workshops on grammar feedback and assessment as well as a professional resource library including books on pedagogical grammar and second language writing instruction and other relevant topics” (158). Matsuda was responding to his vast experiences with faculty, some of whom were described as seasoned and “a good writing teacher,” who were responding to essays in traditional ways of overemphasizing grammatical correctness. His primary concern was the educational success of English Language Learners (ELL) students who experience similar challenges as other non-SAE speakers. He found that many well-intentioned instructors did not have enough background in language rights or linguistics necessary to successfully teach culturally diverse students.

Lack of Resources

The SRTOL resolution established that the creation and dissemination of resources would help guide practitioners towards best practices in implementing culturally inclusive composition

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39 ELL is also referred to as ESL and EFL depending on author and refers to students whose primary language is not English.
pedagogies. However, in the over 40 years since the document’s publication, resources are still limited. Central to understanding this lack and its significance to culturally inclusive Composition pedagogy is an understanding as to why resources aren’t widespread and how that reality contributes to narratives of pedagogical complacency. The above section describing pervasive positive attitudes towards SAE, a sense of social responsibility, and maintenance of internalized white supremacist ideals highlights some of the common perspectives regarding why many practitioners believe that traditional conceptions of Composition pedagogy do not need dismantling. Thus, there hasn’t been an urgent call to revisit our pedagogical course supplements. As a result, most of our textbooks continue to reinforce culturally exclusive perceptions of SAE, which is problematic for multiple reasons. To begin, though textbooks function as course supplements, in most cases they are required texts that illuminate rhetorical principles deemed desirable in composing practices across specific contexts. In that capacity, textbooks perform as models for which content Composition instruction should cover. However, since the data indicates that the vast majority of Composition practitioners may be unfamiliar with culturally inclusive pedagogies, the textbook, then, is not merely a course supplement; rather, it represents a microcosm of the Composition course itself. Additionally, traditional textbooks reinforce hierarchies that place SAE above other cultural rhetorics, as the vast amount of textbooks make no mention of cultural rhetorics at all.

Granted, some could argue that the responsibility of establishing a particular approach to teaching falls on the individual instructors, and that it is their obligation to locate methods of implementing their pedagogy. However, a reality for many instructors, especially those teaching the most “at risk” students, is that time doesn’t always allow for the luxury of research; many Composition instructors spend the vast majority of their time responding to essays, managing the
classroom, uploading grades, attending committee meetings, advising student clubs, holding office hours, etc. As a result, they are limited in terms of the amount of time they can feasibly devote to locating current data surrounding best practices and, by extension, locating strategies of implementing best practices with respect to CIP.

However, as mentioned above, the SRTOL resolution called for researchers and practitioners to contribute to scholarship and textbooks outlining strategies of best accommodating diverse populations, as they were not accounted for in traditional scholarship. Unfortunately, many instructors were left with more questions than answers with respect to what the resolution meant in practice. In fact, “CCCC leadership acknowledged the need for something more in the form of explicit teaching materials, sample lesson plans, and a more practically-oriented pedagogy” (Smitherman 365). Attempts were made, however, to create this body of knowledge. For example, the Language Curriculum Research Group (LCRG) was “a research collective that in the 1960s and early 1970s created a textbook manuscript and trained writing instructors in order to answer the era's pressing question, ‘What should teachers do about students' varied languages?’” (Wible 444). The LCRG received grants from the Ford Foundation over a five-year period and created a “Standardized-English-as-a-Second-Dialect” text for students “whose writing displayed features of Black English Vernacular (BEV)” (444). The LCRG submitted their textbook manuscript for publication, but ultimately it was not published. According to Wible, who reviewed the documents from the Ford Foundation archives, the political landscape of the mid-1970’s contributed to the reluctance of the publishers to publish the text. During this time, marginalized groups in America, including African Americans and women, were engaged in civil rights protests and activism that challenged the status quo and threatened the comfort of those who had been benefitting from social hierarchies that reinforced White patriarchal supremacy. The proposed manuscript and the
pedagogical perspective it represented would have potentially increased the momentum of linguistic activists; however, it would have also challenged the aforementioned social hierarchies that some were not too eager to relinquish for a variety of reasons. For some, as Zorn alluded to, there was great value in the linguistic performances of the elite. For others, challenges to the status quo could potentially jeopardize inherent privileges associated with its maintenance, including experiencing social mobility or preference for representing society’s perception of idealism. Indeed, there was much to lose by embracing new linguistic pedagogies. Ultimately, after the manuscript was rejected, “the LCRG and its project perished” (Wible 444). That was in 1975, but that was not the last attempt; a similar endeavor began a year later by the CCCC.

In 1976, a collection of teaching materials was compiled by members appointed by the Executive Committee of CCCC (Smitherman 365). The committee consisted of linguist Geneva Smitherman, Elisabeth McPherson, who served as the 1972 chair of CCCC, and Richard Lloyd-Jones, who later served as the 1977 chair of CCCC. Each member was considered well-respected in his and her fields, yet “despite having spent nearly four years compiling and editing some excellent material, solicited from practitioners at all levels of language arts education, [they] were informed that CCCC has ‘reluctantly decided’ not to publish the collection” (365). CCCC’s has not gone on the record as to why they chose not to publish the document; however, Smitherman speculates that their decision was a result of the political climate shifting to more conservatism. There is no definitive way of determining whether other manuscripts were similarly rejected, but the existence of the two mentioned here indicate that prominent scholars and organizations were invested in disseminating resources to help teachers access practical strategies of validating language rights in the classroom. However, the absence of avenues available to publish the content stalled the process. And it must be reiterated that it was not just the political climate in society that
blocked forward progress; there were scholars in the academy who were also reluctant to implement linguistically diverse pedagogy, which will be further discussed later in this chapter.

Though full published manuscripts were unavailable during the seventies, they are available today. Staci Perryman-Clark, David E. Kirkland, and Austin Jackson’s *Students’ Right to Their Own Language: A Critical Sourcebook* introduces scholarship from various Compositionists seeking to fulfill the mission of SRTOL through their pedagogical practices. They introduce examples from Geneva Smitherman, Keith Gilyard and Elaine Richardson, Karmen Kynard, Leah A. Zuidema, and Kim Brian Lovejoy, Steve Fox, and Katherine V. Wills to name a few, providing practitioners with several models from which to explore. Published in 2015, this text was not available until recently and there are admittedly few full texts that provide pedagogical strategies for implementing strategies to fulfill SRTOL. However, several strategies have been published as articles in reputable journals in Composition, including some of the essays published in Perryman-Clark, Kirkland, and Jackson’s text. To a large degree, though, textbooks reinforcing monocultural perceptions of SAE dominate the field of Composition, which will be discussed further in this chapter. Unfortunately, the minimal noise SRTOL scholarship and pedagogy generates on a large scale impacts the ability of well-intentioned practitioners to effectively implement CIP, which speaks to how well prepared instructors are in general to confidently execute CIP.

**Traditional Textbooks**

What English instructors do have in abundance, with a few exceptions, are resources that reinforce traditional pedagogy, more specifically writing handbooks and textbooks. Aya and Paul Kei Matsuda argue that “[as] U.S. writing studies, until fairly recently, had been developing in
isolation from the rest of the world, it would be relatively easy to choose a sample of first-year composition textbooks and point out the lack of a global perspective” (173). In their discussion of technical writing textbooks, they suggest that Composition textbooks in general are limited in envisioning their audience, treating diverse populations as the “linguistic and cultural Other” (187). They further suggest that, “In order to educate the students who are increasingly multicultural, multilingual, and multinational, it is no longer enough to acknowledge their presence and celebrate the diversity. Our own rhetoric of instruction must also change so that the you of the textbook and of the classroom instruction represents the actual student population and their audiences rather than an outdated and inaccurate image of the idealized student population” (188).

Matsuda and Matsuda advocate for the type of pedagogy encouraged by SRTOL, which recommends that scholars and practitioners embrace the responsibility of further legitimizing marginalized cultural discourses and, by extension, those who employ them. They recommend that our textbooks evolve to reflect the assortment of cultural and rhetorical values reflected in our student populations and in society at large.

Matsuda and Matsuda are not the only critics of Composition textbooks. Indeed, the idea that two separate entities within Composition were charged with creating a textbook that would better accommodate diverse student populations (Smitherman and Wible) suggests that several prominent scholars and organizations within the field were in general agreement that the existing textbooks were inadequate. But conversations critiquing so-called “Cultural-studies” textbooks that place students’ counter-cultural experiences front and center further complicate the position of culture within textbooks. Cultural studies textbooks were created as an alternative to mainstream texts that marginalized multicultural perspectives and experiences. For example, in his critique of Gary Colombo’s *Rereading America: Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing*, Jay
Jordan highlights that “as a self-proclaimed alternative to more typical readers that provide either a ‘salad bowl’ or ‘talk show’ approach to multiculturalism, Rereading America wants to be a ‘handbook that helps students explore the ways that the dominant culture shapes their ideas, values, and beliefs’” (466). Rereading America offers counter-hegemonic perceptions of mainstream culture alongside poems, narratives, and essays that challenge popular perceptions of what it means to be an American. Colombo’s objectives seemingly reinforce SRTOL by legitimizing the experiences of marginalized groups. However, Jordan argues that these types of textbooks not only devalue mainstream essays, they also imply that traditional academic discourse and hegemonic ideals occupy less significant spaces in modern society. Yet, SRTOL didn’t suggest that practitioners minimize the value of SAE or the cultures associated with it; instead, the resolution suggested that practitioners embrace historically underrepresented voices while continuing to develop mastery in the language of wider communication (LWC), also known as SAE (Smitherman). Granted, as Malea Powell argues in her 2012 CCCCs Chair’s address, there are scholars who support dismantling SAE for its symbolizing of colonial and patriarchal hegemony. However, scholars typically agree that students will benefit from opportunities to strengthen their knowledge of and proficiency in SAE. They mainly argue that acquisition of SAE should not come at the expense of one’s own cultural rhetorics or opportunities to access “other” marginalized rhetorics.

As such, another critique of textbooks relates to the lack of content surrounding cultural rhetorics. Instead of engaging students in discussions and exercises that allow them to make rhetorical choices, many writing handbooks contribute to reductive views of composing by emphasizing “correctness” and minimally acknowledging cultural rhetorics, if at all. Consider Nate Kreuter’s evaluation of four popular style guides, including Strunk and White’s Elements of
Style, which is one of the most popular writing handbooks of the last 50 years. Kreuter argues, “If the style manuals are any indication […], the only correct prose style for contemporary writers is one of brevity and relatively simple syntaxes. In the contemporary composition classroom, style-if it is dealt with at all-is really nothing more than a catch-all, stand-in for ‘grammar’ or ‘punctuation’ or ‘correctness.’” Kreuter suggests that rhetorical style, “until its conflation with correctness, often has been thought of in terms of elegance or linguistic dexterity, and sometimes has been seen as ‘beyond’ correctness.” While scholars of cultural rhetoric specifically emphasize stylistic choices of writers appropriate to context and audience, they rely far less heavily on grammatical conventions. Thus, the emphasis on grammar, punctuation, and correctness in style manuals would do little to nurture the stylistic conventions of cultural rhetoric. In describing Indian Literature, for example, T.C.S. Langen highlights the use of “poetic and stylistic features.” What ethnic rhetoricians and critics of popular writing handbooks suggest is that Composition practitioners recognize a broader purpose of writing that extends beyond reliance on limited perceptions of “correctness.” While understanding grammar conventions are important, it is not the end all be all to academic writing, at least it should not be, as there is much value in understanding the expectations of modern day audiences who are moved by more than properly punctuated thesis statements. Our current landscape reflects a wide range of stylistic appetites into which many of our current handbooks and textbooks are simply not feeding. And their prevalence and prominence in First Year Composition contribute to the larger issue of why practitioners; especially those with limited or no knowledge of SRTOL, cultural rhetoric, or other culturally inclusive frameworks for teaching; are not implementing CIP. In a nutshell, their supplemental resources exclude materials necessary to enact CIP.
However, the existence of the textbooks alone will do little to impact change; writing program administrators and other faculty would have to actually require the texts and provide some insight into ways of integrating the text into the curriculum in culturally inclusive ways. But the reality is that texts that offer culturally inclusive content are far less popular than their traditional counterparts. For instance, in 2014, Bedford St. Martins/Macmillan published Andrea Lunsford’s *Writing in Action* which features a chapter titled “Language” with subheadings “Writing to the World,” “Language that Builds Common Ground,” and “Language Variety.” However, the top sellers for the same publishing company are Diana Hacker’s *A Writer’s Reference*, Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommer’s *The Bedford Handbook*, and Laurie Kirzner and Stephen Mandel’s *Patterns for College Writing* (Macmillan Publishers), none of which include culturally inclusive content advocated by SRTOL. The same is true for Cengage’s top sellers, which are Cheryl Glenn and Loretta Gray’s *Harbrace Essentials with Resources Writing in Disciplines 2nd Edition* and Ann Raimes and Susan Miller’s *Keys for Writers with Assignment Guides 7th Ed. Part IX* (Staples), which actually does include a section titled “Language Diversity and Edited American English: Challenges for Multilingual Writers,” but it functions primarily to assist writers in their acquisition of SAE and does not offer strategies for employing cultural rhetorics. Thus, while it can be argued that there is a need for additional culturally inclusive textbooks, those texts will make little impact unless faculty members actually acquire them and implement them using culturally inclusive techniques.

Many faculty members, especially adjuncts, have their writing texts selected for them. As such, they make the most of the resources they are given. However, though the lack of access to culturally inclusive textbooks doesn’t necessarily equate to the absence of CIP in practice, as mentioned earlier, that lack does require instructors to supplement course materials if they want to
implement CIP. Unfortunately, that is another challenge for Composition instructors given their workload, especially for the adjuncts who represent a large population of Composition instructors (Hammer A2) and possibly teach at multiple institutions. The esteem with which many English departments hold traditional writing handbooks contributes to their wide dissemination and, unfortunately, also presents another challenge to implementing CIP.

What magnifies the textbook book problem is the fact that students in today’s FYC are increasingly diverse, which makes the selection of appropriate textbooks even more critical, particularly if faculty have limited or no knowledge of SRTOL, and limited or no knowledge of any of the pedagogical approaches to FYC that embrace cultural diversity:

Because of significant demographic changes in many regions of our nation, the majority of those now [teaching Composition] in most classes simply need to have ethnic rhetorics as a pedagogical as well as a rhetorical interest. The textbooks they use, highly indicative of the kinds of readings and rhetorical issues being discussed and used by our students, too often circumscribe the work that practitioners in our profession do in first-year composition classes, where our work largely takes place. And because too many from our ranks remain undertrained, textbooks, as Robert Connors argued some years ago, have long been the pedagogical basis that most use for the kind of training most first-year college students receive in rhetoric. These textbooks have only begun to scratch the surface of exposing our students to the complexities of the ethnic rhetorics found everywhere around us” (Mejia 146).

Because the data suggests that many instructors of FYC have limited knowledge of CIP; and that the most popular textbooks in Composition do not reflect cultural diversity in ways that celebrate
equality among cultures, among languages, or among peoples; it stands to reason that many instructors forego implementing CIP strategies.

To be clear, that is not to say that no Composition textbooks reflect culturally inclusive principles. For instance, Sheena Gillespie and Robert Becker’s *Across Cultures: A Reader for Writers* is in its 8th edition and “advocates acceptance of a diversity of voices, while suggesting ways to probe the correspondences, interrelationships, and mutual benefits of that diversity” (Pearson Higher Education). Readings include essays from a variety of cultural perspectives, including a variety of ethnic, gender, sexual, and technological perspectives. The reading selections vary from journalistic articles, to works of fiction, to literacy narratives, to poetry and for all intents and purposes would serve as an adequate text for the CIP I advocate.

However, many composition readers, even so-called multicultural ones, are often critiqued for their typical approach to culture. Several of them equate culture with ethnicity, which reflects progress from an ethnic perspective, but not from a gender, spiritual, sexual, or otherwise “other” perspective. Queer theorist John Hudson, for example, critiques Composition textbooks for their lack of diversity with respect to gender and sexual orientation. He argues, “When editors and publishers produce composition readers--and particularly readers billed as inclusive--lacking in LGBTQ [Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer] representation, they construct a vision of diversity that erases diversity in sexual identities. [...] Making the composition reader--one of the "tools of our trade"--more inclusive is a positive step in this direction” (Hudson). Though textbooks have reflected broader perspectives over the years, they do not necessarily reflect an exhaustive spectrum of diverse perspectives.
In recent years, scholars have taken steps to disseminate materials that would help instructors become more familiar with critical debates surrounding language rights in Composition. For example, Staci Perryman-Clark, David E. Kirkland, and Austin Jackson’s *Students’ Right to Their Own Language: A Critical Sourcebook* was published in 2014 functioning to highlight the nature of the debates surrounding SRTOL and offer practical suggestions for implementing its philosophies in the classroom. The text includes both the SRTOL resolution and the CCCC’s National Language Policy, along with essays providing the backdrop and debates surrounding both. In addition, Scott Wible’s *Shaping Language Policy in the U.S.: The Role of Composition Studies* addresses Language Policies within a historical and political context, exemplifying ways in which some researchers and practitioners translated SRTOL into practice while situating those histories within more modern movement, like “English Only” legislation and the United States Defense Department’s 2006 National Security Language Policy that, according to Wible, embraces of multilingualism “as a strategic military weapon” (135). Access to these significant historical and modern developments helps present instructors with reference guides to some of the most significant content surrounding language rights in Composition studies. Though not exhaustive, as a faculty resource, it helps with teacher accountability as it provides content with which some practitioners expressed limited knowledge. To be fair, exhaustive texts covering the totality of diverse cultural spectrums prevalent among FYC students would be near impossible, and the amount of time allotted in a quarter semester, or even two semester sequence would not allow for a rigorous exploration of that vast rhetorical terrain occupied by cultural rhetoric. However, the lack of access to texts that attempt to expand rhetorical ambitions simply doesn’t help instructors who want to facilitate inclusive pedagogies.
The Elephant in the Room: SRTOL is not for everyone

According to Scott Wible, “the most consistently reached conclusion among compositionists is that the students’ right to their own language is a theory that rarely, if ever, has materialized in the writing classroom” (443). Though we can gauge from the above examples the significance and potential impact of implementing CIP, there is no consensus that educators should implement any component of SRTOL or CIP. In fact, when the resolution was published, Ann Berthoff, a well-respected professor and scholar in the field, responded, “Some of my colleagues have dismissed the Resolution as ‘just political’” (217). Acknowledging the political climate of the time period, Berthoff suggested that many would not take the resolution seriously and saw it as a type of lip service perhaps to pacify civil rights activists. She also took issue with the linguistic scholarship referenced in the resolution, arguing that several prominent linguistic perspectives were absent, essentially characterizing the resolution as “sham scholarship” (216).

More recently, others have voiced their opposition to the resolution. For example, in 2010, Jeff Zorn, suggested that SRTOL was a disservice to students, arguing from the deficiency standpoint that nonstandard speakers’ language was inadequate, and that they should have no “right” to that. Of the resolution, he states, “All told, I will show that SRTOL is a shameful piece of work whose ongoing endorsement warps and stains language education in the United States” (313). On a basic philosophical level, Zorn disagrees with the notion that there is value in non-standard dialects and goes further to critique Smitherman, one of the most vocal proponents of SRTOL, depicting her as militant and separatist (322). Ultimately, Zorn suggests there is much benefit to valuing SAE, and, based on the minimal degree to which SRTOL is implemented in college classrooms today, a significant number of practitioners agree with him. Editor and academic writer Carol Iannone supports Zorn’s critique of SRTOL, characterizing the resolution
itself as “clumsy prose” and the students who are subjected to its pedagogy as “hapless victims” (273). In essence, there were real questions surrounding its significance and legitimacy coming from respected scholars.

Given the various stumbling blocks presented thus far, enacting CIP can be quite challenging. At the least, current practitioners would have to become knowledgeable of the various movements that created CIP, gain access to the limited resources that have been published detailing strategies of implementing CIP, and locate textbook supplements to showcase examples of cultural rhetoric. However, that assumes that instructors actually want to employ CIP, which may not be the case. As mentioned above, not everyone values language traditions beyond SAE for academic purposes for various reasons. For some, like Berthoff and Zorn, SAE is perfectly adequate at expressing academic ideas in a consistent formal manner. More importantly, though, some feel that the SRTOL resolution is a disservice to the very students it hoped to serve, arguing that allowing students to use their various forms of English would yield “underachievement” from students, since they would not necessarily push themselves to gain proficiency in the SAE (Zorn 312). In these cases, scholars are considering the success of the students in deciding to reinforce traditional Composition pedagogy.

With that being stated, clearly there is no singular explanation for instructors’ resistance to implementing CIP; the reasons are varied and complex, which is why addressing this problem requires a multilateral approach. However, scholars have been contributing to solutions that will enhance the experiences and success rates of all of our Composition students, and these current contributions are responsible for the “trending” of CIP.
Conclusion – Still Trending

In spite of some of the clear obstacles to implementation of culturally-inclusive pedagogy, the fact that it is trending is actually a good thing; it means that it will not go away. It will continue to resurface over time, which will allow more teachers and scholars to become familiar with its philosophies and strategies, even though the current research suggests that there has not been a general overwhelming sense of urgency in implementing the strategies recommended by several linguists in the field. Furthermore, aside from the practical issues of implementation, larger institutional problems exist, including the limited amount of graduate programs that adequately prepare future instructors to implement culturally-inclusive pedagogy, and the existence of textbooks that reinforce the principles and/or philosophies of culturally inclusive pedagogy. In addition, the significance of current trends impacting the college Composition, including common core and assessment (which includes a renewed faith in high stakes testing at both the secondary and post-secondary levels), has overshadowed conversations surrounding multiculturalism and diversity in the curriculum, although such conversations are integral to understanding students’ intersectionality within these contexts. However, if scholars fail to consider the impact of culturally-inclusive pedagogy on the Composition curriculum, there will be larger issues within the realm of assessment and common core, especially if neither of these entities recognizes the role of culture in the writing process.

I realize that I, too, have become consumed with appeasing various power structures at play within this debate. By continuing to marginalize the students’ voices and treating them as secondary to SAE, it hardly matters that I tell them they are valued at all. In essence, I show them they are not valued by failing to examine them in the classroom and neglecting to explore their potential incorporation into academic discourse. I don’t treat them with the same degree of rigor
as I treat SAE, which contributes to the problem. I imagine that other instructors, particularly non-tenured and adjunct instructors who make up the vast majority of instructors teaching first-year composition, similarly feel that their hands are tied. The problem is complex and multifaceted. However, I do believe that unrelenting efforts to validate language rights across disciplines and across various factions of our disciplines will produce positive outcomes for the future and help instructors feel more empowered to confidently execute culturally-inclusive pedagogies.

**Acronym Chart for Chapter 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAVE</td>
<td>African American Vernacular English</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIP</td>
<td>Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRiT</td>
<td>Critical Race Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAE</td>
<td>Standardized American English</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRTOL</td>
<td>Students Rights to Their Own Language</td>
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Chapter Three - Composition Unchained:

Writing Beyond Restraints

Nommo – “...the power of the spoken word” (Asante “Transcultural Realities” 80). From an Afrocentric perspective, ways in which words and phrases can be finessed into monumental moments is nothing short of artistry. Especially when spoken. Imagine, then, the potential impact of those moments when transcribed onto paper; consider ways in which powerful oration can influence narration. African American Rhetoric, my mother tongue, embodies unique characteristics that can be strategically employed conditional upon audience, topic, and purpose. Its rhetorical impact perpetually evolves, transcending space, time, and rhetor. Poetic in its rhythm and repetition, emphatic in its tone and vernacular, my African American rhetoric has been begging for a seat at the table amongst its Classical rhetoric counterparts, wondering why it hasn’t been given the same opportunities or recognition within the academy. It has grown weary of its exile and will not remain silent much longer.

My dissertation commenced by establishing the problem with the teaching of “academic writing” as we know it. I detailed ways in which my own experiences and those shared by other scholars in the field illustrate the detrimental impact of reinforcing traditional perceptions of Standardized Academic English (SAE) at the exclusion of all other rhetorical options, including an incorporation of cultural rhetoric. In highlighting the complex nature of the problem, I demonstrated that many practitioners of Rhetoric and Composition are not well-informed of the pedagogical relevance or existence of culturally-inclusive pedagogies, despite research advocating it in our most respected journals and among our most prominent scholars. However, although challenges persist, I believe that sustained efforts will prove beneficial.
My confidence is a result of knowing how much work scholars before me have done to help make this type of pedagogy a reality. By drawing on theorists from cultural rhetoric, culturally responsive/relevant theory, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and critical race theory, I’ll demonstrate that frameworks exist and have existed for a while to help scholars better understand the significance and necessity of a Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy (CIP), the benefits of implementing CIP, and the feasibility of incorporating CIP into the Composition curriculum.

The main components on the CIP I envision are Cultural Rhetoric (CR), inclusive of ethnic rhetoric, feminist rhetoric, and womanist rhetoric; culturally responsive/relevant theory; culturally sustaining pedagogy; and critical race theory. Collectively, these frameworks have the potential to expand perceptions of academic writing in culturally progressive and socially responsible ways. As I’ll exemplify throughout this chapter, independently each of these theoretical perspectives has displayed immense promise in locating strategies of improving the academic experiences of culturally-marginalized students. For instance, knowledge of specific cultural rhetorics gives instructors insight into physical manifestations and rhetorical values of culturally informed written discourse features, which can help practitioners better gauge their students’ rhetorical choices. In addition, culturally responsive/relevant teaching and culturally sustaining pedagogy provide critical lenses through which to reimagine the pedagogical scenarios we construct and the ways in which we assess students’ success within each scenario. Critical analysis of culturally responsive/relevant teaching and culturally sustaining pedagogy also yields a broader understanding of the role culture plays in pedagogical perspectives and assessment practices, potentially spawning more meaningful responses to students’ work. Furthermore,

43 Cultural rhetorics is far more inclusive than the three cultural representations included here. However, I’m illustrating the utility of these three as most significant in framing my personal rhetorical consciousness.
though the theoretical body of Cultural Rhetoric has not been typically utilized as a vehicle for strategic academic expression in Composition, principles of critical race theory and culturally sustaining pedagogy support the incorporation of more culturally diverse composing traditions across rhetorical contexts. Collectively, then, each theoretical perspective empowers the other.

I have an immense appreciation for the work of all of the scholars responsible for contributing to Critical Race Theory, Cultural Rhetoric, Ethnic Rhetoric, Culturally Relevant Teaching, and, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies, as without them I could not have conceived of the culturally-inclusive pedagogy I envision; the significant body of work in these areas represents amazing strides taken towards improving the educational experiences of all students, especially cultural minorities. My hope is to envision each of these frameworks as part of a broader collective, thus illustrating the soundness, practicality, and necessity of building upon and implementing each of these philosophies in concert, which I believe will assist in generating a more culturally inclusive Composition pedagogy.

Relevance of Critical Race Theory (CRiT\textsuperscript{44})

Compositionists who highlight the significance of historical context, specifically with respect to the impact of colonialism and racism on linguistic standards, are most likely doing so within a CRiT framework. Conceived of by legal scholars in response to what they deemed inherently racist components of the legal system and their impact on education, the economy, and social stratification, “Critical legal thinkers have long resisted this maintenance of the status quo and have worked to identify and eradicate various forms of oppression in the courts, in our classrooms, and throughout society” (Taylor, 1). In Composition, one needs only to consider the

\textsuperscript{44} Typically, Critical Race Theory is referred to as CRT; however, since I’ve used CRT to refer to Culturally Responsive Teaching, I’m using a slight variation.
concept of Standardized English, which is the standard most Composition courses function to uphold. Its values reflect a very specific cultural perspective: that of the American colonizers. And though Native Americans, and later African Americans, communicated in America through their own languages, grammar, and style; educational institutions, and indeed society at large, devalued those languages, referring to utterances of them as “grammatically incorrect” or “broken English.” Over time, prominent organizations like CCCC’s and NCTE have validated these “other” languages via journal articles and resolutions, and extensive scholarship has been published justifying the legitimacy of various ethnic rhetorics. Problematic, though, is the widespread practice of designating “other” rhetorics as “Ethnic” or “Cultural,” illustrating the racism and/or Eurocentrism of designating Eurocentric rhetoric as simply “rhetoric,” as normative, as the standard by which all else is measured. Ladson-Billings speaks of this phenomenon in her discussion of the O.J. Simpson trials:

The criminal trial jury was repeatedly identified as the “Black” jury despite the presence of one White and one Latino juror. However, the majority White civil case jury was not given a racial designation. When Whites are exempted from racial designations and become “families,” “jurors,” “students,” “teachers,” etc. their ability to apply a [CRiT] analytical rubric is limited. (“Just What is Critical Race Theory” 21).

Ladson-Billings showcases how racial designations are prevalent in various aspects of society, reaffirming the construction of Euro-normativity and, by extension, the implied superiority of Whiteness. However, CRiT explains that racist and imperialistic values are what rendered culturally diverse voices “other” in the first place, as scholars have generally agreed that there is nothing inherently inferior about them (CCCC, Smitherman, Kynard, Perryman-Clark, etc). The SRTOL resolution is a testament to that.
Critical Race Theory includes specific components that allow for an in-depth analysis of a variety of social norms; including academic, legal, and interpersonal behaviors; through a racial lens. In order to apply this lens, CRiT requires Compositionists, or Comp Crits\textsuperscript{45}, to consider its four premises beginning with the notion that “[Racism] is a normal fact of daily life in U.S. society that is neither aberrant nor rare” (Taylor 4). Composition scholar Catherine Prendergast argues, “Discussions of racism in composition are confined to determining how to handle individual, aberrant flare-ups in the classroom without exploring racism as institutionalized, normal, and pervasive” (36). Missed opportunities to place race and racism, with their current and historic manifestations, front and center function to create an atmosphere of complacency wherein the field becomes complicit in its perpetuation. As such, Comp Crits would need to acknowledge the legacy of racism in America and how it has impacted writing instruction in terms of the role that race plays in establishing and upholding rhetorical and stylistic conventions, performing academic/intellectual gatekeeping, and reinforcing both subtle and overt hegemonic systems of oppression. The authors of SRTOL were conscious of the challenges faced by students of color as a result of the institutional racism of the academy. In many respects, Composition scholars have been racially historicizing the discipline for some time. Examples of this scholarship exist in the form of SRTOL and subsequent resolutions relevant to language rights, and conversations surrounding Ethnic rhetorics and cultural rhetorics.

The second premise of “Interest convergence” suggests that “the interests of Blacks in gaining racial equity have been accommodated only when they have converged with the interests

\textsuperscript{45} Critical Race Theory grew out of legal theory and has been applied to a wide range of disciplines. Scholars who emphasize the impact of racism on Latina/o population are called LatCrits. By extension, I’ve adapted the term “Comp Crits” for Composition scholars who research methods of revealing racist praxis in Composition and offer alternative pedagogy.
of powerful Whites” (Taylor 5). Here, Comp Crits would need to highlight the benefits of ethnic and cultural rhetoric to Whites in addition to non-Whites, demonstrating the “converging” of interests, which according to CRiT justifies the endeavor as worthwhile to Whites and more likely to be implemented with the least amount of resistance. Scholar and professor Steve Lamos speaks of interest convergence in his argument for improving Basic Writing (BW) instruction in Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) by implementing strategies effective in Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs). He argues that interest convergence

[offers] an important opportunity to assert that our BW programs and the race-conscious dwelling that they promote are fundamental to PWIs’ collective ability to achieve their goals of diversity and globalism. In other words, we can assert that the proclaimed diversity interests of PWIs converge directly with our own BW interests in race-conscious dwelling in ways that ought to be recognized and embraced. (“Minority Serving Institutions” 9)

Lamos emphasizes the dual benefit to both the PWI and the BW program that primarily serves minority students by illustrating ways in which serving BW populations contributes to the success of PWIs and, in theory, motivates PWIs to support BW initiatives. Critical Race Theorist Edward Taylor does emphasize that the absence of the White benefit, though, according to CRiT, would yield an uphill battle with little support from Whites (5), which is why Lamos concludes that advocates of BW program initiatives “need to make effective interest convergence arguments that can persuade PWI stakeholders that their interests align in ways that are profoundly important to [both of their] collective futures” (“Minority Serving Institutions” 26). Thus, Comp CRiTs would need to consider ways in which exploring race and culture based initiatives would contribute to larger institutional goals that would benefit everyone. Of note is the absence of an interest convergence critique; no discussion has been executed within this framework as to whether or not
one should have to consider White interests. Critical Race Theorists focus on racialized phenomena as they exist and offers perspectives on functioning with the current systems.

The third premise addresses the significance of historical context. Taylor suggests that “All too often we avoid discussing the historic reasons that Whites and people of color have had separate and unequal educations” (7). CRiTs suggest that the only way to contend with the current problems related to achievement gaps and educational disparities between Whites and communities of color is to acknowledge and explore the historical politics and policies that yielded this reality. Comp CRiTs, then, would need to critically analyze the impact of Jim Crow laws, English Only legislation, and SRTOL on college composition. Examples of additional content to consider would be the basis for the establishment and reinforcement of specific academic standards and assessment criteria, issues surrounding the socio-economic impact of access (or lack thereof) to quality academic and economic resources, and the short and long term impact of racism in Composition instruction on students over time, including students’ sense of voice, perception of their home language, and degree of acceptance SAE as superior.

The fourth and final premise involves the use of narrative, more specifically counter-narrative, which is required to provide an authentic voice to counter the dominant, typically unquestioned perspective of Euro-normativity, which tends to be the perspective by which all else in measured – the master narrative. The counter-narrative, then, provides an “other” perspective that counters the dominant perspective by simply shedding light on alternative versions of reality from a non-White perspective. Thus, Comp Crits would employ counter-narrative, or counter-story as it’s also known, as a specific rhetorical strategy as well as theoretical perspective functioning to offer alternative perspectives of phenomena from various cultural perspectives. As a rhetorical strategy, Comp Crits would encourage students to compose narratives from uncommon
perspectives, including those typically marginalized or completely silenced in mainstream society and literature. They would be explore the voices of the historically voiceless, including women, ethnic minorities, and even subcultures within those groups including the LGBTQ+ community and populations with varying degrees of perceived dis/abledness. Traditionally, these groups have been subjected to a conception of normalcy dictated by a specific cultural perspective. However, counter-narrative allows students to deconstruct the notion of normalcy and validate their own existence through their own stories elevating their own values. Aja Martinez exemplifies this in her use of allegory, which she appropriates from CRiT scholar Derrick Bell who has “employed allegory as [CRiT] counterstory” (Martinez para 2). Martinez notes that while Bell (1992) allegorically dramatizes the African slave trade, my allegory dramatizes the great event of the U.S. conquest of the southwest. I explore assimilation, especially with regard to the protagonist, and the colonizing effects of an education that conquers the mind, crushes, and essentially obliterates a people's worldview (Villenas & Deyhle, 1999, p. 417). This setting illustrates the imminent threat of cultural erasure posed when a people are denied the right to their history; a real threat in Arizona's anti-ethnic studies climate. (para 3)

Martinez’ use of allegory gives voice, personality, and pathos to individuals and/or groups of people referred to in legislation in vague terms; instead of readers imagining the impact of Arizona’s anti-ethnic studies, pro-assimilationist legislation, Martinez creates characters based on personal experience and published research to validate her depiction of the characters and the policies she critiques. In Composition, the use of allegory functions on multiple levels: a) It disrupts perceptions of formal academic discourse and what constitutes “valid” research, b) It provides an opportunity to render the hypothetical or abstract concrete, which could help engage
readers and improve the degree of empathy with characters and/or their representations, and c) It provides a counterstory utilizing specific rhetorical tools, allowing the form to reflect the content in sophisticated ways that contribute to students’ perceptions of academic writing. Furthermore, the counter-narrative itself inspires mainstream students to consider alternative views of the world and of history in ways that could potentially broaden their perspectives on the concept of “normal” and increase their tolerance of other world views.46

To envision how CRiT would function in Composition, consider how it functions in other disciplines47. For example, in discussing the necessity of CRiT in Higher Education as it relates to the Latina/o population, Octavio Villalpando argues that “[Critical Race Theory and Latino Critical Theory, or LatCrit] help us recognize patterns, practices, and policies of racial inequality that continue to exist in more insidious and covert ways. [CRiT] and LatCrit can expose these insidious practices and help us dismantle them and remove their obstruction to the success of Latinos in higher education” (42). CRiT should be applied to Composition for the same purposes, as such an endeavor is necessary to create the Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy I’ve been advocating, while also reinforcing some of the principles established in culturally responsive and culturally sustaining teaching, which will be discussed subsequently.

Incorporation of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Various scholars across disciplines have acknowledged the diversity in ways of knowing and ways of learning. A premise of Diversity Pedagogy Theory is that “to be effective as a teacher, you must understand and acknowledge the critical role culture plays in the teaching-learning

46 Another example of interest convergence.
47 At present, there are not many published models or accounts of critical race theory in the Composition classroom, so current examples are derived from other disciplines.
process” (Sheets 11). Though applied primarily to k-12 education, this pedagogy is significant to education in general; it requires instructors of all students to interrogate their own teaching practices and, equally significant, their students’ learning process. In fact, “DPT maintains that culturally inclusive teachers (a) observe children’s cultural behavioral patterns to identify individual and group cultural competencies and skills; and (b) use this knowledge to guide their teaching decisions” (11). They emphasize the critical nature of attending to students’ needs in the very literal sense of creating a “student-centered” classroom; in this model, teaching practices are guided by various students’ cultural characteristics, such as gender, race, and class. While engaging in these practices, though, one must conceive of culture through broad lenses and acknowledge more than students’ copious cultural identities extending beyond the most common. Knowledge of students’ cultural frames of reference would then be used to inform curricular choices.

Literacy scholars also advocate pedagogical diversity:

New Literacy theorists argue that social context and cultural diversity significantly affect the literacy process. Often, the failure of urban students to develop ‘academic’ literacy skills stems not from a lack of intelligence but from the inaccessibility of the school curriculum to students who are not in the ‘dominant’ or ‘mainstream’ culture.”

(Morrell 72).

This perspective indicates that the absence of cultural diversity in the curriculum can have a detrimental impact on culturally diverse students. Morrell recommends incorporating components of popular culture, including hip hop, popular film, television, and media, into the curriculum as a strategy for creating a broader range of academic content with which to engage students. These
sentiments of better accommodating culturally diverse students are similar to those of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Teaching.

In her early scholarship on culturally relevant pedagogies, Gloria Ladson-Billings emphasized three main objectives: “Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order” (“But That’s Just Good Teaching!” 160). Appealing primarily to K12 educators, Ladson-Billings argued that academic success was critical, and that teachers were tasked with locating best practices for students to achieve it (160). Furthermore, Ladson-Billings encouraged teachers to strategically incorporate students’ cultural interests and values into the curriculum such that students wouldn’t feel culturally isolated in the classroom (160-161). And finally, she suggested that if academic institutions functioned to promote “active citizenship,” then, as active citizens, students should be able to “critically analyze the society” (162). In her discussion of the components of culturally relevant pedagogy, Ladson-Billings is intentional in her avoidance of including prescriptive details. Instead, she gives examples of teachers she observes and highlights areas of their teaching that she believes function to fulfill the objectives stated above. Her justification is that there is no one method of appealing to diverse students, so she showcases a variety of strategies based on specific classroom dynamics (160-162).

Geneva Gay uses the term Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) to describe a similar pedagogical approach which she describes as follows:

… [Culturally responsive teaching uses] the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively.
It is based on the assumption that when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference of students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly (Gay, 2000). As a result, the academic achievement of ethnically diverse students will improve when they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Foster, 1995; Gay, 2000; Hollins, 1996; Kleinfeld, 1975; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995).

("Preparing For Culturally Responsive Teaching” 106).

Gay’s rationale for CRT and its premise mirrors my own rationale for CIP in several respects. Most significant in this description is the belief that instructors can improve their students’ academic performance and level of engagement if the course content and delivery reflect and respect students’ values. Specifically created to speak to the needs of minority students, Gay suggests a model of teaching that embraces students’ ethnic differences, and avoids devaluing manifestations of those differences. In her 2010 text *Culturally Responsive Teaching*, Gay contends that CRT is necessary to the academic success of ethnic minorities in ways that conventional pedagogies spur the academic success of mainstream students (26-27).

Also geared towards K-12 educators, Gay further nuanced six “descriptive characteristics” of culturally responsive teaching, beginning with the first principle that “Culturally Responsive Teaching is Validating” (Gay *Culturally Responsive Teaching* 31). In this respect, Gay suggests that teachers incorporate ethnically/racially diverse content into the curriculum using appealing to multiple learning styles (32).\(^48\) She underscores that the learning styles should be specific to

\(^{48}\) Both Gay and Ladson-Billings use the term culture, although they refer to race and ethnicity. I discuss this later in the chapter as a critical difference between their pedagogical approach and CIP.
“different ethnic students” (32) as a strategy of engaging students and “[building] bridges of meaningfulness” (31) between students’ cultural capital and that of the academy.

The second principle states that “Culturally Responsive Teaching is Comprehensive” (32), involving more than singular moments or assignments. On the contrary, CRT requires collective participation of all students, faculty, staff, administration, and beyond. Gay spoke to the inter-connected nature of education as one that envisions each assignment as part of larger course objectives associated with community success; thus, each component of the process is connected to the other. Among the objectives of this principle is the primary goal of “helping students of color maintain identity and connections with their ethnic groups and communities” (32), and that involves feeling a sense of unity and connectedness towards academic content and everyone involved in the academic process.

“Culturally Responsive Teaching is Multidimensional” is the third principle which asserts that CRT must be conceived of beyond limited perceptions of pedagogy. One must consider “curriculum content, learning context, classroom context, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessments” (33). Gay recommends that teachers gain access to more ethnically diverse approaches to pedagogy and course content, and then use those insights to impact each component of the pedagogical process.

The fourth principle that “Cultural Responsive Teaching is Empowering” reflects the belief that the more confidence students possess, the greater their potential for success. Gay suggests that teachers can effectively empower students by participating in specific types of pedagogical practices that include “bolstering students’ morale, providing resources and personal assistance, developing an ethos of achievement, and celebrating individual and collective accomplishments”
Tacit in Gay’s discussion are the adverse effects of apathy among students of color, and she explicitly states that students have to “believe they can succeed in learning tasks” (34). Gay argues that strengthening one’s sense of self will translate to one belief in one’s ability to achieve, while also contributing to one’s ability to act.

The fifth principle that “Culturally Responsive Teaching is Transformative” speaks to the spirit of social justice that is imbedded within CRT objectives. In explaining ways in which CRT is “double focused,” Gay contends the following:

One direction deals with confronting and transcending the cultural hegemony nested in much of the curriculum content and class instruction of traditional education. The other develops social consciousness, intellectual critique, and political and personal efficacy in students so that they can combat prejudices, racism, and other forms of oppression and exploitation. (37)

Through this lens, CRT forgoes the “business as usual” routines prevalent in academic settings that either unconsciously or wittingly maintain the status quo. Instead, CRT is intentionally conscious, or “woke” in ways that do not promote any specific agenda, but encourages students to critically engage in the spaces they occupy.

Finally, the sixth principle argues that “Culturally Responsive Teaching is Emancipatory… in that it releases the intellect of students of color from the constraining manacles of mainstream canons of knowledge and ways of knowing” (37). Essentially, students’ cultural capital would be validated beyond the usual sites of endorsement, such as their own cultural communities. CRT expands students’ sense of community to include academic spaces and personnel, such that they
explore additional cultural models of academic rigor and performance beyond traditional benchmarks.

**Culturally Responsive Teaching in the First-Year Writing**

In application to FYC, principles of CRT encourages practitioners to view students’ culturally-informed rhetorical choices as assets and use components of said assets to engage students. Tyrone Howard describes those assets as “cultural capital,” a term coopted from Pierre Bourdieu that “embodies the norms, social practices, ideologies, language, and behavior that are part of a given context” (Howard para. 9). Current perceptions of academic writing reflect a very specific cultural perspective, and as such rewards a very specific type of cultural capital. “Thus, if students come from a home or social structure in which the cultural capital places a high value on their non-English, native language, the[sic] may be at an extreme disadvantage in many U.S. schools that frequently give considerable privilege to students whose primary language is English” (Howard para. 9). As such, in a college or university setting, implementing CRT has the potential to reduce the prevalence of cultural privilege, particularly in Composition classrooms. Combining the pedagogical approach of CRT with the ideological lens of Cultural Rhetoric can help create a more culturally-inclusive Composition pedagogy with respect to the content of the course and the strategies by which course content is delivered and assessed.

Because I contend that the prevailing composition pedagogy that reinforces conventional perceptions of academic writing (in process and/or product) is far too limiting to accommodate both the cultural landscape of today’s Composition classroom and the growing cross-cultural purposes for writing, I recommend the field embrace elements of culturally responsive pedagogy that account for the absences of racial and ethnic cultural capital. There’s also evidence justifying
its inclusion in Doctoral Programs in Composition and indeed any program that functions to prepare future educators. Yolanda Sealy-Ruiz, who teaches adult learners, argues, “More and more African American adults are entering the college classroom. Therefore, it is imperative that educators create a learning environment that embraces the cultural characteristics of their race, social status, and linguistic abilities” (59). College classrooms are increasingly diverse with each passing year, and what Sealy-Ruiz is speaking to is the responsibility of educators to maximize the learning environment of all of our students. She conducted a study using CRT, which she refers to as Culturally Relevant Curriculum, on a Freshman Composition course. “The curriculum used in this study encouraged the students to explore their culture, history, language, and unique status of being a Black woman in America in a way that had been ignored or marginalized for most of their educational lives” (59). Again, the curriculum reflects and values the students’ cultural capital, which in this case functions to counter dominant ideology and/or stereotypes associated with the students’ sense of self. After analyzing the results of the study, Sealy-Ruiz concluded “that using [CRT] with Black female adult students can enhance their learning experience. It gives them opportunity to deconstruct negative stereotypes about them and uncover praiseworthy aspects of their history and culture” (59).

Sealy-Ruiz’ conclusions serve to further validate similar studies that highlight ways in which culturally relevant content helps validate students’ sense of self and possibly contributes to students’ overall academic achievement. As Staci Perryman-Clark argues, “When applied to African American students, affirming SRTOL in the classroom can contribute to student success in that classroom” (471). In this context, CRT reflects the objectives of SRTOL in that both seek to empower historically marginalized voices. CRT strategies can help in fulfilling the spirit of SRTOL by encouraging the implementation of culture based course content and delivery, creating
a space for diverse languages to actually perform and not merely exist. Perryman-Clark references a study by Keith Gilyard and Elaine Richardson that sought to explore ways in which an “Afrocentric composition curriculum” (472) informed by SRTOL contributed to the academic success of African American students. In “Students’ Right to Possibility,” Gilyard and Richardson published a study wherein fifty-two students were introduced to African American rhetoric (AAR) during their writing course, and “Activities and assignments were developed which encouraged students to experiment with these Black discourse and rhetorical patterns” (Gilyard and Richardson 43). The study showcased the potential for AAR to complete academic tasks specifically when components of it were an object of study. Similar to ways in which Composition courses generally explore rhetorical traditions like simile, metaphor, personification, and juxtaposition, students in this study explored AAR traditions such as “rhythmic, dramatic, evocative language” and “proverbs, aphorisms, Biblical verses” (41) in their own writing, the published writings of others and in the media; they received “(a) instruction in academic writing/rhetorical practices incorporating rhetorical and discursive practices of African American vernacular English (AAVE) culture, [and] (b) examination of the African American literacy tradition through exploration of values, beliefs, and history as presented in African American texts and media…” (43). An analysis of the students’ essay scores found that “there was a positive correlation between the use of Black discourse and higher scoring essays. In other words, student texts were not down-graded because of the use of Black discourse features” (45), which also suggests that when approached as assets, students use of culture based rhetorical tools was no hindrance to successfully fulfilling academic tasks.

Thus, Gilyard and Richardson’s study illuminates the possibilities specifically for African American students not only to meet the demands of academic discourse, but also to excel through
a more thorough analysis of their own cultural capital and a critique of its manifestations in academic works and in society at large. The results further advocate the potential impact of CRT in Higher Education, specifically in Composition.

Understanding Critical Race Theory and Culturally Relevant/Responsive Teaching are critical to understanding some of the functions of the CIP I envision; however, because they emphasize race as their primary site for pedagogical revision, additional frames of reference are necessary. While I wholeheartedly agree that visiting race is necessary, envisioning culture with a broader lens would accommodate a broader range of students. It’s my contention that both linguistic minorities and mainstream students suffer from their limited rhetorical exposure. In addition, many of the approaches offered thus far speak to addressing teaching materials, which play a significant role in pedagogical practices. However, I am also concerned with broader institutional practices that create the learning outcomes that our teaching materials accommodate. Culturally sustaining pedagogies, which evolved from CRT, speaks to some of my concerns.

**Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies**

To reiterate, my vision of CIP fulfills a much stronger purpose beyond the scope of the college classroom; ideally, it would help students gain access to language practices necessary to communicate more effectively in an increasingly global society. Scholars Django Paris and H. Samy Alim address the necessity of exposing students to what they’ve coined Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, “which has as its explicit goal supporting multilingualism and multiculturalism in practice and perspective for students and teachers” (88). They propose the following:
To offer youth full access to power, then, we must understand that power is now based in part on one’s ability to communicate effectively to more than ‘standard’ English monolinguals/monoculturals, who are becoming a shrinking share of the U.S. population. As youth of color learn DAE [Dominant American English] (and other dominant skills and knowledge) and maintain their multiple ways of speaking and being, it is DAE monolinguals/monoculturals who may increasingly find themselves at a disadvantage. (89-90)

Defining “power” as access to opportunities in society, Paris and Alim recognize that language practices in America continuously evolve over, and they essentially highlight the disservice to mainstream students we perform when we miss opportunities to engage them to current language practices beyond DAE.

Paris and Alim further critique diversity pedagogies by suggesting that practitioners ought to employ culturally relevant strategies and seek to achieve culturally diverse outcomes, whereas the prevailing perceptions of CRT in general is that while it encourages students to participate in their global environments and embrace cultural diversity, it also maintains a strong regard for traditional academic discourse, or LWC. Django and Paris reference “asset pedagogies,” for example, which were established as a means of combating deficit pedagogies that “view the language, literacies, and cultural ways of being of many students and communities of color as deficiencies to be overcome if they are to learn the dominant language, literacy, and cultural ways of being demanded in schools” (87). Asset pedagogies were viewed favorably in response to the former, as practitioners were now encouraged to view students’ cultural frames of reference as valuable resources. However, as Django and Paris argued, asset and similar pedagogies like CRT did assist in helping students and faculty validate students’ culture to an extent, but maintained it
primary function of strengthening students acquisition of SAE (87-88). As Smitherman acknowledged, we live in a society that many students and teachers believe requires proficiency in SAE to be socio-economically successful (“English Teacher” 61). It is also true, though, that we live in a dynamic society that ideally reflects modern philosophies and diverse perspectives. Educational philosophies have shifted towards cultural inclusivity, which suggests that we critique and revise our existing pedagogies in ways that reflect current perceptions of written communication that no longer merely include one singular cultural perspective.

For instance, during the 1960’s and 70’s, educational theorists were implementing deficit pedagogies reflecting the false ideology that language differences equated to deficiencies; the further one strayed from LWC, the larger the deficit. “The dominant language, literacy, and cultural practices demanded by school fell in line with White, middle-class norms and positioned languages and literacies that fell outside those norms as less-than and unworthy of a place in U.S. schools and society” (Paris 93). CRT was developed in response to pedagogical practices that discounted the cultural capital of non-mainstream academic values. Established primarily by Education scholars for pre-service and in-service teachers in k-12 environments, CRT was a type of “resource pedagogy” that functioned to elevate value ascribed to one’s culture and use that as a pedagogical tool to further access and master DAE, also known as SAE and LWC (94). What’s significant here is that while shifts in attitudes towards non DAE evolved, CRT, like other pedagogies, continued to elevate the status of White middle-class dominant cultural norms, which is what scholars Paris and Alim, and more recently Ladson-Billings, have taken issue with in creating CSP. They believed that CRT made great strides in helping teachers value historically marginalized voices, yet they felt that the process of truly validating multicultural perspectives must include multicultural lenses in the application of standards that would allow and indeed
require “pluralist outcomes that are not centered on White, middle-class, monolingual, and multicultural norms of educational achievement” (Paris and Alim 95). They believe, as I do, that holding multicultural writers to monocultural standards is a practice that continues to forward the myth of DAE/LWC superiority, thus recommending what they call “culturally sustaining pedagogy,” which imagines a pedagogical framework non-reliant on the “White gaze,” a term they borrow from author Toni Morrison expressing the value system through which mainstream education, and indeed mainstream society in general, determines worth. They ask:

What would our pedagogies look like if this gaze weren’t the dominant one? What would liberating ourselves from this gaze and the educational expectations it forwards mean for our abilities to envision new forms of teaching and learning? What if, indeed, the goal of teaching and learning with youth of color was not ultimately to see how closely students could perform White middle-class norms but to explore, honor, extend, and, at times, problematize their heritage and community practices? (Paris and Alim, 86).

Published in the Spring 2014 edition of the Harvard Education Review, Paris and Alim and Ladson-Billings’ discussion of CSP aligns closely with my vision for a culturally inclusive Composition pedagogy. CSP builds upon the foundations of CRT, while adding the new dimensions of expanding perceptions of culture, as they acknowledge youth culture, Hip-Hop culture, gendered cultures, etc., and expanding perceptions of acceptable academic work. More importantly, though, CSP conceptualizes a paradigm shift wherein educational outcomes are revisited and critiqued, such that practitioners continue to evaluate how we teach while institutions reconsider what we’re teaching, whose histories we’re exploring, which perspectives we’re examining, and what manifestations of knowledge we’re validating. Furthermore, CSP requires
practitioners to critique what it is we require of our students in terms of whether or not those expectations are in sync with the evolving expectations of modern society.

Paris and Alim go on to argue the following:

…For too long, scholarship on “access” and “equity” has centered implicitly or explicitly around the question of how to get working-class students of color to speak and write more like middle-class White ones. …As Alim (2007a) argues, youth cultural and linguistic practices are of value in their own right and should be creatively foregrounded rather than merely viewed as resources to take students from where they are to some presumably “better” place, or ignored altogether. (Paris and Alim 87)

Paris and Alim’s “loving critique”50 of asset and resource pedagogies suggest that those pedagogies reflected a spirit of progress during their era, but we are now living in a society with vastly different cultural demographics. Hence, they encourage a pedagogy that sustains current and future cultural landscapes beyond service to DAE/LWC, as pedagogy ought to help all students better navigate their actual terrain, which scholars have noted is increasingly diverse. Appropriating elements of CSP into Composition pedagogy is critical, as our field has also employed progressive pedagogies, like Cultural Rhetoric and Ethnic Rhetoric (which will be discussed in the next section), that function to empower students and combat deficiency pedagogy while we have continued to use both to help students perform LWC; we continue to evaluate work based on LWC standards. Yet our prominent scholars have frequently and persuasively made the case that CR and ER represent legitimate discursive practices worthy of academic inquiry and social utility. So I am suggesting that scholars implement CIP, which draws on the principles from

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50 Paris and Alim use the term “loving critique” to describe the process of critiquing scholarship from a perspective of love and respect for the scholarship itself and the scholars who produced it.
CSP to use re-evaluate society’s diverse rhetorical expectations across broader contexts to allow for more accurate evaluation of student work based on a broader range of rhetorical systems. This pedagogical perspective reflects the needs of our modern multicultural society and its students.

As suggested, though, for teachers to actually employ a more culturally inclusive pedagogy, several other pieces of the academic puzzle need to be in place, including revised learning outcomes and assessment guidelines for Composition, and overall expanded perceptions in general about linguistic gatekeeping in Higher Education, as there has been a lengthy tradition of only allowing voices reflective of elitist-class values. Furthermore, purposes for and approaches to Composition must be revisited to ensure that practitioners move beyond surface level manifestations of cultural rhetoric and begin to consider how one’s world view shapes one’s approach to the composing process. And of course we have to articulate concrete strategies to implement CIP. Like Ladson-Billings’ discussion of Critical Race Theory suggests, the utility of CRT and CSP in Composition will “continue to generate scholarly papers and debate, and never penetrate the classrooms and daily experiences of students of color” (“Just What is Critical Race Theory” 33) unless there is a larger institutional investment in cultivating culturally-inclusive Composition pedagogy.

By encouraging practitioners to expand their perceptions of academic discourse to include rigorous examination of rhetoric in society across cultural contexts (social, political, economic, etc), we can continue the work of scholars who advocate for a more inclusive model of academic discourse. CRT and CSP speak to how we explore and evaluate said content in the classroom, while Cultural Rhetoric and by extension Ethnic rhetoric speak to the course content we explore.
Understanding Cultural Rhetoric

Cultural rhetoric (CR) offers access to an expansive body of rhetorical ideologies extending beyond classical rhetoric; CR accounts for multiple components of one’s culture, including but not limited to race, gender, age, religion, and economic status. In this context, culture is defined as common characteristics practices, performances, beliefs, worldviews, and/or value systems with which individuals and groups identify. It most societies, there are dominant cultures whose values systems and behaviors are promoted and validated. And then there are subcultures whose cultural identities are questioned, contested, debased, policed, silenced, or merely tolerated. However, one’s worldview surely influences the development of one’s authentic voice. Whereas traditionally Composition students have been taught to mimic a Eurocentric elitist mainstream voice, whether they identify with it or not, I am suggesting that communities of readers and writers would benefit from access to voices that more accurately reflect their own lived experiences, values, and choices as writers, and not just the version to which academic writers have had to conform.

Juanita Comfort, for instance, discusses what she and other colleagues view as the need to “help reconstruct some of the academy’s traditionally marginalizing discourses so that they would bring non-White and nonmale experiences and standpoints… to a more central location within [the] discipline – in effect, as the saying goes, ‘using the Master’s tools to dismantle the Master’s house’” (92). Exploring Cultural Rhetoric helps fill that need, not only as it applies to gender and race, but also as it counters hegemonic discourses beyond the White male gaze. Discourse normativity tends to reinforce a perspective that, amongst other characteristics, is distinctly heterosexual and middle to upper-class, celebrating the values of both, marginalizing the values of “others.” Queer theorists Jonathan Alexander and David Wallace speak to that perception, suggesting that representations of the general term “culture” in Composition scholarship tend to
exclude conversations surrounding human sexuality and submit that the potential for “transformative power” in Composition can be manifested through critical engagement with queer theory and “other axes of identity, such as gender, race, class, physical and mental/mental/emotional abledness, spirituality, and age” (W301). Extending beyond W.E.B DuBois double consciousness, Cultural Rhetorics engage multiple consciousness to represent a broader range of social realities experienced by our students and faculty.

Because representations of one’s culture are vast, one must conceive of Cultural rhetorics as dynamic, expansive, and inclusive; it is comprised of shared communicative practices specific to distinctive populations. Although some emphasize subcultures and/or minority groups when discussing Cultural Rhetorics, including mainstream culture within the discussion of Cultural Rhetorics is necessary as a strategic effort to challenge the space SAE occupies with respect to discourse hierarchies. Inclusive pedagogies embrace diversity while resisting the practice of elevating one set of ideals over another. Furthermore, cultural rhetoric accurately describes SAE, since SAE embodies specific goals, practices, and values unique to specific populations and contexts. In addition to mainstream SAE, which can be conceived of as embodying the Eurocentric patriarchal rhetoric of which Comfort speaks, scholars have offered critical analysis of several marginalized rhetorics, each representing a specific sphere of Cultural Rhetorics. Each sphere of CR illuminates a set of ideologies informing one’s purpose and strategies within the variety of rhetorical spaces. To be clear, one of the most critical aspects of CR that distinguishes it from traditional Eurocentric perceptions of rhetoric is the positioning of one’s worldview; CR acknowledges that worldviews are not universal and functions to dismantle practices that operate under that assumption. To that end, scholarship surrounding CR offers insights into a variety of worldviews and rhetorical practices associated with them.
Though composing volumes of entire books would be necessary to fully examine each type of cultural rhetoric, for the purposes of this project, I will explore components of African American Rhetoric as it is has been heavily theorized and represents one of the cultural rhetorics most relevant to my consciousness as an African American. Note, however, that even within that cultural designation, my discourse practices and purposes for communication are also shaped by my economic status, my spiritual affiliations, and my gender. As for now, we’ll begin with an examination of African American Rhetoric, which exists within the realm of Ethnic rhetoric.

Note that one’s culture is informed by one’s ethnicity, one’s gender, and one’s class, amongst other criteria; and CR is the umbrella under which these designations exist. Though CR is sometimes used interchangeably with ER, the two represent similar yet distinctive attributes. However, in much of the scholarship within the last ten years, the term Cultural Rhetoric appears more frequently than Ethnic Rhetoric, as scholars are realizing that language rights debates extend beyond issues of race and ethnicity. Yet, there is much to be gained through the examination of ethnic rhetoric, since to a large degree one’s ethnicity can be directly linked to one’s cultural experiences; the status of African Americans in America, for example, reflects a specific historical positioning inclusive of various socio-economic realities than cannot be discussed in isolation. Descendants of formerly enslaved individuals who experience multiple forms of discrimination, including housing, education, and employment, would have endured unique challenges directly related to their ethnicity. Thus, though ethnic rhetorics do not tell the entire story of rhetorical traditions, it significantly contributes to the larger conversation and represents a key component of my conception of a culturally inclusive Composition pedagogy.
Exploring of Ethnic Rhetoric

To help instructors better understand and embrace the linguistic diversity of their students, scholars have contributed to a body of research known as Ethnic Rhetoric (ER), which encompasses the communicative practices influenced by a particular ethnic group, inclusive of specific grammatical constructions, vocabulary, rhetorical devices, and rhetorical purposes. In addition to one’s rhetorical choices, practitioners must also consider one’s rhetorical inspiration and the worldview that informed it. Across the globe, students, politicians, lawyers, and activists already employ a variety of ethnic rhetorics to achieve wide ranging goals, from political influence to social justice. As such, ethnic rhetoric is a key component of culturally inclusive pedagogy (CIP), as CIP celebrates the rhetorical differences that students bring with them, while also locating strategies for maximizing their prior knowledge. CIP also engages students in traditional academic discourse, as it is the “language of wider communication,” but it resists hierarchies and functions to help students explore rhetorical value across a variety of rhetorical expressions. In CIP’s efforts to cultivate linguistic pluralism, it employs ER, which illustrates the vast number of rhetorical ideologies and devices that exist beyond what has been traditionally accepted as academic discourse and reflects “the rhetorical strategies historically and currently used by at least the major ethnic groups of this country” (Mejía 146). With respect to the purposes of this chapter, African American rhetoric (AAR) will be used to exemplify a specific type of ethnic rhetoric, though there are many more, including Asian American rhetoric, Latinx rhetoric, and Native American rhetorics, to name a few.

To be clear, African American rhetoric resists classifications in the traditional sense. AAR is derived from an African cultural consciousness that emphasizes spiritual connectedness, communalism, and moral character. In the essay “The Spiritual Essence of African American
Rhetaoric,” Adisa Alkebulan contends that “At the core of African American rhetoric is the spiritual force that places its speakers on a humanistic mission for justice, freedom, balance, and harmony.” Rhetorical performances enacted from this perspective attempt to move audiences to action through the use of various rhetorical devices steeped in a framework of Afrocentricity. According to Molefi Kete Asante, Afrocentricity refers to a lens and or approach to knowledge, culture, values and other phenomena from an African ideological perspective (Facing South 2). As it applies to rhetoric, Afrocentricity challenges scholars to consider the vast rhetorical ancestry existing beyond the Eurocentric iterations that many have come to accept as universal and singular. To the contrary, African rhetorical traditions have unique foundations informed by an African worldview that values spiritual connectedness, communalism, orality, and morality (Asante, Jackson, Alkebulan). As such, key attributes of AAR must be understood through that lens, beginning with one of its most critical components: *Nommo*.

Nommo represents “the generative and productive power of the spoken word, in African discourse and in specific instances of resistance to the dominant ideology” (Asante “Transcultural Realities and Different Ways of Knowing” 80). Also defined as “the magical power of words to cause change” (Atkinson), *nommo* embodies a spirit of activism, and functions to promote a sense of justice or balance in society, also known as *Maat* (Asante Facing South to Africa 22). Because the traditional African discourse most influential to African American communication was primarily and intentionally oral, much of its rhetorical value stems from oral characteristics. Asante suggests that “in the oratorical experience, much as in the jazz experience, the African person finds the ability to construct a discourse reality capable of calling forth nommo” (5). Within this

53 These four distinctions do not reflect the entirety of the African worldview; instead, they function as key components of that worldview as it applies to the current discussion of African rhetorical traditions.
paradigm, nommo is recognized as a substantial objective of African communication that inspires specific rhetorical practices, which is why examining surface features of AAR without consideration of their cultural context would limit one’s grasp of their function and impact.

Repetition, for example, is a rhetorical tool that has been strategically employed by African American writers and rhetors, such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr (“I Have A Dream”) and Maya Angelou (“Still I Rise”). Though typically appealing to ethos and pathos, in AAR, repetition includes the Classical Greek rhetorical patterns of anaphora, antithesis, parallelism, and chiasmus (Ampadu 138), with the objective of conjuring the power of nommo. Whereas classical rhetoric presents multiple examples and purposes for repetition, including for “emphasis, clarity, amplification, or emotional effect” (“figures of repetition”), within AAR, repetition is driven primarily by nommo. For instance, in Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, numerous examples of repetition function to counter hegemony through “word power.” For instance, consider the second paragraph of the speech:

Five score years ago a great American in whose symbolic shadow we stand today signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree is a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity. But 100 years later the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later the life of the Negro is still badly crippled by manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land. So we’ve come here today to dramatize a shameful condition. (King 1). [My emphasis on the repetition.]
In the above example, one must note the objective of the speech itself. Dr. King is speaking about injustices suffered by African Americans in America; the speech itself counters widespread dominant practices of racism and segregation in American society. The use of repetition in this context, then, should be viewed within the framework of promoting social justice. “One hundred years later” emphasizes the amount of time that passed since the Emancipation Proclamation freed enslaved African Americans, but the amount of time precedes the description of the condition of the “Negro” in America as “not free,” “badly crippled,” “on a lonely island of poverty,” and “languished […] in exile in his own land.” King uses powerful imagery to detail the distressing experiences of African Americans in efforts to promote change and restore order, in other words to appeal to Nommo and Maat.

Maya Angelou uses repetition similarly in her poem “Still I Rise,” particularly in the last two stanzas:

Out of the huts of history’s shame
_I rise_
Up from a past that’s rooted in pain
_I rise_
I’m a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
_I rise_
Into a daybreak that’s wondrously clear
_I rise_
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

\textit{I rise}

\textit{I rise}

\textit{I rise.}

[My emphasis on the repetition.]

In the first stanza included above, the repetition of “I rise” juxtaposes the horrific conditions from which Angelou and African Americans in general have risen. Referencing slavery, Angelou uses the power of her words to counter narratives of Black despair. She specifically and strategically emphasizes language that represents the process by which one triumphs over hardship. To “rise” is to get up when one is down, and in this poem Angelou perpetually rises again and again and again, particularly in the last stanza where “rise” is then connected to overcoming the hardship, literally being “the dream and the hope of the slave.”

Repetition isn’t the only rhetorical device of AAR; several scholars have identified rhetorical components that extend from a fundamental spirit of \textit{Maat} and \textit{Nommo}. Alkebulan suggests that “Sermonizing, signifyin’, playin’ the dozens, stylin’ out, soundin’, lyricism, improvisation, indirection, repetition, poetry, spirituals, history, style, culture, rhythm, and the very creation of the language of Africans in the United States (commonly called Ebonics) are all significant aspects of language and African American rhetoric that are firmly rooted in the African oral tradition.” Of note are the ways in which the rhetorical distinctions reflect performative artifacts, as rhetoric lends itself to both oral and written discourse. However, Ronald Jackson has isolated the characteristics most applicable to writing to include, “rhythm, soundin’, stylin’, improvisation, storytelling, lyrical code, image making, and call and response…” (Gilyard
“Introduction: Aspects of African American Rhetoric as a Field” 17). Each component embodies a specific cultural objective and can have multiple manifestations. The objective is key, though, because a critical component of AAR is the way in which it diverges from Eurocentric rhetoric, not only in form and content, but also in purpose. One must not assume that communicative objectives are culturally universal, nor that they should be.

Thus, to contextualize within the realm of the Composition classroom, how might AAR function? The answer is not a simple one; one must consider the specific learning objectives of the course and the student demographics. However, if at a foundational level the main objective of the course is to help strengthen student writers while empowering them to successfully navigate through the vast rhetorical terrain they are likely to encounter as citizens within and outside of the academy, then students would benefit from exploring ways in which African Americans have effectively employed AAR, referencing both historical and contemporary examples. For instance, most students are familiar with Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, but few have examined its rhetorical components or ancestry. Most agree that the speech was/is powerful without having knowledge of nommo; without having identified the rhetorical components of sermonizing, image making, or repetition as specific to AAR in their situational context; without understanding the purpose of Maat and its relation to social justice and spiritual harmony. As practitioners are preparing students for conscious and conscientious citizenry, introducing students to rhetorical principles beyond traditional Eurocentric models would provide students with more insight into world views beyond their own while helping them create more powerful writing in the process.

Towards that end, practitioners could begin by facilitating an exploration of what Jackson identified above as the eight features of African American rhetoric by examining works of authors and orators who have employed them; they may even look to their own narratives for examples if
applicable. A critical component of such an exercise would be the acknowledgement of ways in which cultural perspectives and ideologies shape perceptions of rhetorical value, and that acknowledgement is just as crucial for the instructor as it is for the students. Introducing components of ER into the Composition curriculum spawns the rigorous examination of “other” rhetorics and potentially improves the experiences and academic success of all students, while also broadening their understanding of rhetoric and rhetorical tools.

Incorporating ER into a Composition curriculum is not only valuable in terms of maximizing students’ rhetorical knowledge, but also in terms of countering a culture of White Supremacy. Whether consciously or otherwise, the ways many Composition instructors teach academic writing prevents it from accommodating the needs of minority populations by solely emphasizing Euro-centric models of academic discourse as the only possible means of accomplishing academic tasks. In fact, Lamos argues that historically, academic institutions “tended to stress the supposed superiority of white mainstream standard language and literacy practices, a stress that served to reify rather than contest or remedy the racist dynamics of power and privilege operating within predominantly-white institutions” (“Language, Literacy, and the Institutional Dynamics” 48). While Compositionists should concede that there is much value in these traditional models in terms of utility, they should also consider the damage inherent in adopting these models at the exclusion of all other potential options. Limiting discussions on rhetorical devices to Euro-centric models gives the false impression that other models either do not exist or are inferior to the mainstream examples. Furthermore, the lack of access to additional models limits students’ rhetorical tools and, by extension, students’ capacity to fulfill writing tasks associated with principles of Nommo, for instance. Exploring additional models would not only assist in diminishing culturally-elitist ideologies as they relate to Composition, but also contribute
to a more culturally-inclusive Composition pedagogy in terms of purpose, form, and content with respect to why we are teaching, what we are teaching, and how we are teaching.

**Critical Distinctions Among Culturally Relevant Pedagogies, Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies, and Culturally Inclusive Pedagogies.**

Admittedly, the current chapter explores pedagogical perspectives that, while distinct, share common objectives to varying degrees. Those varying degrees are significant though, as they represent evolving consciousness about what is necessary in creating equitable pedagogy. All of the scholarship examined offers insights into pathways towards improving the academic experiences of ethnic minorities. Culturally Relevant Pedagogies and Culturally Responsive Teaching specifically emphasize ways in which racial achievement gaps underscore the need for pedagogical frameworks incorporating aspects of students’ racialized identities. Geneva Gay actually acknowledges that Culturally Responsive Teaching has also been referred to as Culturally Relevant Pedagogies, amongst other similar designations. However, they were discussed separately to highlight the main components as originally detailed by Gloria Ladson-Billings under Culturally Relevant Pedagogies, and then further expanded upon by Geneva Gay as Culturally Responsive Teaching.

H. Samy Alim and Django Paris provided a “loving critique” of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Culturally Relevant Teaching, essentially by seeking to expand the scope of both. Their iteration of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies, also endorsed by Gloria Ladson-Billings, explores culture beyond racialized lenses to include gender, class, religion, generation, etc. CSP also advocates for a dismantling of the broader academic spaces dominated by Euro-centric
ideology, including assessment strategies, course objectives, and the general acceptance of DAE as the most valuable timeless social currency.

Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy includes the objectives of the aforementioned pedagogical perspectives. In addition, it is specific in its theoretical approach of applying a lens of Critical Race Theory, which highlights components of American society dominated by racist ideologies that have been reinforced to the extent that they have been considered normal. Critical consciousness is a necessary component of CIP because inclusion cannot function merely in practice; scholars cannot implement new approaches to readings and assessment without identifying the inherent racism and lingering oppression present in conventional pedagogy. Our goal in creating a more culturally inclusive composition pedagogy extend beyond creating better writers to creating more just societies. This is also where components of Cultural Rhetoric, specifically African American Rhetoric, influence CIP, as the principles of Nommo and Ma’at function collectively to use the power of the word to create balance and morality in society.

**In Summary**

As we’ve highlighted, conversations surrounding the implementation of culturally inclusive pedagogy have been circulating for several decades and progress has been made. Many scholars and practitioners are implementing pedagogies that help validate students’ language by introducing more diverse course content and allowing a space for multiple literacies to co-exist in the classroom alongside the SAE/LWC/DAE. Independently, Ethnic rhetoric, Cultural Rhetoric, Culturally Responsive Teaching, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, and Critical Race Theory each provide the theoretical foundations for the Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy that I believe can contribute to the existing strides taken towards evolving perceptions of academic writing from a
multicultural perspective. It is my contention that components of each combined can collectively create the CIP I envision that validates historically marginalized voices and works towards dismantling oppressive pedagogical practices.

However, other movements in Composition have functioned to highlight how little of an impact these conversations have had at the institutional level. Assessment, for example, functions to provide a narrative describing the degree to which students showcase their mastery of specific skillsets. In Composition, most of the skills revolve around surface level manifestations of grammatical conventions, emphasis on thesis development and research methods, wherein “support” is discussed in limiting terms, which are further reinforced in our writing handbooks. However, “other” ways of knowing and performing have generally been excluded from assessment discussions with few exceptions. For instance, Karmen Kynard speaks to the dangers of evaluating students using racially biased assessment tools (“Writing while Black: The Colour Line, Black Discourses and Assessment in the Institutionalization of Writing Instruction”). In addition, Asao B. Inoue’s text Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future highlights the need for a critique of assessment strategies that treat race as either invisible or irrelevant. It must be noted, though, that assessment critiques also apply to larger cultural identities, as one’s communicative strategies are informed by one’s world view as it is shaped by various aspects of one’s culture, as discussed earlier in understanding Cultural Rhetorics. By and large, though, students who use nonstandard dialects, grammar, and rhetoric are penalized, reinforcing the need to ascribe to the conventions of the White male heteronormative gaze. Thus, although our classes may include diverse content and teaching methods, many of our Composition courses still maintain the same overall objective of helping students become more fluent in LWC/DAE without providing adequate space for exploring “other” rhetorical options.
According to Critical Race Theory scholars, this is a common practice and requires a counter narrative; Critical Race Theorists in Composition, or Comp Crits, need to offer an “other” perspective of Composition pedagogy that unmask the racist ideology upon which Composition was built and, to a large degree, is currently being reinforced. I hope to illustrate that the culturally inclusive pedagogy I’ve been advocating will speak to this counter-narrative and create a space for scholars to consider societies’ evolving opportunities, purposes, and expectations for writers; revise course objectives such that they acknowledge multicultural audiences and contexts for writing; and, finally, apply a critical lens to the ever-expanding body of cultural rhetoric, locating ways in which specific components of each contribute to students’ ability to meet their academic and social expectations.

To contribute to this objective, I’m introducing a sample course design with justification of assignments based on the principles discussed in this chapter. By critically analyzing reading and writing assignments, I hope to illustrate possible steps practitioners can take towards enacting CIP. I do realize that additional work is necessary to make CIP fully realized, including addressing assessment practices, teacher preparation, and textbook ideology, as we’ve demonstrated throughout this chapter and will be further discussed in Chapter Five. Yet, as history has shown us, small steps over time can create larger long term strides, and I believe that addressing course design will create a small step that will contribute to a larger long term impact.
### Acronym Chart for Chapter 3

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAR</td>
<td>African American Rhetoric</td>
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<td>AAVE</td>
<td>African American Vernacular English</td>
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<td>BW</td>
<td>Basic Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIP</td>
<td>Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy</td>
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<td>CR</td>
<td>Cultural Rhetoric</td>
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<td>CRiTS</td>
<td>Critical Race Theorists</td>
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<td>Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy</td>
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<td>DAE</td>
<td>Dominant American English</td>
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<td>Ethnic Rhetoric</td>
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<td>FYC</td>
<td>First Year Composition</td>
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<td>LWC</td>
<td>Language of Wider Communication</td>
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<td>MSI</td>
<td>Minority Serving Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWI</td>
<td>Predominantly White Institution</td>
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<td>SAE</td>
<td>Standardized American English</td>
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<td>SRTOL</td>
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I’ve have been telling this counter-narrative through an undocumented voice; it has no papers, no sense of belonging here, but it is intent on staying. I am reminded of my early experiences as a writer, wherein I was encouraged to disown the familiar voice of my nurture, my community, and my family, in order to succeed in Higher Education. I am reminded of how I encouraged others to adopt a so-called racial and gender neutral voice that reflects traditional Euro-centric values. And I am reminded of the epiphanies that rendered those notions hegemonic and unjust, influencing me to contribute to what many have argued are necessary reformations in Composition. Some stories are didactic, and I’ve come to realize that mine is no different; through my journey, there is a lesson to be learned. My experiences have highlighted some of the flaws of our Composition courses, but I don’t want to merely lament; instead, I’d like to contribute to the solutions. In previous chapters, I’ve introduced theoretical analyses and examples of some of the pedagogies designed to broaden student access to cultural rhetorics, along with potential obstacles to implementation of what I see as important components of Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy (CIP). What I lay on the altar here is a discussion of the key components of CIP and an in-depth analysis of how each aspect of the CIP I introduce will collectively generate the kind of transformative and impactful Composition pedagogy I envision. I will then explore ways in which the principles of CIP can, and in fact must, be implemented in each key component of the course from course objectives, to learning outcomes, to assignments, to grading and assessment.

The Components of Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy

Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy represents a framework conceived of to expand current perceptions of Composition in ways that advocate academic equity and rhetorical diversity. Inspired by my own personal academic journey, CIP draws from existing scholarship: Cultural Rhetorics, Critical
Race Theory, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy. It is also highly influenced by the Students’ Rights to Their Own Language resolution and subsequent reaffirmations. And, of course, it is influenced by the countless scholars who have advocated for more equitable pedagogical practices for decades. I’ve spent the greater portion of the previous chapters exploring said scholarship; thus, here is where I’ll illustrate my vision of how to evolve the aforementioned theoretical perspectives. It is my contention that existing pedagogical perspectives surrounding equity in Composition function well to improve upon historic practices of ignoring and/or punishing cultural rhetorics and cultural diversity in the Composition classroom. Yet the objectives have always been to ensure that students continue to honor principles of Standardized Academic English (SAE) as the best strategy for composing academic and social documents. However, the CIP I envision challenges practitioners to question the space SAE occupies in Higher Education and to explore ways in which cultural rhetorics can accomplish many of the same academic and social tasks students complete. Furthermore, CIP also encourages scholars to view SAE as an example of a specific Cultural Rhetoric and to acknowledge that SAE is a product a specific social hierarchy that, intentionally or otherwise, reinforces dangerous racist, classist, sexist, heteronormative, and ablest values. To that end, Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy seeks to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Articulate **Culturally Inclusive Course Objectives** and **Learning Outcomes** that address a broader range of rhetorical purposes and strategies of meeting writing objectives reflecting evolving socio-cultural rhetorical trends in addition to conventional purposes for writing

2. Introduce students to **Culturally Inclusive Learning Materials** that showcase culturally diverse purposes for writing and model examples of cultural rhetorics in practice.
3. Introduce students to more **Culturally Inclusive Writing Assignments** representing the vast purposes for writing within Academia and across the vast social terrain students navigate. Within this space, students should be introduced to a broader range of rhetorical contexts reflective of communicative purposes across cultural landscapes.

4. Articulate more **Culturally Inclusive and Equitable Assessment Practices** that consider diverse rhetorical strategies of meeting assignment objectives and that refrain from reinforcing damaging racist, classist, sexist, heteronormative, and ablest rhetorical hierarchies. Let’s consider each component individually to better gauge the significance of each.

**I. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Dismantling and Countering the Master Narrative

According to Critical Race Theorists (CRiTs), “Educational inequality offers one measure to gauge the persistent and pervasive problem of racial inequality. The persistent problem of segregation in schools, the inequitable funding of schools in poor neighborhoods, gaps in achievement, and the further entrenchment of a Eurocentric curriculum are examples of racial inequality in education” (Zamudio, Russell, Rios and Bridgeman 14). This statement reinforces previous accounts by scholars of the negative impact of the lack of diversity in many First-Year Composition curricula. One of the objectives of implementing a culturally inclusive pedagogy is the pursuit of social justice, which includes addressing and eliminating oppressive systems in each component of our curricula. However, CRiTs have described most educational curricula as Eurocentric, functioning to reinforce Eurocentric ideals, representing what they call the “Master Narrative.” They argue, “Connected with national identity development, scholars have long
identified the role of curriculum as a tool for enforcing cultural assimilation (Bennett 2001; Yosso 2002), a goal most European American educators find desirable (Weiner 2000)” (Zamudio et al 110). Discussed primarily in the context of k-12 education, CRiTs have argued that school curricula functions to reinforce a specific worldview that reinforces White Supremacist ideals, thus further promoting the Master Narrative or Master Script.

Within the context of First-Year Composition, the Master Script is reflected in notions of academic discourse, course content, assessment practices, and virtually every component of the course. In essence, the components of courses that reinforce Eurocentric ideals are reflections of the Master script in that they seldom allow space for “other” voices to count as valid or legitimate, establishing the necessity for position statements like “Students’ Right to Their Own Language.” Moreover, course standards and values typically have been seen as fixed entities that reflect best practices, as though a critical analysis of various culturally informed rhetorical practices was performed and everyone agreed that Eurocentric values were best. Though current educational practices and standards are valuable, it must be noted that they do not represent the totality of all legitimate knowledge. Problematic absences of “other” cultural insights into Composition pedagogy underscore the significance of revisiting Composition praxis.

In dismantling the master narrative of the Composition class, one must consider its various oppressive components that CIP seeks to liberate. This analysis requires an understanding of who or what contributed historically to said oppression and what can remedy the situation. What complicates this dismantling are its lengthy traditions and vast conditioning; many students, teachers, and institutions in America consume the narrative of White superiority, either

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56 The tradition of reinforcing Eurocentric ideals mainly reflects the discussions of Predominantly White Colleges and Universities. There is research that suggests experiences are vastly different at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic serving institutions, and tribal colleges (Kynard and Eddy W27).
consciously or subconsciously, without examining manifestations of it as anything other than the norm. Education scholars Django Paris and H. Samy Alim address this widespread practice while articulating their perception of culturally sustaining pedagogy, which functions to counter said practices by “[allowing] us to see the fallacy of measuring ourselves and the young people in our communities solely against the White middle-class norms of knowing and being that continue to dominate notions of educational achievement” (86). Even as colleges and universities increase their cultural makeup, our pedagogies have come under fire for maintaining traditional Eurocentric values. In Carmen Kynard’s account of working at “THE MOST [her emphasis] diverse university in the country [diverse] certainly does not accurately describe the faculty, pedagogies, ideologies, or mission of this university” (Kynard and Eddy W32). Kynard speaks to the notion that diversity exists in terms of the ethnic makeup of the university, but it does not reflect the overall campus culture or the Composition classroom.

Composition scholars have responded to the field’s reinforcement of Eurocentric ideals through a number of countermeasures, such as emphasizing the significance of cultural rhetorics and creating resolutions to affirm students’ language rights. However, more work needs to be done to actually investigate the role of racism in establishing and reinforcing past and current perceptions of Standardized Academic English (SAE) and our teaching of it in the college classroom. Composition scholar Catherine Prendergast argues that “the relationship of race to the composing process is seldom fully explored” (36) and further notes that “Discussions of racism in composition are confined to determining how to handle individual, aberrant flare-ups in the classroom without exploring racism as institutional, normal, and pervasive” (36), which relates to one of the premises of Critical Race Theory that suggests that racism is a normal part of American life. To a large extent, composition scholars have spent a great deal of time sharing studies and
philosophies of how to acculturate minority students into the college classroom and college culture, generally viewing those spaces as normal and fixed entities, while emphasizing the onus on teachers and students to meet the demands of the curriculum and its learning outcomes. However, Prendergast views the classroom itself as a site of contestation (Powell) and recommends that scholars place more emphasis on examining the racist ideologies in the social construction of the Composition classroom. This is where the dismantling begins.

As explained in Chapter Two, the current iteration of the WPA Outcomes statement does allow for more cultural diversity in course outcomes; however, the statement does not necessarily require practitioners to implement culturally inclusive curricula or assessment strategies. The statement more or less compromises, such that if practitioners choose to implement more culturally progressive pedagogical practices they can; but those who are fine with reinforcing conventional trends can continue to do so. Because the Outcomes Statement offers that flexibility, its commitment to diversity falls short of truly honoring linguistic and cultural pluralism. For Composition instruction to evolve in ways that meet the needs of modern students, writing program administrators and professional organizations in our field have to establish stronger commitments to diversity that oblige practitioners to incorporate culturally inclusive content and assessment strategies.

In order for the WPA OS to reflect Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy, it must explicitly function to acknowledge and endorse culturally diverse composing objectives and rhetorical products. For instance, under Rhetorical Knowledge, the first two bullets should be revised as follows, with the italics representing the suggested revisions:

- Learn and use key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts from a variety of cultural perspectives
• Gain experience reading and composing in several genres across a variety of cultural landscapes to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers’ and writers’ practices and purposes

Under Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing, the second bullet should be revised as follows:

- Read a diverse range of texts representing wide ranging cultural perspectives and rhetorical traditions, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements, and to how these features function for different audiences and situations

Under Knowledge of Conventions, the second and third bullet should be revised as follows:

- Develop knowledge of linguistic structures across a variety of cultural landscapes, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling, through practice in composing and revising

- Understand why genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, language, grammar and mechanics vary across cultural contexts

My primary objective in revising Outcomes Statements is to ensure that culturally diverse rhetorical practices are invited into the Composition classroom on a large scale with intent, rather than toleration; and as a requirement, rather than an option. Scholars have justified and reaffirmed the implementation of CIP in various iterations for decades, with the objective of implementing more just pedagogical strategies on a large scale, not a case by case basis. That is why it cannot be an option; CIP is a necessity and the OS must reflect that reality.
II. CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE LEARNING MATERIALS

My own experiences spanning 18 years as an instructor in Higher Education across state colleges, private colleges, two-year colleges, and for-profit institutions reflects both commonalities and anomalies in classroom instruction. At some institutions, instructors are able to exercise freedom in their textbook choices, reading selections, writing assignments, and/or exams, while others are more prescriptive, with pre-selected textbooks, syllabi, and assignments. Ohio University, for example, provides a list of nine recommended readers and along with statements explaining what writing courses should provide in terms of reading content (Ohio University), while Florida State requires its TAs to use two specific texts, “strongly encourages” a third, and firmly states “YOU MAY NOT REQUIRE ADDITIONAL OR ALTERNATE TEXTBOOKS [their emphasis]” (Florida State University). The seemingly menial task of selecting or appropriating a textbook into FYC is a crucial component of CIP in that, as we’ve acknowledged, current FYC course objectives typically do not explicitly require familiarity with cultural rhetorics. By extension, assignments designed to help students meet course objectives tend to reflect the same degree of monoculturalism and monolingualism as the course objectives themselves. Thus, to reflect the mission of culturally sustaining pedagogy and culturally responsive pedagogy, many scholars recommend incorporating a range of course materials that expand on current notions of rhetoric in Composition. That is why the second component of CIP proclaims that FYC must “Introduce students to Culturally Inclusive Learning Materials that showcase culturally diverse purposes for writing and model examples of cultural rhetorics in practice.”

Some scholars and practitioners already practice this component of CIP. For instance, in her discussion of comparative rhetoric, which is “the cross-cultural study of rhetorical traditions
as they exist or have existed in different societies around the world,” (Kennedy 1), President of the SUNY Council on Writing Arabella Lyon advocates broadening the scope of Composition scholarship to evaluate Eurocentric rhetorical traditions in addition to rhetorical traditions of other cultures. Lyon speaks specifically to the use of Chinese rhetoric, as she argues that our societies are increasingly global, and it behooves us to better understand the complexities of various cultures’ rhetoric. She argues:

In sum, as we situate our scholarship and its relationship to particular cultures and eras – as we approach global education – the purposes, limits, and outcomes of our writing should be more clearly articulated and connected with its effects. In addition to including the theories of other cultures, composition and rhetoric scholars need to evaluate their own communicative theories and the colonizing reach of their research. (Lyon 352)

Lyon emphasizes the idea that communication extends beyond singular perspectives, and, to be successful, one must interact with multiple perspectives to account for the various purposes of communicating and the multiple peoples engaging in communicative practices.

Similar arguments have been made by scholars on a national level, acknowledging the multiple rhetorics of American discourse that extend beyond euro-centric iterations (Richardson, Smitherman, Gilyard). As stated in earlier chapters, the problem with adopting traditional Composition readers, which primarily showcase canonized authors through a prescribed lens, is that they leave very little room for “other” ways of reading texts. Bruce Horner highlights some of these problems is his depiction of textbooks as monocultural, which I mentioned earlier. Beyond the language debate, culturally, many of these texts reinforce the hierarchy of what the master narrative validates: cultural hegemony, heteronormativity, patriarchy, and ethnocentrism to name a few. As illustrated in Chapter 3, many textbooks have not quite evolved in terms of cultural
inclusivity. In order to embody the characteristics of CSP, scholars and instructors would have to demonstrate their commitment to introducing students to cross cultural rhetorical traditions, not only in their textbook selections, but in their course content in general.

Many scholars have taken steps to diversify Composition in terms of decentralizing the position of Eurocentric rhetoric. In fact, in a study referenced in Chapter 3, Keith Gilyard and Elaine Richardson created a course featuring “Afrocentric topics” (Gilyard and Richardson 39) wherein a “fundamental aspect of the course was introducing students to Black discourse patterns from an analytical point of view” (43). Students were also introduced to African American rhetorical devices in ways that mirror discussions on literary and rhetorical devices in general, and those lessons functioned to further legitimize marginalized perceptions of AAR in formal academic settings.

Similarly, Janet Bean published an article detailing a First-Year writing curriculum she designed and implemented that “makes African-American Vernacular English a central subject of study and focuses on how language is used in various discourse communities” (Bean 244). Bean’s rationale is that First-Year Composition (FYC) presents a perfect opportunity for students to learn the politics associated with communicating across discourse communities. Empathizing with her African American students who discuss their frustrations towards teachers who they feel impose linguistic standards upon them at the expense of their “Black English,” (245) which Bean refers to as “vernacular English,” Bean argues, “If [English instructors] spent as much time explaining how dialects work as we do explaining how commas work, then our students might not feel like their education is trying to force vernacular English out of their lives” (246). In response, Bean created a curriculum that examines “how language functions in discourse communities and how these communities shape social identity” (243). Her course required Eleanor Kutz’s textbook Exploring
Literacy, which “explores the literacy practices of various communities” (Backcover) and involved students researching discourse practices of African Americans from a linguistic perspective. Students interviewed members of their community, their families, and others who employed both vernacular English and Standard English, seeking an understanding of the benefits of both across a wide range of social contexts. Bean suggests that these exercises provided African American students with a more keen awareness of the value of their vernacular English and Standardized English.

Recognizing the potential benefits of placing students’ language front and center in a composition curriculum, in 2008 Stacy Perryman Clark designed a FYC course emphasizing the components and utility of “Ebonics based linguistic and rhetorical practices” (Perryman Clark 474). She selected readings reflecting and discussing Ebonics based discourse features, including work from literacy scholars Keith Gilyard and Geneva Smitherman, content found in “online an digital spaces,” (474) and articles in academic journals. She also required students to complete “four major writing assignments that focused on […] race and ethnicity” (474). Perryman-Clark discussed her course design as a way of implementing the spirit of the “Students’ Right to Their Own Language” resolution, which I mentioned occupies a significant space within CIP. What’s noteworthy about Perryman-Clark’s assigned readings is that they explore components of African American rhetoric in ways that many mainstream FYC courses explore Eurocentric rhetorical practices. Furthermore, her curriculum did not rely on a traditional textbook; instead readings were selected specifically to examine the impact of the variety of ways in which components of African American rhetoric are appropriated in society. Similar to the previous examples, Perryman-Clark mentions that her attention in this course is on African American student writers; however, the course content lends itself to a broader range of students who are or will be exposed to various
components of African American rhetoric throughout their lifetimes. As the course readings indicate, aspects of AAR are prevalent in the media and gaining visibility in professional journals, in addition to the spaces they already occupy within college classrooms amongst students and faculty.

In addition, a study titled “Teaching the African American Tradition as a Rhetorically Effective Writing Skill” included African American, White, Asian, and Latino students (Williams 416). Composition scholar Bonnie Williams’ study introduced students to five specific components of what she refers to as African American Vernacular tradition (AVT): repetition, “signifyin[g]/indirection”, sounding, call response, and “narrativizing” (413-414). Like the other studies, Williams also presented students with nontraditional instructional materials including published academic essays written in AVT and work found in multimodal formats like text messages, social media posts, and spoken word. Williams’ study demonstrated that students found value in AVT when presented with its history and characteristics (along with examples steeped in academic and social contexts) and when they were given opportunities to compose based on those components. All of the students benefitted, not just the African American students in the study.

Though I contend that disseminating culturally diverse rhetorical materials benefits all students, it has also been argued that it is absolutely critical for minority and second language students whose voices have been historically absent in Composition classrooms in terms of texts they consume and are encouraged to reproduce. In discussing the benefits of exposing Afrocentric texts and rhetorical tools to African American students, Gilyard and Richardson conclude “Such students seem to become more vested in improving their writing when it is directly and functionally connected in this manner to issues and exercises that are of immediate concern to them” (50). This statement speaks to the significance of cultural rhetoric, as exposure to a wider
range of cultural texts and assignments potentially increases student engagement when their personal frames of reference are represented in the curriculum. Not only do students receive validation of the legitimization of their cultural discourses, but also they have opportunities to critically engage with their cultural rhetorics as students, perhaps for the first time, and they learn the specific rhetorical devices associated with their rhetorical choices. Dominant practices of reinforcing limited perceptions of valid discourse “denies an increasing number of multilingual students the opportunity to develop as assets and to use strategically the full range of their linguistic and discursive resources to accomplish their communicative goals” (Barwashi 198). Thus, scholars recommend that practitioners prioritize opportunities for students to learn the historical significance of their rhetorical choices, along with the impact of the historical silencing and devaluing of them, to help them begin a process of recognizing the implications of cultural rhetoric, which Lyon illustrates below:

The study of a different culture nurtures counter-discourses, the discourses that speak back to power, […that] help us in two ways. First, they help us respond to the dominant discourse with voices strong from different traditions of thought. Second, they unmask dominance's pretence [sic] to depoliticize education and render it as neutral writing or reading. When the texts of other cultures speak with rich and full voices, then issues of power and justice, different conceptions of power and justice, are audible” (364).

What’s critical about Lyon’s insistence on reading cross-culturally is the notion of empowerment, which is central to the concept of CIP. The empowerment stems from the validation of historically marginalized and oft-times devalued discourse features; students gain a sense of pride and, as Gilyard, Richardson, Bean, and Perryman-Clark suggest, students potentially develop into stronger writers.
From a Critical Race Theory perspective, introducing texts reflective of a variety of cultural perspectives functions to complicate the Master Narrative that advocates monocultural notions of academic discourse. Instead, the examples of Gilyard and Richardson, Bean, Perryman-Clark, and Williams provide counter narratives indicating ways in which historically marginalized and devalued discourses function to perform academic tasks. Furthermore, these examples feature reading and writing assignments designed to place race and culture at the center of the curriculum; that is, each example centralizes aspects of African American discourse seldom explored in Composition courses and rarely featured as a course objective. And, Lastly, scholars concerned with reinventing FYC’s construction of cultural capital would benefit from accessing culturally diverse texts representing broader contexts for writing, along with the culturally diverse strategies of accommodating them. These suggestions contribute to the dismantling of what some scholars view as an oppressive system of elevating one cultural perspective of Composition above others.

Centralizing “other” cultural composing practices also reflects the spirit of culturally responsive and culturally sustaining pedagogy, which both function to present students with course content and objectives reflective of their personal frames of reference. Decentralizing one cultural perspective in FYC removes the invisible hierarchies that, according to scholars like Gilyard and Richardson, contribute to students’ self-worth and low academic potential. Furthermore, CSP is interested “in sustaining and extending the richness of our pluralist society. Such richness includes all of the languages, literacies, and cultural ways of being that our students and communities embody—both those marginalized and dominant” (Paris 96). From this perspective, expanding notions of academic writing via the implementation of culturally and rhetorically diverse texts is a necessary step towards reflecting the myriad cultural rhetorics employed effectively by “marginalized and dominant” groups in our Composition classrooms.
To fulfill the second requirement of CIP, practitioners would have to engage in the types of aforementioned practices with respect to introducing cultural rhetorics into the curriculum. Students must be given access to far more culturally diverse rhetorical traditions than they experience in conventional FYC classrooms, and examples can be found in journalism, multicultural literature, social media, film, and academic journals. Journalism, for instance, has grown as a field and now represents rhetorical constructions across a broad cultural spectrum, allowing students to gauge ways in which rhetorical values shift based on rhetor/writer, audience and context. Exploring articles in TheGrio, which is an online publication dedicated primarily to issues of concern to the Black community, provides ample opportunities for students to locate examples of African American rhetorical expression. Similarly, introducing students to the work of authors like Geneva Smitherman, who actually employs African American rhetorics in her academic scholarship, functions to reinforce the legitimacy and utility of cultural rhetorics in academic settings. Additional examples exist in literary spaces where cultural rhetorics occupy lines of poetry, short stories, and novels in the works of prominent authors like Maya Angelou, Ntozake Shange, James Baldwin, and Langston Hughes, to name a few. Introducing authentic illustrations of cultural rhetorics across contexts provides opportunities for students to recognize its characteristics while also critically engaging in conversations surrounding its impact.

As a field, we can also be more proactive in creating textbooks that identify, explain, and exemplify various cultural rhetorics, further validating marginalized yet legitimate rhetorical practices. To better understand African American rhetorics, for instance, students would benefit from reading actual articulations of it from scholars like Elaine Richardson, Ronald Jackson, and Keith Gilyard. Students should also be able to easily access examples of AAR as easily as they have been able to access examples of compare and contrast essays in traditional textbooks. Ideally,
a writing textbook emphasizing cultural rhetorics would provide foundational knowledge of various cultural rhetorics with examples and links to online publications demonstrating cultural rhetorics in action. And while my emphasis for the current project is primarily on African American rhetorics, textbooks that truly function to introduce students to writing in the 21st century should include wide ranging rhetorical practices across a variety of cultural contexts utilizing a variety of rhetorical traditions extending beyond African American rhetoric.

III. Culturally Inclusive Writing Assignments

With respect to the variety of essays students typically compose, students are generally familiar with the most common modes of discourse including compare/contrast, cause/effect, definition, classification, informative, and persuasive. Traditional Composition textbooks and handbooks promote these as staples to the Composition curriculum. As students are introduced to these modes, they are also generally expected to compose essays reflecting proficiency in any number of these modes. What is less common, however, are writing assignments extending beyond traditional modes of discourse. The third component of CIP is to “Introduce students to more Culturally Inclusive Writing Assignments” representing the vast purposes for writing within Academia and across the vast social terrain students navigate. Within this space, students should be introduced to a broader range of rhetorical contexts reflective of communicative purposes across cultural landscapes.” This third component advocates for an expansion, not replacement, of current modes of discourse, as well as strategies of accommodating the current modes by implementing cultural rhetorics to fulfill academic tasks and, by extension, broaden perspectives of Academic Writing.
Scholars from the previous section who discuss their curriculum also offer sample writing assignments to broaden students’ knowledge of cultural rhetorics and to gain confidence in their own rhetorical capital, which had been previously limited or punished in FYC. Each scholar requires culturally diverse assignments that place language front and center in the curriculum, though the assignments do not explicitly function to challenge perceptions of academic writing from a Culturally Inclusive perspective in ways that reflect the CIP I’m advocating. However, each represents effective strategies of implementing more Culturally Inclusive Writing Assignments than those most commonly associated with FYC.

Bean, for instance, requires students to write a literacy narrative wherein they must “[analyze] their language experiences in relation to other writers of color, including Keith Gilyard, bell hooks, Richard Rodriguez, and Gloria Anzuldua” (Bean 244). She then introduces a unit wherein students must create an ethnographic study of language practices in their own communities, and the final unit explores language in academic contexts. Bean’s article explores a “code switching” assignment as a part of the second unit requiring students to interview people they consider “master code-switchers” (244). In doing so, students seemingly gain a greater appreciation of both their home language and Standardized Academic English (SAE). Assignments requiring students to analyze their own language practices and those of others assist in developing a critical consciousness regarding language’s function across contexts. Such assignments reflect CIP’s objective of placing language front and center while also introducing additional modes of discourse, such as the ethnography and literacy narrative.

Perryman-Clark offers other examples, whereby students are introduced to reading materials and assignments requiring them to become familiar with research and debates surrounding Ebonics and Composition while simultaneously promoting the “institutional
programmatic goals” of the composition courses including the ability to “Write for purposes of reflection, action, and participation in academic inquiry,” and “Understand that various academic disciplines and fields employ varied genre, voice, syntactical choices, use of evidence, and citation styles” (231).

In essence, the course content represents the most significant component of the course that strays from traditional perceptions of First Year Composition; like Gilyard, Richardson, and Bean, the Perryman-Clark’s course emphasizes Ebonics and debates surrounding language rights in Composition. There are four major writing assignments: “a literacy autobiography; a cultural literacies assignment; a disciplinary literacies assignment, and a remix literacies assignment” (Perryman-Clark “New Directions for SRTOL” 474) and in each of these assignments, Perryman-Clark presents evidence of students’ strategic use of AAVE for accomplishing the following tasks:

(1) students want to convey a specific cultural idea or phenomenon; (2) students want to define a word, phrase, or idea in Ebonics prior to translating its meaning into Standard English; (3) students want to provide an example of how they code-switch for certain communicative situations; or (4) students want to execute, identify, and analyze the genres they determine necessary for using Ebonics phonology and syntax. ( “New Directions for SRTOL” 476).

The assignments’ specific emphasis on literacy and language legitimizes students’ own rhetorical expressions in ways that reflect the goals of SRTOL. Furthermore, the assignments themselves reflect the objectives of CIP in their expansion of rhetorical contexts available to students.

Similarly, Williams’ assignments provides AVT instruction over the course of four class sessions as a guest lecturer in the FYC course titled “Writing: The American Racial and Ethnic
Experience” (Williams 415). Being guided by SRTOL, as well as culturally relevant pedagogy and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, Williams seeks to “help students incorporate AVT in their writing to produce the most powerful essays possible” (415).

Williams’ curriculum consists of introducing students to five significant elements of AVT, which she notes is distinct from phonological and syntactical components of African American discourse; the aspects she introduces are purely rhetorical. Williams’ curriculum provides an interesting juxtaposition to Perryman-Clark’s curriculum, which focuses primarily on phonological and syntactical aspects of African American discourse, but not rhetorical. The features introduced in Williams’ course are Repetition, Narrativizing, Call-Response, Signifying/Indirection, and Sounding. Students are presented with definitions and scholarly examples of each rhetorical tool and perform textual analysis of the examples to ensure that they are able to identify manifestations of each. They are also tasked with analyzing their own work for examples of AVT, and to write an essay detailing their use and rationale behind employing AVT. Furthermore, they are required to locate additional examples of AVT outside of academia, especially in digital spaces (418). During the final class session, students reflect on their knowledge and use of AVT, its impact on academic writing, and its evolving discourse features.

While Williams’ assignments were limited to 4 class sessions, the objectives and requirements of the assignments directly reflect the principles of CIP by explicitly introducing students to rhetorical tools extending beyond SAE and encouraging students to locate manifestations of cultural rhetorics beyond their own usage. Assignments such as these assist in the deconstruction of linguistic hierarchies that elevate SAE without acknowledging cultural rhetorics’ value in Composition or society at large.
Because students are likely to interact with members of several different discourse communities in their various academic, professional, and personal pursuits, they would benefit from more critical analysis of cultural rhetorics in their FYC course. As argued by professor and scholar Anis Bawarshi, instructors “need to design assignments that invite students to use a wider range of their linguistic and discursive resources, assignments for example that invite students to mix genres and modalities from different domains and then to reflect afterward on the experience of shuttling between discourses and domains” (202). Bawarshi advocates broadening the scope of FYC to reflect what he sees as increasingly diverse purposes for writing and untapped valuable linguistic resources. The previous examples highlight the potential benefits of incorporating African American rhetoric into a curriculum, and I am further suggesting that incorporating additional cultural rhetorics into the FYC curriculum would improve students’ ability to communicate across cultural contexts.

In considering the assignments presented, CIP celebrates those that function to expand dominant perceptions of rhetoric by exploring culturing rhetorics and giving students opportunities to compose academic essays using cultural rhetorics. Further, CIP advocates introducing students to a broader range of assignments designed to gauge society’s evolving expectations from writers across cultural contexts and media. Overall, assignments should be refined to ensure they provide opportunities for writers to execute diverse rhetorical objectives employing culturally diverse rhetorical strategies.

IV. Culturally Inclusive Assessment Standards and Rubrics

Ideally assessments are indicative of students’ grasp of course content. Whether they take the form of essays, exams, or some combination of the two, in Composition assessments are critical in helping students not only determine their degree of success in a course, but also gauge their
overall class standing in comparison to their peers. However, as with other aspects of Composition, current practices of evaluating students’ work have come under fire for the promotion of culturally informed grading practices that celebrate and reward one culture’s standards while devaluing others.

In considering Higher Education assessment practices, an international collective of scholars on the subject collaborated to create “A Manifesto for Change,” which highlighted problem areas in assessment and created suggestions for improvement. Though their critiques of current assessment practices do not explicitly address cultural implications, the manifesto does argue that “Assessment standards are socially constructed so there must be a greater emphasis on assessment and feedback processes that actively engage both staff and students in dialogue about standards” (Price, O’Donovan, Rust, and Carroll Tenet 4). Price et al are speaking to the development of strategies that would help students engage with the established standards, instead of merely knowing what the standards are; they advocate creating a space to discuss the establishment and significance of specific standards to help students understand and perhaps value the standards. However, the socially constructed nature of the standards is problematic from a cultural perspective, as the question remains as to whose values are being represented in the construction of the standards.

A number of scholars have argued that current assessment practices that elevate “White middle class” (Inoue 136) standards of academic discourse undermine the cultural diversity of Composition classrooms in their lack of consideration of the broad range of cultural rhetorics significant to communicative practices. WPA administrator and assessment scholar Asao Inoue suggests “that engaging with ‘diversity,’ engaging with the racialized, gendered, sexualized, and classed bodies in our classrooms in ethical ways, means that we develop writing assessment
technologies as critical processes that speak directly to the diverse subjectivities and linguistic diversity in our classrooms” ("Engaging with Assessment Technologies: Responding to Valuing Diversity as a WPA”138). Inoue advocates a critical examination of assessment practices that requires teachers, TAs, and the like to determine the degree to which assessment practices reflect the evolving cultures, ambitions, and purposes of student writers.

The CCCC committee on assessment further advocates the acknowledgement of language diversity as not merely a cultural phenomenon to be tolerated, but as a necessary and meaningful practice to be respected and accounted for in our assessment methods. In its position statement on writing assessment, the committee states, “Best assessment practice respects language variety and diversity and assesses writing on the basis of effectiveness for readers, acknowledging that as purposes vary, criteria will as well,” and further suggests that best assessment practices “are sensitive to the language varieties in use among local population and sensitive to the context-specific outcomes being assessed” (CCCC 3B). This suggestion reinforces the spirit of the SRTOL resolution by encouraging practitioners to enact assessment policies that demonstrate the field’s commitment to language diversity, rather than reinforcing cultural hierarchies that value singular conceptions of academic discourse. Arabella Lyon endorses this viewpoint, suggesting that assessment practices should function to celebrate rather than tolerate rhetorical diversity.

In general, assessment practices vary across institutions and, in some cases, within institutions depending on the course goals and individual instructor expectations. Ideally, though, assessment practices are informed by course objectives and learning outcomes, which are informed by scholarship and leading organizations in the field. Thus, the first step in revising assessment tools is to revise course objectives and learning outcomes on a broad scale. As mentioned earlier, existing iterations of course objectives and OS leave room to exclude cultural rhetorics, which then
allow assignments to exclude CR, which then allow assessment practices to also exclude CR. Once measures have been taken to revise course objectives, outcome statements, and assignments, instructors and WPAs can then create rubrics designed to gauge the degree to which CR are implemented successfully in much the same fashion that they determine the degree to which students incorporate outside sources. I am not suggesting that one unified assessment tool be implemented across American FYC programs; I am suggesting, however, that all American FYC programs revise their assessment tools to reflect CIP and individual institutional objectives.

One way to conceive of an ideal rubric would be to consider the above details surrounding Bonnie Williams’ incorporation of AVT characteristics of “repetition, narrativizing, call-response, signifying/indirection, and sounding.” If an assignment requires students to implement these rhetorical strategies as a rhetorical exercise in appealing to more culturally diverse audiences, the assessment tools should account for those specific AVT rhetorical constructions in order to honor and measure students’ proficiency\textsuperscript{57}. However, beyond the revision of rubrics to accommodate the revisions of assignments towards more cultural inclusion, rubrics should evolve to more broadly conceive of manifestations of rhetorical strengths. In considering recommendations that assessment tools should be more embracing of language varieties, rubrics - and ultimately practitioners implementing the rubrics – must account for expanding contexts and audiences for writing in addition to the agency of the writer. Instead of reaffirming the dominance of Eurocentric rhetorical values and emphasis on grammatical correctness, modern Composition rubrics should reflect diverse composing practices that may incorporate cultural rhetorics even when assignments

\textsuperscript{57}The examples here reflect components of African American rhetoric/ African Vernacular Tradition, but by no means should students be limited to these examples. However, the field of Rhetoric and Composition must do more to ensure that practitioners are familiar with cultural rhetorics in order to recognize and cultivate its diverse presence in our classrooms.
do not specifically require them. In his text *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future*, Inoue speaks to ways in which conventional rubrics and assessment practices in general seemingly reinforce racist ideologies regarding rhetorical constructions in academic writing. Inoue suggests that even well-intentioned scholars create rubrics that “define ‘good’ writing in standard ways that have historically been informed by a white discourse” (18). Courses of this nature, he further posits, run the risk of “missing important opportunities to interrogate the dominant discourse as normative, or interrogating the hegemonic ways of evaluating texts in classrooms, some of which are rhetorical in nature” (19). To that point, Inoue implements rubrics that students participate in creating and that do not function to grade student work. Instead, the rubrics offer feedback on student work and present opportunities for discussions of ways in which traditional expectations of student writing can be culturally problematic and potentially racist (132).

Granted, Inoue addresses assessment practices more generally and does not necessarily account for the nuances of FYC; however, incorporating the spirit of his critique is most significant to the current conversation. For rubrics to reflect the cultural inclusivity I envision, one must critically engage in each part of their construction to ensure that they do not function to reinforce racist or cultural ideologies; rubrics must be intentionally inclusive and adequately reflect the degree to which students display proficiency in the diverse skills being measured with each assignment. As such, the rubrics should vary with each assignment and forego standardization, and Inoue’s recommendation of collectively creating rubrics with students furthers CIP’s goals. With an objective of honoring language variety, creating rubrics with students offers opportunities for students and practitioners to engage in a Freirean dialogue regarding the evolving expectations of FYC and rhetorical strategies of fulfilling those expectations, regardless of the origins of
students’ language varieties. With this in mind, practitioners are able to offer their expertise in terms of institutional expectations while students are able to contribute insights into their own rhetorical cultural capital as they relate to FYC.

Revising approaches to rubric construction and implementation to account for and celebrate language variety helps students sustain “the cultural and linguistic competence of their communities while simultaneously offering access to dominant cultural competence” (Paris 95), which is a key component of CIP. The practice of rewarding monolingual/monocultural representations of rhetoric is counterproductive to the mission of encouraging students to embrace and showcase their diverse Englishes while also emphasizing the vast and evolving strategies of meeting rhetorical objectives. The alternative suggestions from scholars such as Inoue, Jordan, and Ballester represent important steps towards realizing the spirit of the “Students’ Right” resolution and enacting current scholarship on language diversity and assessment as endorsed by CCCC, NCTE, and WPA.

**Summarizing Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy**

Simply stated, the rationale behind the culturally inclusive pedagogy articulated here is to implement strategies reflective of existing scholarship surrounding language rights in Composition. A long list of scholars including Smitherman, Gilyard, Richardson, Paris, Ladson-Billings, Matsuda, Perryman-Clark, and the list goes on, have advocated for Composition pedagogy that places students’ language practices front and center, and many have offered studies detailing the benefits of employing race-based pedagogy. My recommendation is to build on the legacy of those scholars by adding Paris and Alim’s notion of the CSP that goes beyond helping students acquire the conventions of SAE. Applying CSP to Composition allows students to
appreciate the value of SAE in addition to the appreciating the value of their home language and beyond, since asset pedagogies teaches us that there is value in several cultural rhetorics. The CIP I advocate, which incorporates CSP with cultural rhetoric and an understanding of Critical Race Theory, elevates the value of cultural rhetorics and ideally empowers all students to communicate across cultural contexts.

On a personal level, my own story remains my greatest rationale for implementing CIP. As a teenager prideful of my rhetorical legacy reflected in the poetry I read, the orations I heard, and the Harlem Renaissance literature I preferred; I was initially overwhelmed, confused, and insecure in my FYC classrooms. My experiences with language were not reflected in the classroom, nor were they allowed. Instead, my classmates and I were encouraged to model and value conventions of writing reflecting a very specific cultural identity. And there was value in that to be sure. But there was also damage. Damage arising from repressed thoughts and expressions, and the constant state of censorship of all rhetorical capital out of sync with conventional academic writing standards. Damage arising from the eventual devaluing and, to some degree, erasure of the cultural rhetorics I had valued prior to entering FYC. The erasure manifested into self-silencing, as I struggled with questions of “How do I speak when I speak ‘wrong’?” Eventually, the damage evolved into acceptance; through the constant conditioning of linguistic hierarchies reinforced in virtually every academic space, I resolved to eradicate my CR in place of more “correct” linguistic practices, eventually teaching others to do the same. But this is the way hegemony works; regardless of how racist, sexist, classist, etc a particular practice may be, once that practice is widespread enough, resisting its grasp becomes near impossible.

From a CRT perspective, my counterstory highlights the detriments of acquiring SAE at the expense of one’s home language. The Master-narrative will speak of increased opportunities
for financial and social success, and that would be true if those were universal values. The counter-
narrative speaks of losses in opportunities to appreciate the value of my own cultural capital. Gone
were potentially earth-shattering opinions never voiced for the fear that the “inadequacy” of my
language would devalue the expression. Gone were potential teachable moments to strengthen my
cultural rhetoric and perhaps learn from the cultural rhetorics of others, increasing my potential to
communicate across cultures. Instead, the master narrative dictated which populations were most
important for me to understand and to be understood by in its constant reinforcement of White
middle class standards. However, CIP functions to validate “other” voices typically marginalized
or downright eradicated in the Composition classroom. This type of pedagogy has the potential to
give students’ access to rhetorical tools and values traditionally denied them in the past.
Furthermore, it would allow students to be appropriately assessed in their employment of various
cultural rhetorics. That is not to say that the pedagogy offered here is perfect, but that is to say that
it represents an important stride towards empowering students to write cross culturally in our
evolving global society.
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<td>CIP</td>
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<td>SRTOL</td>
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Chapter Five:

Implementation, Limitations, and New Directions

The previous four chapters perform a critical analysis of Composition pedagogy through the lenses of Critical Race Theorists, Cultural and Ethnic Rhetorics, and Culturally Relevant and Sustaining pedagogies. I begin by articulating the myriad ways in which First Year Composition reflects exclusionary and limiting perceptions of Academic Writing and explaining why conventional practices are a problem. Chapter Two continues exploring current policies and praxis that further complicate efforts towards implementing Culturally Inclusive Pedagogies. Subsequently, Chapter Three introduces existing theoretical and pedagogical concepts that could potentially broaden iterations of Academic Writing as a genre and function to create more Culturally Inclusive Pedagogies. Chapter Four then locates examples of scholars executing the concepts introduced in Chapter Three, highlighting specific components of the FYC curriculum most in need of revision to align current practices with current scholarship surrounding language and composition instruction. At this juncture, Chapter Five begins by introducing a concrete version of Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy by way of a sample syllabus inclusive of learning outcomes/course objectives, course materials, writing assignments, and assessment tools. Following that, I locate potential challenges to implementation of the sample syllabus and implications for future research. I hope to illustrate that though there will be obstacles to promoting and enacting CIP, there are actually more detrimental consequences to reinforcing conventional Composition pedagogy that can be far more unfavorable to students and society at large. I am also suggesting that sustained efforts towards representing more cultural diversity in the Composition
classroom and in programs preparing future instructors can provide greater opportunities to address potential challenges to implementation and improve writing instruction overall.

Sample Syllabus

The following syllabus exemplifies my vision for the CIP I’ve been advocating throughout my dissertation. Explanations of each component of the course design will be discussed immediately following the syllabus in order to more clearly identify the ways in which each component reflects my description of CIP.

Course: First Year Composition

Course Objectives:

First Year Composition introduces students to a wide range of rhetorical strategies necessary for composing texts across a variety of academic, social, and personal contexts. Using culturally inclusive strategies, students will analyze written work across academic, social, and personal contexts. Students will also engage in various writing processes, from drafting to peer reviewing to revising, for a variety of rhetorical purposes. Each document students compose will be saved onto one continuous ePortfolio document for evaluation throughout the semester, and a final evaluation at the end of the semester.

Learning Outcomes

Inspired by the WPA Outcomes Statement\(^59\), the following details represent categorized goals of student proficiency by the end of FYC:

\(^{59}\) The vast majority of the Outcomes Statement represented here are verbatim from the WPA Outcome’s statements, with revisions implemented to require knowledge and proficiency in cultural rhetorics and other culture based rhetorical practices.
**Rhetorical Knowledge**

- Learn and use key rhetorical concepts through analyzing and composing a variety of texts from a variety of cultural perspectives
- Gain experience reading and composing in several genres across a variety of cultural landscapes to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers’ and writers’ practices and purposes
- Develop facility in responding to a variety of situations and cross-cultural contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, vocabulary, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure
- Understand and use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences
- Match the capacities of different environments (e.g., print and electronic) to varying rhetorical situations

**Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing**

- Use composing and reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts
- Read a diverse range of texts representing wide ranging cultural perspectives and rhetorical traditions, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements, and to how these features function for different audiences and situations
- Locate and evaluate (for credibility, sufficiency, accuracy, timeliness, bias and so on) primary and secondary research materials, including journal articles and essays, books,
scholarly and professionally established and maintained databases or archives, and informal electronic networks and internet sources

• Use strategies--such as interpretation, synthesis, response, critique, and design/redesign--to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources

Processes

• Develop a writing project through multiple drafts
• Develop flexible strategies for reading, drafting, reviewing, collaborating, revising, rewriting, rereading, and editing
• Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas
• Experience the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
• Learn to give and to act on productive feedback to works in progress
• Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities
• Reflect on the development of composing practices and how those practices influence their work

Knowledge of Conventions

• Develop knowledge of linguistic structures across a variety of cultural landscapes, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling, through practice in composing and revising
• Understand why genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, language, grammar and mechanics vary across cultural contexts
• Gain experience negotiating variations in genre conventions
• Learn common formats and/or design features for different kinds of texts
• Explore the concepts of intellectual property (such as fair use and copyright) that motivate documentation conventions

• Practice applying citation conventions systematically in their own work

Course materials


Grading:

The classwork and homework assignments are designed to help students cultivate skills through drafting, peer reviewing, and revising. Work in this space is expected to be messy, as this component of the course emphasizes writing as a process. As such, students will be participating in brainstorming, listing, mapping, freewriting, outlining, and other techniques as a part of the prewriting and drafting process.

The five writing assignments reflect different purposes for writing that students will submit as final products after their prewriting and drafting process. As final products, the final submission is expected to be more refined that drafts and require more academic rigor, which is why the assignments carry a heavier weight.

Finally, the Portfolio is a culmination of the writing assignments that have been further revised after submission. Over the course of the semester, students are expected to grow as writers, and their final portfolio ideally will reflect that growth. They will submit a reflection along with their documents expressing their growth as writers over the course of the semester.
along with a brief narrative documenting their revision strategies across the essays they’ve included in their portfolio. Because the portfolio includes revised assignments that have been previously graded with feedback, they carry less weight than the original writing assignments. However, the portfolio is still a significant component of the course and its weight reflects that.

**Classwork and Homework:** 30%

**Writing Assignments (5):** 50%

**Portfolio and Reflection:** 20%

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**Week 1:**

**Intro to First Year Composition**

**Assignment:** Literacy Narrative Draft.

**Content:** Narrative techniques, Descriptive techniques, Nommo, Call and Response

**Readings:** Lunsford, et al. *Everyone’s an Author.* “Writing Processes,” “Writing a Narrative” and “Literacy Narratives”

**Supplemental:**


Week 2

Sample essays and Revision strategies

Assignment: Literacy Narrative Peer Review and Final draft

Content: Audience, tone, language, cultural rhetorics


Week 3:

Online Composing

Assignment: Blog with original images Draft

Content: audience, visual rhetoric, digital rhetoric


and “Writing in Multiple Modes.”

Supplemental:


KJohnson_11_11.pdf


http://webservices.itcs.umich.edu/mediawiki/DigitalRhetoricCollaborative/index.php/'
Invitational_Rhetoric

Week 4:
Sample blogs representing various cultural perspectives

Assignment: Blog peer review and final draft

Content: Cultural rhetorics, peer review, digital rhetoric

Readings: http://www.digitalrhetoriccollaborative.org/

Week 5:
Cultural rhetorics

Assignment: Comparative Rhetorical analysis draft

Content: cultural rhetorics, compare/contrast, cause/effect


Supplemental:


Nordstrom, Georganne. “Pidgin as Rhetorical Sovereignty: Articulating Indigenous and Minority

**Week 6:**

Cultural rhetorics

Assignment: Comparative Rhetorical analysis final draft.

**Week 7: Mid Term Evaluation**

Student Conferences and Portfolio assessment.

Progress Reports

**Week 8:**

Informative essay with sources. **Understanding culturally-informed perceptions of “credible” sources and plagiarism.** See examples.

**Assignment:** Conduct primary research and secondary research for Informative essay with sources.

**Content:** research, citing sources, evaluating sources, cultural rhetoric, invitational rhetoric

**Readings:** Lunsford, et al. *Everyone’s an Author.* “Reporting Information,” and “Research.”

**Supplemental:**


Hinkel, Eli. “Objectivity and Credibility in L1 and L2 Academic Writing.” *Culture in Academic*

Mack, Natasha, Cynthia Woodsong, Kathleen M. MacQueen, Greg Guest and Emily Namey.
https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/Qualitative%20Research%20Methods%20A%20Data%20Collector%27s%20Field%20Guide.pdf


Week 9:
Informative essay with sources

Assignment: Incorporating source material, avoiding plagiarism, MLA format

Content: research, citing sources, evaluating sources, MLA format

Readings: See Week 8.

Week 10:
Informative essay with sources

Assignment: Peer review and Final draft

Content: peer review, revising, editing, MLA format

Week 11:
Argument essay with sources. Understanding culturally-informed perceptions “persuasive.”
See examples.

Assignment: Conduct primary research and secondary research for position essay
Content: research, citing sources, evaluating sources, cultural rhetoric


Supplemental:


Week 12:
Argument essay with sources

Assignment: Incorporating source material, avoiding plagiarism, MLA format

Content: research, citing sources, evaluating sources, MLA format

Readings: See Week 11.

Week 13:
Argument essay with sources

Assignment: Peer review and Final draft

Content: peer review, revising, editing, MLA format

Week 14:
Assignment: Final: Revise ePortfolio with justification statement

Week 15: Final ePortfolio due.


Discussion of Syllabus, Textbook, Learning Outcomes, Assignments, and Assessment Tools

The syllabus presented above demonstrates ways in which FYW instructors can implement CIP to better equip students for cross-cultural communication experiences while also strengthening the rhetorical skills necessary for academic success. It is based upon a 15-week semester and utilizes an ePortfolio system that allows students to review and revise their body of work over the course of the semester.

Course policies; such as the impact of student absences, penalties for late work, or guidelines for appropriate in-class cell phone usage; typically vary on a case by case basis and vary from institution to institution. Asao Inuoe, for instance, implemented a policy that students with 8 or more late assignment submissions or 7 absences would get an F in the course (Antiracist Writing Assessment 188). However, the policy was collectively constructed with student input, so it would necessarily vary from semester to semester. In my own experiences, I’ve been bound by institutional policies that were not open to revision by faculty; however, is not necessarily a best practice. To uphold principles of CIP, especially for those of us working with non-traditional students and/or students facing hardships, I recommend collectively constructing course policies in ways that value students’ unique circumstances while prioritizing their academic success. Students who have children and a job experience a different academic journey than those without either; thus, creating uniform policies unfairly rewards students who have an easier time meeting deadlines. However, that is not to say that policies aren’t necessary; creating too much flexibility can potentially hurt students who fall behind so much so that they are working on multiple assignments at once, making completing them successfully even more challenging. As such, involving students in the policy-creating process helps them take ownership of their responsibilities while contributing to what they see as more equitable learning conditions.
The Learning Outcomes

The Learning Outcomes predominantly reflect the WPA Outcomes Statement; however, my iteration established that Cultural Rhetorics are a necessary component of modern day Composition. As I’ve demonstrated throughout the dissertation, proficiency in Cultural Rhetorics is critical for all students communicating in a multicultural society; reintroducing students to SAE as a specific type of Cultural Rhetoric generates a more accurate and equitable perception of SAE. Framing SAE through a culturally-inclusive lens in the Learning Outcomes sets the tone for the culturally inclusive curriculum. For that reason, I’ve included language throughout each section of the learning outcomes designed to require Writing Program Administrators and instructors to acknowledge the elevated space Cultural Rhetorics should occupy with FYC and beyond.

Textbook

Lunsford et al’s “Everyone’s an Author offers FYC students a wealth of resources relevant to modern writers. The text addresses ways in which students compose both inside and outside of academia, including social media, protest rhetoric, and visual rhetoric. Furthermore, conversations about ways of understanding, reading, and responding to rhetoric are also significant, as the text explores ways in which different cultures employ rhetoric and language. And finally, examples of each of the essays required in the syllabus are exemplified throughout the text.

However, the text is less successful in exploring cultural rhetorics as a viable option for writing in general or composing academic texts. So, I’ve included supplemental reading throughout the syllabus as viable options. The current reality is that textbooks functioning to introduce Cultural Rhetorics as a legitimate composing strategy with descriptions and examples
Reading and Writing Assignments

I’ve always envisioned assigned readings as supplements to class discussion. Typically, I begin a class discussion with open ended questions to gauge student knowledge and perspectives on course topics and to then offer my own insights on the subject. I then assign reading and writing assignments to build off of that foundation. The reading and writing assignments throughout this syllabus should be conceived of through that lens; the readings are not to be taken as law, but as content to be explored and interrogated. To be clear, though, exploring cultural rhetorics and problematizing conventional rhetorics are absolutely fundamental objectives of the course. Students will be encouraged to critically engage with notions of rhetorical hierarchies in academia and within a range of social contexts, while simultaneously being introduced to various iterations of cultural rhetoric and its potential to fulfill rhetorical obligations.

Assignment 1: Literacy Narrative –

*Everyone’s an Author*, like other textbooks, includes a section on Literacy Narratives. Literacy narratives require students to explore their own experiences with writing and help them to become more conscious of what has informed their rhetorical choices and consciousness over time. As such, the Literacy Narrative assignment provides an opportunity to discuss language perception across social, historical, and academic contexts. Students will compose a 2-3 page essay exploring their positive and negative experiences with writing. They will be required to incorporate African American rhetorical devices in addition to the more common rhetorical devices being discussed during that time. For instance, common AAR devices employed in narratives include
anaphora, dialect, and repetition, which are characteristics of Nommo. Components of Maat speak to balance or justice, so students can begin to consider ways in which their literacy experiences illustrate an injustice in their educational journey. Students will not be appropriating African American culture, as their goal is not to mimic or exploit AAR. Instead, students are expanding their knowledge of legitimate rhetorical expression and will be encouraged to locate their own voices within each rhetorical tradition. For instance, they would not employ African American dialect if they are not African American, but they would employ the dialect of their own background. The goal in this context would be to discuss the impact of the use of dialect across rhetorical contexts. Ultimately, the goal of introducing students to various cultural rhetorics throughout the course is to illustrate ways in which students can conceive of and meet various rhetorical objectives in ways that honor diverse cultural expressions. Students’ journeys throughout the Literacy Narrative should help set the tone for the rest of the semester with respect to honoring and employing Cultural Rhetorics.

Reading Assignments:

Narrative techniques & Descriptive techniques: Readings associated with these rhetorical modes are typically common place. Most readers focus on narrative techniques by exploring the order in which the story is told (chronological, en media res, spatial, etc.) and the point of view of the narrator (1st person limited or omniscient versus third person limited or omniscient). Similarly, descriptive techniques typically include sensory details, and I always include a discussion of adjectives and adverbs. However, composing narratives is not as simple as following a few techniques. One must account for the persona of the narrator, the audience, and the purpose of the story narrator (in other words, the rhetorical triangle: ethos, pathos, and logos).
Once some of the basic components of narrative are understood, students must see narratives in practice from a variety of cultural perspectives. Furthermore, students should be introduced to narrative tools not frequently accounted for in traditional texts, such as nommo, maat, and call and response, for instance. Students have to understand that purposes for expressing oneself are complex and multifaceted. Understanding the social justice component to AAR gives students an opportunity to consider composing with a greater sense of purpose. Readings that detail and exemplify African American rhetorical traditions have been posted, but students should also be encouraged to locate examples for themselves of essays and/or speeches that reflect AAR.

**Assignment 2: Blog with Original Images –**

*Everyone’s an Author* includes several sections beneficial to composing Blogs, including “Arguing a Position,” “Writing Analytically,” and “Writing in Multiple Modes.” The process of completing the Blog assignment will help students become more cognizant of the presence of their online audience and the responsibility associated with their audience’s instant access to their perspectives. With the growing number of students composing on social media and enduring backlash as a result of poor composing choices, the blog assignment creates an opportunity for students to confront the online composing space and learn strategies of successfully navigating through it. For the blog assignment, students will take 2-3 pictures of what they see as a problem in society, such as homelessness, littering, traffic, neglected buildings, advertising, etc. They will then incorporate the images into their blog to help them explain the problem. They will use the rhetorical strategies from the text book for assistance. In addition, they will learn about feminist and womanist rhetorical strategies, and will be required to incorporate them into their blog. The length should be approximately 600 words.
Reading Assignments:

The Blog can also be used to explain or persuade, which, again, are common rhetorical modes accessible in the Lunsford text. Generally, when explaining a concept, students are introduced to journalistic questions such that key components of the issue are addressed. When persuading, students are introduced to organizational strategies of forming arguments (from least to most important or vice versa) or introduced to the rhetorical appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos. For ethos, they are generally encouraged to appeal to an authority or personal insights; for pathos, they focus on an emotional experience; and for logos, they focus on the logic of their arguments, many times encouraged to use transitional words and phrases to make the connection among their ideas more obvious to their readers. However, a feminist gaze offers another set of rhetorical tools. Being defined loosely as “intentional othering” allows students to explore their topic from counter-hegemonic perspectives. Employing first person is also a common strategy of feminist rhetoric, as employing personal narrative as a means of challenging dominant perspectives is both necessary and persuasive. Similarly, understanding womanist perspectives highlight the intersections of multiple subjectivities on feminism, such as race, class, sexual orientation, and ability.

Invitational rhetoric, which is influenced by feminist rhetoric, is also explained in the Lunsford text. Invitational rhetoric invites multiple perspectives on an issue and encourages the audience to participate in the conversation. Instead of arguing in a traditional sense, students engage in writing to broaden their own understanding of issues, and they arrive at “knowledge” through dialogue in the true Freirean sense. The Blog provides the ideal vehicle for this type rhetorical exploration and helps students understand purposes for writing beyond argument.

60 See Chapter 1.
Additional readings that detail and exemplify feminist and womanist rhetorical traditions are included in the syllabus, but students are encouraged to locate their own examples of essays and/or speeches that reflect feminist and womanist rhetoric.

Assignment 3: Comparative Rhetorical Analysis –

The section on “Writing Analytically” and “Choosing Genres” from *Everyone’s an Author* will assist students in completing their comparative rhetorical analysis assignment. The primary skills necessary to complete this assignment are ability to implement compare/contrast rhetorical strategies and ability to apply analytical skills. The Comparative Rhetorical Analysis requires students to explore multiple cultural rhetorics in practice. Students will observe, for example, spaces where SAE are employed and take note of its impact based on narrator, audience, and context. They will identify some of the rhetorical strategies employed and make arguments about their impact. Students will then observe another rhetorical tradition, perhaps their own or a friend’s, and collect the same data with respect to narrator, audience, and context. Then, they will identify the rhetorical strategies employed and make arguments about their impact. The process of completing this assignment will ideally help students become more cognizant of their rhetorical choices and ways in which those choices are informed by audience, medium, purpose, and narrator. The completed assignment will be approximately 800 words.

Reading Assignments:

The Comparative Rhetorical Analysis will employ compare/contrast and analytical writing strategies, which are explored in the Lunsford text. Students can also find supplemental information on compare/contrast and analytical writing in virtually every writing handbook and writing website, as they are conventional rhetorical modes. Generally, students will be introduced to common transitional words and phrases used to emphasize similarities or differences between
phenomena (e.g., similarly, also, too, on the other hand, however, conversely, etc.). Students would also benefit from reading the section on causal relationships (also available in the Lunsford text), as it is common to compare the value of something based on its impact, or effects. Furthermore, the assignment creates a space for students to question why writers make certain choices. In other words, students can begin exploring underlying factors or causes that influence individual’s rhetorical choices, whether those cause are social, financial, personal, or academic to name a few.

As students try to identify rhetorical devices, they would benefit from reviewing the previous examples on AAR and feminist/womanist/invitational rhetorics, but they should also learn more about cultural rhetorics beyond those, including Latinx rhetorics, Indigenous rhetorics, and ablest rhetorics. Readings that detail and exemplify additional cultural rhetorical traditions have been included in the syllabus, but students are also encouraged to locate additional examples on their own.

Assignments 4 & 5: Informative Essay with Sources and Argument Essay with Sources –

The section on “Reporting Information,” “Analyzing and Constructing Arguments: Classical/ Toulmin/ Rogerian/ Invitational,” and the entire chapter on “Research” from Everyone’s an Author will assist students in completing their Informative and Argument Essay with Sources. Students will use these assignments to practice informative and persuasive skills, and they will apply that skillset to an issue, phenomenon, policy, etc. relevant in society. Ideally, students will strengthen their ability to perform research, locating credible sources on the topic they choose. They will also learn how to properly incorporate research into their writing using MLA format, quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, and avoiding plagiarizing. However, they will also explore ways in which perceptions of “credible” and “plagiarism” are culturally informed, and they will be encouraged to explore broader perceptions of research to include academic and various cultural
contexts. The process of completing these assignments will expand students’ perceptions of research and assist in them in their understanding of the space culture occupies in performing research. While the finished products may mirror conventional essays of this type, the culturally inclusive components of these assignments are less tangible. The process of framing the components of these assignments within a cultural perspective transforms students’ perceptions of the various aspects of the research and composing process. As with all of the assignments on the syllabus, the way in which students understand rhetorical hierarchies are challenged, expanding their understanding of composing processes, and that understanding is just as significant as the resulting products they submit. The completed assignments for each of these essays will be approximately 800 words.

**Reading Assignments:**

As mentioned above, The Lunsford text includes a wealth of content helpful in preparing students for understanding Informative strategies, Argument strategies, research strategies, and research incorporation using MLA format. Furthermore, supplemental content on Informative and Argument essays and conducting research is easily accessible online and in various writing handbooks. Less prevalent are resources exploring broader perceptions of research, credibility, and plagiarism from various cultural perspectives. Supplemental course readings have been included in the syllabus.

**Assignments 6: Portfolio with Justification Narrative**

Throughout the semester, as students complete their assignments, they will be compiling them onto one continuous document: the Portfolio. As they receive feedback, they will be encouraged to revise their documents so that by the end of the semester they will be submitting what they believe to be the strongest versions of their writing assignments. In addition, their
justification narrative requires them to implement narrative and descriptive techniques to detail the revisions they made throughout the semester and describe how they feel those revisions strengthened their work. They will also be required to express what they see as their growth as writers in general, taking into account the variety of rhetorical traditions explored over the course of the semester.

**Assessment Tools**

Rubrics are common place amongst FYC courses; my current institution requires a standard rubric to be used by all faculty teaching the FYC and applies a separate rubric for evaluating the ePortfolio. What’s most significant about creating a rubric is the degree to which it reflects the course’s Learning Outcomes and assignment guidelines. Practitioners have to ensure that rubrics don’t punish students for making choices that FYC courses seek to validate. The “NCTE-WPA White Paper on Writing Assessment in Colleges and Universities” suggests that “writing assessment should recognize diversity in language,” in ways that honor the SRTOL resolution. However, I’m suggesting that the field articulate a stronger commitment to language diversity from recognition to promotion. If we expose students to various components of and benefits to cultural rhetorics, we can then assess them based on their employment of language diversity. For instance, the literacy narrative requires students to use narrative techniques, descriptive techniques, in addition to AAR. Thus, students would be assessed based on the degree to which they implement those techniques. Other components of rubrics; such as the sense of purpose, supporting details, and organization; are typically standard and should maintain their presence insofar as those components are relevant to the specific task. However, what constitutes support and organization may vary depending on rhetorical purpose and cultural context, and those conversations will persist throughout the curriculum.
To further validate students’ language and “Rhetorical Sovereignty,” which is a term from Indigenous rhetorics referring to “the inherent right and ability of peoples to determine their own communicative needs and desires in this pursuit, to decide for themselves the goals, modes, styles, and languages of public discourse,” (Lyons 449-450) I am also advocating for collective rubric designed to include input from students. Inspired by Inoue’s articulation of labor contracts that are collectively constructed, I support implementing rubrics that consider students’ purposes for writing from their perspectives in addition to institutional expectations. Essentially, rubrics are negotiated in ways that ideally serve students’ best interests as writers and citizens, both within the academy and within larger social contexts.

And finally, rubric construction must coincide with course Learning Outcomes and Assignment expectations. As outcome statements evolve to reflect culturally diverse reading and writing assignments, so too must our rubric that are tasked with assessing student proficiency on those assignments. Though I am not endorsing a specific rubric, I offer the following to exemplify what I believe represents best practices for the assignments in the current syllabus, keeping in mind that the categories and weights are negotiable based on student input:

**Literacy Narrative:**

For this assignment, students will be introduced to a variety of narrative and descriptive techniques, as well as components of AAR such as repetition, dialect, call and response and Maat. They will also engage in conversations surrounding their own rhetorical cultural capital as it applies to narrative and descriptive writing. Thus, their finished product should display their proficiency in employing narrative techniques, descriptive techniques, and AAR techniques to
create a strong Literacy Narrative. Students will also submit a brief paragraph with their assignment detailing ways in which they feel they have successfully completed the assignment.

Students and practitioners should collectively discuss which categories best communicate proficiency, but I would begin by recommending the four standard categories of “High Proficiency, Adequate Proficiency, Minimal Proficiency, and Non-Proficient.” Students and practitioners would then discuss which criteria are most critical to successfully meeting the assignment guidelines. I would recommend evaluating the Literacy Narrative based on the following criteria: purpose, narrative techniques, descriptive techniques, African American rhetorical techniques, additional cultural rhetoric technique, sentence structure, and grammar and mechanics.

I would encourage a criteria for purpose to stress the significance of goal oriented submissions that are easily recognizable to readers. Granted, ways in which the purpose is expressed do not have to be conventional by way of a thesis statement, for example; however, readers should be able to discern the goal of the document.

*Narrative techniques* include a consistent use of a particular point of view, unless students intentionally alternate between 1st person, 2nd person, and/or 3rd person for rhetorical effect (in which case students will mention that choice in their accompanying paragraph). Narrative techniques also include the use of transitional words and phrases to highlight chronology or detail spatial elements. Other techniques include the use of literary devices like simile, metaphor, or personification to make narratives more engaging.

*Descriptive techniques* include the use of sensory details, as well as the use of adjectives and adverbs to provide more vivid descriptions to details and actions in a story.
African American rhetorical techniques discussed in this context primarily include use of dialect to recreate dialogue more realistically. Note that students are not expected to recreate African American dialect unless they are African American and it serves the purpose of their story. Instead, they will have a greater understanding of how dialect functions in a narrative and will be encouraged to employ it in theirs. Students will also be encouraged to use repetition, call and response, and/or Maat in ways that add pathos to their stories and increase audience engagement.

Throughout this process, students will be exploring their own culturally-informed rhetorical practices, and they will be encouraged to incorporate them into their Literacy narrative. The characteristics will vary, but their accompanying paragraph will explain their choices.

The sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics criteria are included, not as reinforcements of conventional academic discourse, but as sites of contention. Sentence structure does not necessarily equate to “grammatically correct sentence”; its presence more so acknowledges ways in which sentences function in a narrative. For instance, the intentional use of fragments can be rhetorically effective, especially in a narrative. However, there is much value in creating grammatically correct sentences of varying types and lengths. Furthermore, there can be harm in composing a series of short or long mundane sentences with little variety, and the same can be said for grammar. The sentiment is not that sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics ought to be “correct”; instead, I’m encouraging students to be conscientious about all of their rhetorical choices, for each has a rhetorical impact that varies across contexts and audiences.

Blog:

Using the aforementioned four standard categories of proficiency, I recommend evaluating the Blog based on the following criteria: purpose, invitational rhetorical/feminist
rhetoric/womanist, supporting details, sentence structure, and grammar and mechanics. The expectations for purpose, sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics are the same as noted above. Invitational rhetoric, feminist rhetoric, womanist rhetoric, and supporting details will be discussed below; and students will also submit a paragraph along with this assignment explaining their rhetorical choices and ways in which they’ve successfully completed the assignment.

Characteristics of Invitational rhetoric include resistance to formal argument, or otherwise imposing one’s opinion upon others. Instead, writers acknowledge and invite uncommon perspectives, especially those representing marginalized populations. Language employed strategically avoids dichotomies, phrasing that renders any particular group inferior, or discourse that contributes to oppressive hegemonic social systems.

Feminist rhetoric does the same, employing personal narrative and first person to counter criticism surrounding subjectivity and the evidence of experience. First person plural is also encouraged as a way of representing a collective versus an individual, as well as to show solidarity with marginalized or otherwise disenfranchised populations or causes.

Womanist rhetoric further represents the ultimate “other,” representing multiple subjectivities, particularly Black women and members of the LGBTQ+ community. As such, the rhetorical expression is intentionally and exceedingly resistant, taking risks in sentence structure, format, tone, even mechanics with intentional lower casing of traditionally capitalized letters.

Supporting details can be manifested in a variety of ways. Invitational, feminist, and womanist rhetoric each value the evidence of experience. As such, personal stories using narrative and descriptive techniques are encouraged, as are hypothetical situations, anecdotes, and stories involving other people. That is not to say that statistics or traditional appeals to authority would be
inappropriate. Students have a choice and responsibility to justify the details they believe most suitable as supporting details, but the class will not have explored conversations surrounding conventional academic research in-depth at that stage of the semester, so there will be no expectations of students to include any.

**Comparative Rhetorical Analysis:**

I recommend evaluating the Comparative Rhetorical Analysis based on the following criteria: purpose, organization (based on use of cause/effect and compare/contrast), cultural rhetoric, supporting details, sentence structure, and grammar and mechanics. The expectations for purpose, supporting details, sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics are the same as noted above. However, the expectations for organization and cultural rhetoric will be discussed below. Like the previous assignments, students will have to submit a paragraph explaining ways in which their rhetorical choices successfully accommodate the assignment.

The *organization* of the comparative rhetorical analysis should reflect strategies discussed in class specific to causal analysis and comparative analysis. Students will be comparing rhetorical strategies across contexts and articulating their perceptions of the impact of each. Typically, surface level transitions help students’ clarify the nature of their comparison as well as the effects of specific phenomena under study. For comparisons, words like *similarly, in addition, also, likewise, etc.* indicate similarities; while phrases like *on the other hand, on the contrary, however, and conversely* indicate areas of divergence. Beyond the surface level transitions, students are also encouraged to incorporate culture based rhetorical choices, such as the use of satire or hyperbole which is typically used in AAR to prove a point. By exaggerating differences or similarities, students can still help audiences recognize their main arguments without necessarily using the
expected transitional words and phrases to do so. The same is true for causal analysis. Typically, students are encouraged to use transitions like *as a result, then, thus, and consequently*. However, students are also encouraged to use other rhetorical choices. Hyperbole and figurative language, for instance, could help readers gain a greater sense of the significance of the impact being described. Thus, students would need to employ comparative and causal strategies, but they have flexibility in how they employ them.

Students’ use of *cultural rhetoric* should reflect aspects of cultural rhetorics discussed in class and manifested in the students’ home culture. By this stage of the semester, students will have explored aspects of AAR, invitational rhetoric, feminist rhetoric, womanist rhetoric, and other cultural rhetorics that students have introduced into class discussion. Students would need to showcase their use of CR in rhetorically effective ways, and, of course, they would acknowledge those uses in their accompanying paragraph.

**Informative and Argument Essay:**

I recommend evaluating the Informative and Argument Essays based on the following criteria: purpose, organization (based on use of informative and argument strategies), supporting details, incorporation of outside source, sentence structure, and grammar and mechanics. The expectations for purpose, sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics are the same as noted above. However, the expectations for organization, supporting details, and incorporation of outside sources will be discussed below. Students will also be required to submit a paragraph justifying their rhetorical choices and explaining how those choices helped them successfully complete the assignment.
For *organization*, similar to the expectations of the rhetorical analysis, students will have options in terms of ways in which cultural rhetorics can emphasize a point. However, the main goal is that students gain a sense of the objectives of various organizational strategies. Typically, transitional words and phrases help readers distinguish main points from each other and from secondary points. Phrases like *to begin, more importantly, furthermore, and in addition* help readers identify when writers move from one argument or idea to the next, while simultaneously highlighting the relationship between those ideas. What’s most significant is not which strategy students employ, but rather that students exercise their consciousness regarding the necessity of distinguishing ideas from each other in strategic ways.

At this stage in the semester, students will have been introduced to research strategies using academic databases and online search engines. They will have also engaged in discussions surrounding ways in which perceptions of credibility are culturally informed. However, they will also understand ways in which these perceptions function across contexts and will need to demonstrate proficiency in offering *supporting details* in ways that appeal to wide ranging audiences across a variety of academic and social environments. Thus, students will need to include sources from academic databases, online search engines, and their own sense of what represents a credible source.

And, finally, students will need to demonstrate their ability to *incorporate their outside sources* effectively into their essays using transitional words, signal phrases, and MLA format for in-text citations and a Works Cited page. It must be noted that while these are requirements of the assignment that I believe will help students become more versatile writers, I do not encourage weighing this aspect of the assignment as strongly as the rhetorical components. Ultimately, I want students to think more critically about their rhetorical choices and to practice composing for a
variety of audiences. However, I do not want to dismiss components of the assignment that reflect traditional rhetorical values; the reality is that students will need to compose for audiences who prefer those values. Ultimately, I’d like students to have enough tools to make informed decisions regarding the nature of their composing practices.

**Portfolio:**

The satisfactory completion and revision of each assignment should be assessed using the same rubrics implemented throughout the semester. However, I recommend evaluating the Portfolio’s narrative justification based on the following criteria: purpose, narrative techniques, descriptive techniques, sentence structure, and grammar and mechanics. Each of the six components of the Portfolio (the five revised assignments and the narrative justification) should be equally weighted in determining the Portfolio grade.

**Limitations of Syllabus**

The sample syllabus provides Learning Outcomes that reflect culturally inclusive objectives and coincide with current scholarship surrounding cultural equity in Higher Education. However, I’ve highlighted in previous chapters the varying perspectives as to why faculty aren’t currently implementing CIP on a large scale. Aside from a lack of desire to implement CIP, the problem of teacher preparation is significant. To effectively deliver the content of the syllabus; including reading assignments, writing assignments, and assessment strategies; WPAs would have to ensure that faculty are adequately prepared to do so. Considering that the research suggests that most FYC teachers are unfamiliar with CIP strategies and/or scholarship, efforts must be taken to ensure that faculty are familiar with important scholarship surrounding CIP and strategies for implementation. Ideally, faculty would become familiar with CIP and the scholarship informing
it, and they would have the desire to incorporate this pedagogical perspective into the FYC curriculum.

Beyond the challenges associated with lack of knowledge surrounding principles of CIP, another concern is the lack of FYC textbooks that include cultural rhetorics. Because students would have to access content from a source outside of their primary text, there is the danger that cultural rhetorics will continue to be perceived of as less significant than the rhetorical strategies detailed in the primary textbook. One of objectives of CIP is to elevate the status of Cultural Rhetorics in Composition; however, its absence in FYC textbooks is problematic in the sense that its marginalization becomes apparent, potentially reinforcing unfair rhetorical hierarchies. While locating appropriate readings is feasible, the textbook limitations continue to hinder perceived legitimacy of cultural rhetorics and language diversity on a broader scale.

On a positive note, the limitations expressed here are not beyond the scope of Writing Program Administrators and faculty. The following section on “Moving Forward” details strategies that Compositionists can implement to continue improving the educational equity and quality of Composition instruction.

**Moving Forward as Scholars, Teachers, and Global Citizens**

To continue adding credibility to the CIP I’ve discussed throughout, a number of habits must be sustained to ensure a continued commitment to strengthening the writing skills of all students across cultural contexts. Those habits require practitioners to view this analysis as an additional step following the great strides taken before it and encouraging additional steps in the future. In addition to some of the suggestions I’ve made throughout regarding strategies of implementing a
CIP, there are other factors to consider moving forward to contribute to additional literature related to expanding the fields’ evolution of FYC from a culturally conscious perspective.

**Graduate Programs and Writing Program Administrators**

With respect to spaces that could benefit from a stronger sense of cultural consciousness, Graduate programs in English, inclusive of Rhetoric and Composition, Literature, and Creative Writing would be an appropriate place to begin. As the space primarily responsible for preparing future teachers of FYC, it is one of the sites most vital to the process of disseminating theoretical perspectives surrounding language rights in Composition. Potential courses to house this content would be in a Composition Pedagogy course or a practicum designed to help students with course design. Students preparing to teach should at the least be presented with prominent debates and policy statements surrounding language rights, in addition to pedagogical strategies to analyze, critique, and improve based on informed opinions. As the research has shown, many teachers have no knowledge of the debates and may or may not consider multicultural purposes for writing in designing their syllabi. Key readings that promote awareness of issues impacting linguistically diverse students include the 1974 SRTOL resolution and its reaffirmation in 2003, Staci Perryman-Clark, David E. Kirkland, and Austin Jackson’s *Students’ Right to Their Own Language: A Critical Sourcebook*, Django Paris and H. Samy Alim’s "What Are We Seeking To Sustain Through Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy? A Loving Critique Forward" and Asao Inuoe’s *Antiracist Assessment Ecologies*. These readings challenge Composition as a field and Compositionists specifically to interrogate ways in which Composition has functioned historically and currently to reinforce racist, sexist, and elitist hegemonic ideologies. More importantly, these texts represent proactive strategies of forging more socially and culturally just Composition pedagogy by offering practical approaches to implementing CIP.
Graduate students would also benefit from formal exposure to cultural rhetorics. Not only would that exposure strengthen their capacity to recognize CR in student essays, but it would also enhance their appreciation for CR’s vast rhetorical options in ways that would allow them to incorporate CR into their own writing and their FYC curriculum. Key readings include Keith Gilyard’s “Introduction: Aspects of African American Rhetoric as a Field,” Georganne Nordstrom’s “Pidgin as Rhetorical Sovereignty: Articulating Indigenous and Minority Rhetorical Practices within the Language Politics of Place,” Nuyen, A. T. ”The Rhetoric of Feminist Writings,” and Cano, Jose “Code Switching” published in Decolonizing Rhetoric and Composition Studies: New Latinx Keywords for Theory and Pedagogy. While these texts do not fully represent all that is cultural rhetoric, they offer a point of entry into a broader conversation surrounding ways in which cultural rhetorics are performed and received in Composition.

Overall, requiring graduate students to become more familiar with scholarship surrounding language rights in Composition cultivates a stronger sense of cultural conscientiousness and contributes to their professional identity as scholars. However, I must acknowledge that presenting graduate students with the research is not an assurance that they will implement the strategies or align themselves with the principles underscoring supporting CIP. I believe, though, that the choice to employ or reject any pedagogical approach should be based on exposure to a wide range of accurate information from which to select. Exposing students to more thorough representations of Composition Pedagogy from various cultural perspectives would inspire more informed pedagogical decisions from them as practitioners.

Similarly, Writing Program administrators are tasked with ensuring that faculty syllabi reflect current scholarship in culturally inclusive ways and that faculty members are equipped and confident in their knowledge of CIP to effectively implement the recommended pedagogical
strategies. To that end, WPAs will need to be proactive in making resources, such as the readings mentioned above available to faculty teaching FYC. In addition to historic content, WPAs would benefit from disseminating current scholarship surrounding language rights and pedagogy to faculty, while also creating a space to discuss the content, via list serve or Black Board, for example. If faculty weren’t introduced to content in graduate school, WPAs have to be more proactive about ensuring that FYC faculty have the information they need to implement CIP.

In addition to offering reading materials, WPAs can offer mandatory training, meetings, and retreats to focus on issues surrounding language diversity in FYC and explore best practices of implementing CIP. Furthermore, WPAs can encourage faculty participation in national and regional conferences that address language diversity, such as the Biennial Cultural Rhetorics Conference, CCCC, and NCTE.

In some cases, necessity may require WPAs to create a uniform syllabus and select the textbooks for faculty. Though less ideal, the reality is that some WPAs are already tasked with creating uniform syllabi and selecting textbooks. Additionally, the other options of presenting faculty with resources and engagements do not necessarily guarantee that faculty will create and implement CIP. In that case, it would be useful to articulate a mission statement of FYC that explicitly expresses its commitment to social justice and linguistic equity.

As WPAs, reviewing every FYC syllabus will be critical to ensuring that each class functions to uphold CIP. As such, WPAs must be willing to intervene when coming across syllabi that fail to conform to the mission of FYC. Collaborating with faculty to improve the syllabi helps faculty maintain a sense of academic freedom within the parameters of the mission of FYC.
Additional Research

In addition to the programmatic level, collecting and circulating additional data regarding the impact of CIP on students’ success in various areas would provide valuable resources for other researchers, scholars, and practitioners in the field. I am personally interested in documenting the impact of CIP on students’ sense of self and students’ strengths as writers in various academic, social, and professional settings. However, the field would also benefit from access to multiple iterations of CIP and the impact of each on students’ overall success. Thus, as practitioners implement their version of CIP, they should share their experiences, whether qualitatively or empirically, via journals and conferences. Furthermore, the presence of academic social networks such as Academia.edu allow practitioners to share their work more quickly, expansively, and affordably than the process of attending conferences and publishing articles in peer reviewed journals. Regardless of the medium, generating a database of CIP strategies as they apply to different populations of students from the most to the least diverse classrooms would help graduate students and practitioners become more informed about the various nuances involved in implementing CIP.

Furthermore, should more graduate programs in Composition implement more courses, required or otherwise, on the intersections of cultural rhetorics, language rights, and Composition pedagogy, additional research should be conducted to determine the impact of incorporating these courses on graduate students’ pedagogical goals and long term classroom practices. The current scholarship speculates as to why some instructors opt out of implementing CIP, including lack of exposure to pedagogical strategies and lack of knowledge of historical and/or theoretical knowledge surrounding language rights and Composition. It would be worthwhile to document the opinions of practitioners who are familiar with the historical backdrop of CIP and the various
strategies for implementation, yet continue to opt out of implementation. Understanding opposing viewpoints is actually a key component of CIP as the goal is not to replace one set of oppressive strategies with another. Instead, CIP seeks to empower students and faculty by encouraging informed pedagogical strategies that will contribute to the success and global citizenry of all students.

In addition to better understanding attitudes towards implementing CIP, continuous analysis of cultural rhetorics itself would prove meaningful. In some instances, for example, African American rhetoric and African American discourse has been referred to as African American Vernacular English, Black English, Ebonics, the African American Vernacular tradition. Further, distinctions within this very analysis exist between rhetorical features, syntactical features, and phonological features, and there has been no consensus as to which is deemed appropriate for academic use. In the absence of definitive answers, additional research should be done that would allow for a more in-depth analysis of African American rhetoric than what is presented here. I have made the case that African American rhetoric as it relates to Composition studies is under-theorized in our journals as well as our graduate programs. Thus, additional discussions describing features, examples and utility of AAR in Composition would be helpful, not necessarily to create the definitive answer (which I actually think would be counter-productive to CIP), but to extend the conversation and broaden the pool of resources on the subject.

Similarly, because I am invested in exploring the impact of several cultural rhetorics on Composition pedagogy, I believe that extending the research on Asian American rhetoric or Native American rhetoric, for example, would also benefit practitioners seeking ways of incorporating that content into FYC. Adding to the existing scholarship would allow teachers to present students with valuable rhetorical strategies from a variety of cultural perspectives in more informed ways.
Furthermore, beyond the potential impact on students’ final products, access to more thorough accounts of cultural rhetorics provide students with a better understanding and perhaps appreciation for the diversity of people beyond their limited frames of reference.

Finally, I recommend compiling data to determine the impact of cultural rhetorics across disciplines. One of the common impressions of FYC is that it functions to prepare students for writing in other courses. Though Compositionists do not necessarily endorse that premise, understanding the function of cultural rhetorics across disciplines would be helpful in contextualizing its utility in classroom discussion. For instance, if the research reveals that applying specific components of African American rhetoric proved effective in students’ Speech Communications, Marketing, and Political Science courses, but ineffective in Biology, practitioners could use those results in designing their FYC syllabus and/ or revising their Writing Across the Curriculum programs. Furthermore, the data produced would help students recognize the significance of context and audience in their immediate settings, reinforcing the idea that rhetorical choices are not universally good or bad, but vary depending upon purpose and setting.

Conclusions

My journey to articulate and justify CIP has been encouraging. Through engaging in debates and theories regarding methods of best serving diverse populations of students, I gained a greater appreciation for all of the scholars on all sides of the debates, as we all seem to have one objective in common: we want students to succeed. And though these chapters represent the culmination of countless hours of research and analysis, the road ahead will require the same and more if we are to create the kind of transformative pedagogies worthy of tomorrow’s global leaders.
As such, there can be no passive pedagogy. No silent opposition nor guilt through complicity. When we know better, we have to do better, and that means that we must hold ourselves accountable. This task is difficult for many teachers specifically of FYC, since many are adjuncts, graduate students, and non-tenured faculty with little power to challenge policies. And those of us who are in position to make changes will still need a great deal of courage to forge new paths with pedagogy that has not yet been implemented. We don’t know the short or long term effects it will have on students or their writing. We don’t know the potential backlash from other departments or members of our own departments. We only know that current and previous research supports our efforts. We only know the problematic nature of several current strategies that fail to address students’ rhetorical cultural capital. And we only know that doing nothing will not solve that problem. My discussion of CIP contributes to the preexisting resources designed to help marginalized students succeed in higher education and in life. The concepts adapted from Critical Race Theory, Culturally Relevant and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, and Cultural Rhetorics collectively define the specific problems plaguing many pedagogically conventional Composition classrooms. The language of wider communication (LWC) as we know it is shifting, and our pedagogy has to evolve to reflect that reality. Furthermore, by leaving other voices out of the classroom, we remove the opportunity to better understand those voices and to gauge students’ strategic purposes for utilizing those voices.

Creating spaces and policies to engage with and utilize “other” voices can provide the type of transformative pedagogy our students crave. While students’ purposes, spaces, and methods of composing are steadily evolving, to a large degree their learning outcomes are not. Thus, I hope my contribution to the existing conversations advocating language rights in Composition will
inspire practitioners to rethink their pedagogical strategies and make tomorrow’s class a little more culturally conscious than today’s.

**Acronym Chart for Chapter 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAR</td>
<td>African American Rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP</td>
<td>Culturally Inclusive Pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Cultural Rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYC</td>
<td>First Year Composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWC</td>
<td>Language of Wider Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAE</td>
<td>Standardized American English</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRTOL</td>
<td>Students Rights to Their Own Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPA</td>
<td>Writing Program Administrator</td>
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Appendix:

Chart Breaking down Rhetoric and Composition Doctoral programs across the United States. See Below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhet Comp Programs</th>
<th>Cultural Rhetoric Program</th>
<th>Ling Program</th>
<th>CR req/No program</th>
<th>CR electives/no program</th>
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Approximately 6% have programs in Cultural Rhetoric
Approximately 4% have programs in Linguistics
Approximately 9% have a linguistic requirement
Approximately 5% have a cultural rhetoric requirement
Approximately 33% offer CR electives
Approximately 20% offer Ling electives
Approximately 6% offer electives in both CR & Linguistics
Approximately 19% offer no courses in either CR or Ling.