**21st CE Englishes – Presentation (script)**

Done by: Addison Lamb and Adam Pittman

Slide 2 – Intro to Technical Communication

* As an overview, we are both TAs at the University of Findlay who teach Intro to Technical Communication. The structure of the course focuses on one semester-long project with various parts, rather than smaller papers on different topics. Students are put into groups based on their majors and interests, and then come up with an issue in their fields to eventually write a report on. Depending upon the size of the class and student majors represented, some of the groups have less in common than we would want. Adam teaches in a face-to-face environment with some students Zoom-ing into class, while Addison teaches fully online and asynchronous.

Slide 3 – Framework

* We have grounded our framework in the rhetorical principles of Glenn, Berlin, and Gray-Rosendale and Gruber to remember that we are always coming at situations from a particular position, whether that is our identities or those of our students.
* Additionally, we pull from Blair and Nickoson’s *Composing Feminist Interventions: Activism, Engagement, Praxis*, specifically Beth Godbee’s exploration of “pedagogical too-muchness” and Katherine Fredlund’s look at Kirsch and Royster’s “ethics of care and hope” in the classroom.

Slide 4 – Teaching as TAs

* Fredlund applies Kirsch and Royster to her senior-level student activism theory and practice course, whereas we are looking at our second-level technical writing course. This means that we have less room to introduce theory into the classroom.
* Due to our position as TAs and the lack of structural agency in the course’s creation, we approach Kirsch and Royster’s “ethics of care and hope” from a more personal lens, especially trying to be more understanding and approachable during COVID-19 uncertainties.

Slide 5 – Teaching our Experiences

* In Face-to-face environments, conversations with students are more dynamic and organic. During my conversations with groups in the medical field, in environmental fields, and in business fields, I am able to ground my advice and discussion in personal experience: I’ve had two heart surgeries; I’ve done individual research on environmental rhetoric and issues; I worked in an office environment for nine months. Coming from these experiences, especially during the brainstorming and research phases of my students’ projects, I was able to direct my students to various resources and have them think about their ideas in new ways.
* In asynchronous, online environments, there may be less opportunities for organic conversations that would happen during class drafting time or while leaving the classroom. To still teach my experiences and help students see the connections between their research and their lives outside of school, I primarily used their weekly memos and comment sections to show intrigue and support. Over time, I saw students more likely to give details about their pets, specific experiences they had tending to sick animals on their farms, and the stresses they were encountering this semester.

Slide 6 – “Too-Muchness” as TAs

* We have considered Godbee’s concept of “too-muchness” as TAs with specific time-restraints and power dynamics. We posed the question, how much agency we have as TAs to structurally change the assignments we teach within the course?
* We don’t believe there is much space for TAs to make considerable changes to courses due to the ethics of expecting TAs to design courses on breaks without pay, to the lack of experience in designing courses, to TAs not usually being at institutions long enough to create stable change.
* Because of this, Godbee’s “too-muchness” becomes extremely useful in exploring how TAs who want to include activism in their coursework can actually do so. Often, adding in feminist and social justice education “on top of” existing course work creates modal confusion for students and added work for TAs.

Slide 7 – Moving Forward

* Questions for the future:
	+ How can we structure our courses to create community in the classroom?
	+ How do we negotiate institutional requirements with individual activism?
	+ How do we foster conversations with students based around their experiences in local communities?
* Throughout this semester, we have had great conversations about “real-world” connections, but we also want to move towards educational environments where we can teach our students that their experiences are valuable in academia.
* Writing courses often ask students to find issues and solve them, but without a connection or partnership with local organization. This leads to students only seeing their work matter for a grade within the classroom.
	+ Moving forward, how do we define local communities? And how do we teach students to connect their experiences to a larger, communal whole?

Slide 8 – Works Cited