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## 4 A Difference in Delivery

### Reading Classroom Technology Policies

*Jacob W. Craig and Matthew Davis*

#### Introduction

Since the refashioning of the book into the e-book for e-readers, a substantial body of scholarship has emerged considering the effects of reading on screens. Through several frames of reference, including neuroscience (Carr), literary studies (Wolf), and media studies (Baron; Birkerts), there emerges a resounding feeling that print affords a kind of reading that electronic texts cannot and that media-specific differences make digital texts deficient for learning, research, and meaning making when compared to printed texts. These concerns about screen-based reading reflect a persistent cultural anxiety about the use of electronic texts and digital devices for reading, research, and learning that are later passed on to new generations of readers and students when codified in technology statements developed as part of course policy sheets and syllabi.



Such technology statements typically define what devices are sanctioned for use during class meetings and, perhaps more commonly, if and how devices are to be used during class meetings. Statements like the following set collected and circulated by Brown University's Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, frequently appear in syllabi:


- I know many of you read online or take notes on your laptops or tablets, however, electronics are a major distraction in class and disrupt class discussion [. . .] But, because we often read online, I will allow them. However, if I find they become distracting, I hold the right to disallow them in class.

~~(“Sample”)~~

- Laptop/tablet use in lectures is not recommended. Using your laptop or tablet to take notes often leads to checking email and social media or browsing the internet. This hinders your learning and has also been shown to distract those around you. Therefore, I highly recommend taking notes on paper [. . .] If you choose to use your laptop or tablet in class, please sit in one of the side sections of the

lecture hall. NO LAPTOP OR TABLET USE IN THE CENTER SECTION OF THE LECTURE HALL.

(“Sample”)

At face value, these statements are attempts to create a classroom environment hospitable for learning by keeping potential distractions at the periphery of “real learning,” that is, learning in print at “the center section of the lecture hall.” Rather than understanding the digital devices that students own and bring with them into classrooms for their potential to support student learning, these policies parallel concerns about the presence of digital texts in traditionally print-only environments.  **Doing so,** these policies assume that digital media, devices, and networks can only exacerbate mythologies about today’s college students: specifically, their lack of “ability and experience either to concentrate on or to comprehend detailed, complex, and hypotactic texts” (Salvatori and Donahue 315).

In this chapter, we examine what the technology policies contained within syllabi communicate to students about the devices they use to read, write, and learn on their own time, outside of the classroom. **In doing so,** we identify that such policies too often fail to support or authorize students’ agency over their literate development. We observe that because syllabus policies have the weight of institutional power and may be one of the few instances where students attend to the relationship between their devices and their literate development, they are an important site of technological discourse; the “complex cultural network of discourses, practices, institutions, and power relations” that plays an integral role in the validation and naturalization of new technologies in the cultural sphere (McCorkle 36). Although students encounter a variety of technological discourses—some, like those from the marketplace, emphasize the seemingly endless benefits of buying a new device—the discourse they encounter through course policies informs how they understand the value, function, and effect of their devices in relation to their literate development within academic environments.

In what follows, we provide an analysis of course policy sheets collected in the Spring 2017 academic year from two different institutions: an urban public research university in the northeastern US and a liberal arts college in the southeastern US. Based on our analysis, we argue that in attempting to preserve classroom environments as they have been understood in the late age of print, technology bans also undermine the social nature of literacy and learning while perpetuating myths about students’ literacies that have little historical or conceptual basis. Drawing upon our analysis, we conclude by suggesting more productive ways of structuring course policies—and therefore textual interactions—available to students. Our goal in this examination of course policies is to forward possibilities for contextually sensitive, “positive implementations of technology that support and sustain” student learning (McCorkle 17). Although our

discussion focuses on the more quotidian instances of technological discourse that reproduce technological anxiety in new generations of readers and learners, there is a wealth of scholarship about e-reading to inform such policies. Thus, to provide a context for our analysis of these policies, we start by examining formal technological discourse about the efficacy of digital reading and digital texts.

### Anxious Technological Discourse

Concern about digital devices in classrooms has gained plenty of traction in the public sphere, mirroring the same passions that emerged when it was believed that text message writing or textspeak would hinder students' writing development and even diminish the English language itself. In his 2014 *New Yorker* article, Dan Rockmore described his "electronic etiquette policy" that he developed after it became commonplace for students to bring laptops with them into the classroom. His primary concern was the incongruence between "twenty-first-century tools (computers, tablets, smartphones) with nineteenth-century modalities (lectures)," between "play and pedagogy." Anne Curzan echoes Rockmore's point in a *Chronicle of Higher Education* post, similarly emphasizing how networked technologies alter the classroom environment by creating distractions for everyone while reinforcing "*addictive patterns with email, texting, Facebook, etc.*" (italics here). There is some basis for these policies; for instance, in Daniel Oppenheimer and Pam Mueller's study of note-taking practices in a lab setting, they conclude that longhand note-taking enabled students to recall information better (1164). How these findings play out in real scenes of student learning—real classrooms—remains to be seen.

Ravizza et al.'s more recent study of internet use in a lecture- and test-based introductory psychology class also finds that students who used a computer in class were not necessarily advantaged over those that chose to write in print. Using a combination of test scores and HTTP requests logged through use of a proxy server, Ravizza et al. found that non-academic web use was "inversely related to performance on the cumulative final exam" (177). They also found no correlation between academic web use and improved score on the final exam (167). What is perhaps most relevant to a project-based course like a writing course, however, is the relationship between self-reported data and HTTP logs. Students who reported that the internet had no effect on their classroom learning "showed no relationship between Internet use and final-exam score," and students who identified that the internet was slightly disruptive "had lower exam scores and used the Internet more than the other group" (178). Thus, what Ravizza et al.'s research ultimately indicates is that students understood their internet use and how their internet use affected their learning.

Although studies like ~~Oppenheimer and Mueller's~~ and Ravizza et al.'s have strongly influenced course policies and validated anxieties about digital devices and digital texts, perhaps the most relevant to this discussion are Naomi Baron's *Always On* and *Words on Screen* for their attention to the co-evolution of reading, writing, and technology (*Words* 24) and in their attention to the plurality of screens, devices, and platforms on which reading takes place (*Words* 15). While Baron concedes that reading on screen makes sense for short pieces and light content, she is concerned that reading on screen fails to invite serious reading, creating a "critical shift in the way at least some types of readers have encountered books for centuries" (xiv). Baron argues that, instead of facilitating close and rereading of texts, digital reading encourages the same kind of fast and distracted reading that emerged during the paperback revolution of the nineteenth century (95). In the current moment, Baron argues, digital reading mirrors paperback pleasure reading; both are one-off experiences (95). Predicated on the idea that "modern education, especially higher education, is grounded on the assumption that taking your time—with thinking, with reading—is essential for intellectual development," Baron argues that all of the features of reading in a digital culture are eroding the ability of students to engage in serious reading, thought, and research (166). Thus, Baron's primary investment is in making the case that while digital technologies have made texts more convenient and easier to read (particularly when reading across multiple texts), serious/real/ "deep" reading "is a child of" and only possible in print (168).

In relation to educational contexts, these discussions of technology bans, policies, and anxieties function as a network of technological discourse that continues to influence how the larger culture understands—or should understand—the purpose and effects of digital texts and e-reading. As Ben McCorkle shows, technological discourse has historically facilitated the cultural acceptance of new media, functioning as "a mechanism by which an emergent technology gains easier acceptance into culture at large" (28). Unlike other new media that have been a focus of past technological discourse like hypertext, websites, word processors, and graphical interfaces (and in different historical moments: the codex, typescript, pencils, typewriters, TV, and radio, among others), technological discourse about e-reading has not brought about acceptance.

Within the larger body of technological discourse about e-reading, substantial work from scholars ~~as well as~~ device-makers ~~have~~ tried both "emphasizing the benefits or affordances of the new technology over older ones" and "fostering a sense of familiarity and naturalness" between nascent and new technologies (153). For instance, scholars like Richard Lanham and James Sosnoski emphasize the affordances of new technologies by tracing the emergence of a new kind of reader, an electronic reader or a hyper-reader, who shares control over texts with writers by

manipulating how texts are displayed (Lanham 267) and navigated “to suit their own needs” (Sosnoski 163).

As Cynthia Selfe has argued, technological literacy involves more than skills and practices like the ability to annotate digital texts or to summarize complex material; technological literacy also “refers to a complex set of socially and situated values” that “become essential parts of our cultural understanding of what it means to be literate,” for instance, the notion that the ability to use a computer equates to digital literacy or the belief that digital texts are private, ephemeral, or even owned by the writer when produced in social networks or in cloud-based office suites (11). The technological discourse that too many students encounter about digital texts and digital devices forwards a specific vision of literacy as ~~print-based~~ that not only limits what practices that students can develop or employ but also does a disservice to their literate development by depicting the act of reading through harmful mythologies about reading as a silent, ~~private~~, and reverent activity conceptualized as scenes of private study. In contrast to these mythologies, and as scholars working in the history of the book have shown through studies of marginalia, there is a rich history of reading as a social, collaborative, and performative act of meaning-making. For example, in his examination of marginalia and other markings that readers added to books during the Renaissance period, William Sherman shows that the emergence of the print press “did not automatically, or immediately, render readers passive” (9). Centuries after the emergence of the printing press, readers’ marginalia practices went well beyond conventional annotation of texts, including: the customization of books by cutting, combining, and rebinding printed materials; the use of marginalia as a medium for conversation among multiple readers; readers’ use of blank pages in books for “penmanship exercises, prayers, recipes, popular poetry, drafts of letters, mathematical calculations, shopping lists” and phonetic markings suggesting the use of printed materials to practice pronunciation by reading aloud (Sherman 15). Although, as Sherman notes, “the cult of the clean book” eventually took hold as paper became more affordable and as library systems became important institutional sites for learning, this history of active reading serves as a compelling analog to the current moment (157). Just as readers in the Renaissance were still learning to trust print as a medium, they turned to an extensive set of literacy practices to contextualize, converse with, and use printed texts as part of their daily lives.

Not unlike readers in the current moment who use multiple devices, platforms, and networks to assert authority and identity in backchannels (Mueller) and to access and participate in communities of practice (Pigg, “Coordinating”); and to compose attention (Rivers), readers in the Renaissance employed a range of practices to engage meaningfully with their new medium: printed texts. Thus, banning the possibilities of meaningful engagement with the new medium of this technological era

during key moments of student's literate development not only has the effect of perpetuating a specific and limited cultural understanding of what reading looks like but also limits students' opportunities to engage with texts meaningfully in ways that make sense for the current technological-cultural moment.

In the next section, we provide an analysis of course policies about the use of digital devices collected from our own institutions: nineteen from a liberal arts college in the southeast (Southeast) and thirty-six from a public research university in the northeast (Northeast). Among those policies collected, thirty-nine policies were sampled from first-year writing courses (FYW) and sixteen were sampled from second-year and upper-level literature courses (LIT). The sample size differed between policies sampled from Southeast and Northeast because Southeast instructors teaching FYW courses made frequent use of the technology policy developed for the staff syllabus, often copying it verbatim:

Almost all course materials—including handouts, assignments, the syllabus, policies, and schedule—will be available online through OAKS. You may use laptops and tablets in class so long as you're taking notes, referring to relevant sources, or conducting other class-related work. Texting is not class-related work, so please keep phones put away at all times.

Given the frequency of this policy in our sample and to prevent skewing our sample, we eliminated all but one instance where the staff syllabus policy was copied verbatim. Though our sample of syllabi is relatively small, totaling fifty-five individual syllabi, and is limited to first-year and undergraduate courses housed within English Departments, we discovered that the policies we collected were comparable between our two different institutional contexts. This comparability suggests to us that our sample is reflective of at least some of the range of technological discourse that students encounter through course documents.

### **Preserving the Traditional Social Arrangement**

In our sample policies developed for discussion- and drafting-focused FYW courses and in lecture-focused LIT courses, most of the policies we collected echoed Dan Rockmore's concern that digital devices and digital texts are incompatible with productive learning environments. Most overwhelming was the tendency to associate device use as a behavioral issue where the use of prohibited devices—most often, cell phones—or the inappropriate use of devices are akin to arriving late, leaving early, interrupting, and chatting. In contrast with the policies about lecture halls circulated by administrators at Brown that offered a pedagogical justification or a strategy for working across media to promote students'



comprehension of lecture materials, syllabi from our collected sample were resounding in their treatment of devices strictly as behavioral problems or as prohibited behaviors more generally. For example, one policy collected from a FYW section at Southeast discusses the use of devices as ~~disrespectful behaviors~~ equivalent to other common examples of disrespectful behavior found in syllabus policies: “Please treat the members of this community with respect by avoiding the following behaviors: using cell phones/electronic devices, arriving late, leaving early or in the middle of class.”<sup>1</sup> Another collected from a course in Literature at Northeast outlines that if a student is given a dispensation to use a device in an otherwise print-only classroom, that student should “please respect the time and space of the classroom—your time, my time, and the time of your classmates—by using the device exclusively as a reading tool.” When not discussing device use as a behavioral issue or a matter of respect, policies tended to blankly prohibit digital devices, stating simply that cell phones, laptops, and e-readers should be turned off and stowed away during class.

Justifications for the prohibition of devices were often linked to a broader attempt to define the social arrangement of the classroom as a space removed from other aspects of daily life and defined by a sustained engagement with a specific text. In such cases, devices are not only distractions but threats to learning environments that one Northeast instructor described as a “rare space isolated from the electronic and real worlds.” Similarly, a Southeast instructor’s cell phone policy ~~instructed~~ students to imagine that their “social life is subordinate to your academic education.” In such formulations of the relationship between school and other domains of life, electronic social exchanges that do not exclusively concern the classroom community and are not authorized by the instructor are understood as secondary and inconsequential to the classroom community.

Related to this issue of student agency, our sample of policies unevenly imagined and narrowly applied prohibitions and limitations on digital technologies, often restricting students’ opportunities to make choices about how to read, write, and take notes while instructors exempted themselves from their own policies. In other words, policies went beyond managing the attention of students to prescribe how students are supposed to learn, even in ways that contradicted the focus of the course. This most often occurred in ~~first-year writing~~ classrooms themed around issues of pop culture and media. The most illustrative of these came in a syllabus developed for a writing class at Southeast themed “New Media and Identity.” Students in the course were meant to: “work to understand and analyze the meaning of the culture we inhabit and the technology we use, especially how it relates to the increasing globalization of our world. We will explore how space, time and technology influence who we are as people.” In terms of policy and in contradiction of the course’s theme, the course’s technology policy told students to “bring with you

the appropriate texts or materials” while negating the possibility that some of those appropriate texts and materials might be online by also instructing students to “turn off cell phones and any other electronic devices, and be prepared to take part in the work of the class.” In other words—and despite the theme of the course—the policy suggests that texts made and shared online are neither appropriate nor part of the work of the class. While this course policy is perhaps the most illustrative of the theme, it was common for courses—most often ~~first-year writing~~ courses—that directly included a focus on digital culture to emphasize print, particularly through delivery requirements.

Despite these variances in the degree to which technologies are allowed or prohibited between the two sampled institutions, common across both was the practice of placing delivery requirements on students. These delivery-focused technology policies were mechanisms through which instructors made claims about their authority over the learning environment regardless of whether or not that environment included the study of digital culture. Such delivery requirements included asking students to download and print readings; check email daily; use a wiki or other content management system; submit projects in print; ~~save projects in print~~; use a Genius annotator; and use specific file names (e.g., YourLast-name\_Project1.doc). For example, it was commonplace for Northeast instructors to distribute syllabi through websites (most often, course wikis) and to share readings online or through an electronic course reserve when not already available as a printed text; these instructors then often required or strongly encouraged students to print materials shared online or through electronic reserves, stating in one case, “You MUST print out all PDFs and come to class with the text(s) carefully read and notes made in detail.” Where not required, policies either encourage students to read and annotate in print or emphasize print as the preferred medium for their work. For example, in a FYW course at Northeast the instructor posted course materials through a wiki, instructing students to print their readings “or bring a device on which you can access them.” But the instructor also required students to save their work in print for a portfolio project: “Please use one binder to file/organize all the paper we generate over the course of the semester.” At Southeast, print is also privileged but to a lesser extent; the policy contained in the staff syllabus which the majority of FYW instructors use, allows students to read “handouts, assignments, the syllabus, policies, and the schedule” in the learning management system using “laptops, cellphones, and tablets.” Among those that did not use the staff syllabus technology policy, all included a technology prohibition (most often, cell phones) and either requiring or insisting that students read and take notes in print.

While the nature of the requirements themselves varied ~~from how much and to what end students are given license to use digital technologies in the classroom~~, what was perhaps most surprising was how instructors

who implemented print-only or print-mostly requirements on students also made use of digital technologies to facilitate their own delivery of course content. This disparity between instructors' ability to deliver texts electronically and students' accountability to an array of technology policies suggests that technology policies do not apply to instructors. Even in those courses that attempt to recreate a microcosm of print culture by prohibiting reading and note-taking on devices, instructors have license to communicate electronically with students and hold them accountable to checking their email frequently. Thus, even where the preservation of a learning environment closed-off from outside influence is not the justification for the use of a technology policy, technology policies become mechanisms through which instructors extended their authority beyond the classroom, influencing how students read and write in preparation for class, and at the same time, limiting students' agency over their reading, writing, and learning inside the classroom.

Instances of technological discourse that attempt to preserve the social arrangement of the classroom as a space removed from the "real world" and establish it as a place where print is still the dominant medium work to reinforce anxieties by suggesting that print is the medium most appropriate for learning and that only those with expertise in print—particularly, instructors—can effectively attend to their choices of media and use of digital devices. These anxieties exacerbated by the association of device use with behavioral issues that disrespect and disrupt communities focused around the study and production of texts, suggesting that digital devices and digital spaces are about disruption rather than student learning.



### Defining Academic Work

In addition to monitoring students' behavior and learning, even in some cases in ways that were antithetical to the content of the course, we observed that course policies also consistently imagined digital devices as anathema to academic work. Most often, students' devices and their functions were imagined as attention traps that exclusively and necessarily distract students. In particular, these course policy sheets state that the presence of digital devices ultimately cause students to engage in a range of destructive behaviors: "surfing the web," checking email, engaging with social media, texting, "accessing pornography," and making up excuses for late work while in class. In other words, these policies narrowly imagine what students are doing onscreen, suggesting students are not using the required course management software, not accessing the course website, not reviewing readings, not visiting the websites professors provide for additional resources (e.g., the OWL at Purdue). Some policies provide self-justification, outlining how the devices work against the goals of the course: "Again: studies show that multi-tasking in class

will probably lower your performance. We don't want that." (The irony here is that no such studies are listed.)

Even courses in which digital delivery is specifically described as integral to the academic work of the course—in the course focus, readings and content, research requirements, or supplementary resources—often prohibit the use of delivery devices that could access digital materials or accomplish digital tasks. When digital devices are allowed, their possible productivity is almost always about reading, note-taking, or looking things up quickly. None of the course policies described meaningful, sustained engagement with digital technologies during the class meetings, and very few mentioned the use of devices, platforms, software, or texts as having potential for drafting, workshopping, revising, peer reviewing, researching, discussing, or analyzing. (As we collaboratively write this article online, and given how much writing takes place online generally, this strikes us as an especially ironic omission among the policies.) For instance, one instructor at Southeast did mention that laptops could be “handy” for workshops without an indication of why or how, before mentioning that the pen and paper, or the “old fashioned way,” is also permissible, suggesting—at best—digital technologies are capable of replicating print.

Most surprising were course policies developed for courses where digital media and digital culture were topics in the course and/or where a digital environment (for example, a wiki, a blog, or another CMS) figured prominently in the course. In these cases, course policies overwhelmingly reinforced the idea that learning happens in print and face-to-face while digital technologies are only useful for accessing readings, note-taking, and communicating with the instructor outside of class, thus narrowly imagining what academic work entails. Among six sampled syllabi that were distributed online or were developed courses where digital and contemporary culture are focuses, all six recommended or required students to read in print. For instance, in a course on culture and technology, wherein the primary objective was to “explore how space, time and technology influence who we are as people,” the technology statement read simply: “turn off cell phones and any other electronic devices and be prepared to take part in the work of the class.” A generous reading of these policies might identify the underlying pattern of positioning of digital devices as impeding learning as being undergirded by the idea that digital devices and digital texts are only useful for academic work outside the classroom; in more extreme cases, the belief seems to be that they are not capable of contributing to academic work at all.

## Conclusion

As composition studies has increasingly taken up pedagogies that emphasize writers' choices (for example, Shipka's *Composition Made Whole*), this sample of course policies suggests that students consistently lack the

opportunity to make meaningful choices in how they read, write, and learn. Rather than offer choice, support, and reasoning, we have found that these technology policies consistently prescribe practices while imagining reading, writing, and learning within a microcosm of print culture, obscuring the reality that much of the serious work that students do outside of class occurs in a material- and media-rich scene of literate action. As Stacy Pigg has shown, students develop sophisticated sets of habits both onscreen and in social space to negotiate the challenges of living and working in a hyper-networked attention economy by “combining shared social spaces and personal technologies to support learning processes over time through informal but sustained writing processes” (“Emplacing” 269). As Pigg shows, students understand that their attention is a commodity, and much like the students’ part of Ravizza et al.’s study, they are aware of what they need to do and not to do to pay attention. By limiting the devices they use to read, learn, and write—and along with them, the strategies and practices they find helpful—prescriptive policies deny students opportunities to develop and practice literacy with materials that they regularly use as part of their academic work outside of class.

While policies may attempt to guide students to processes and practices that can productively sustain their academic work by providing models of good academic behavior, we also observe that they occlude possibilities for student engagement with delivery technologies in ways that are productive—and maybe even experimental—and for students’ cultivation of the ability to manage their own attention (in the same ways professors assume for themselves). Part of this work of making new possibilities available to students involves imagining attention as a limited but not static resource that’s gained and lost depending on the devices present in the room but as composed. As Nathaniel Rivers has argued, attention is an important resource that is not possessed but is formed through relations between students, devices, texts, and a range of other materials. As he argues, “Moving forward in digital rhetoric, the task is not just to measure a new digital tool against ‘attention’ but to slowly trace the very composition of attention in action, each and every time.” This notion of attention as composed is a compelling starting point for imagining what student learning might best look like from behind the podium because it suggests possibilities for students to consider what devices and media are most conducive to their academic work.

In short, there is substantial research that would bolster thinking through careful limitations on digital device use in the classroom. However, we find little of that thinking—and none of that research—mentioned or reflected in the course policies discussed here. Instead, instructors use technology policies as a locus of control for defining acceptable behavior and delimiting the possible ways that academic work can be productively accomplished. What we identify in the course policies, then, is expressive of anxiety and a desire for control—of community, classroom,

attention—and as willing to exact punitive measures to ensure that control. Some versions of that control orient themselves to device specificity: circumscribing the use of tablets, USB drives, cords and cables, printer cards, earbuds/headphones, cloud storage, and even device charging. The flouting of these behavioral norms is variously punished by shame (it’s “disrespectful”), by docking grades via participation, by requests to leave, the applications of the absence policy, or by formal charges before a university honor board.

Given these issues: how we might write course policy statements to more productively shape the discourse surrounding the use of technology in English classrooms. Instead of boiler plates and justifications of policy, what ways forward might we pursue in thinking about policies as sites of productive technological discourse about digital delivery? Below, we suggest two approaches to developing course policies: one focused on the goals of the course and ~~the other acknowledging~~ the realities of living in a networked culture where the lines between the curriculum and the extracurriculum are all but completely dissolved. Accompanying ~~these approaches~~, we also suggest a possible assignment for each designed to help instructors systematically support the inclusion of print and digital technologies in classroom.



The first approach to policy-writing involves taking stock of what students are ultimately expected to be able to do by the end of the course and what technologies can support those goals. Such an approach involves not only recommending platforms but also recommending specific ways of using those platforms. To begin to imagine what platforms might be constructive for use in the class, we recommend asking students: what technologies (media, devices, platforms, and software) they have used in the past to read, write, research, and learn; what they did with those technologies; and whether or not ~~and if so, how~~ they were effective. Such a list might be generated on the first day of class based on a version of the following.

1. List the technologies (for example: pens; notebooks; laptops; annotation software; e-readers) you have used to read in the past. For each, note whether or not it was effective and why.
2. List the technologies (for example, pens; notebooks; Powerpoint; Google Docs camera phone) *you have used to take notes* in the past. For each, note whether or not it was effective and why.
3. List the technologies (for example: pens; notebooks; Google Docs; Microsoft Word; Pages; markdown or distraction free word processors; blogs; discussion boards) *you have used to write* in the past. For each, note whether or not it was effective and why.
4. List the technologies (for example: double-entry notebooks; books; notebooks; reference software like RefWorks; Google Drive; blogs) *you have used to research in the past*. For each, note whether or not it was effective and why.



After students help generate this list of technologies and their possible productive uses, a compilation of their responses might be shared with them to suggest what academic work looks like using a combination of print and digital media. Based on this list, a policy might be circulated to emphasize what the primary work of the class entails and what technologies can best support that work based on their own responses. Ultimately, this approach involves offering students a set possible best practices that suggest how they might use print and digital technologies to support specific literacy tasks.

Although not always reflected in course policies, students read, write, and learn in a rich media landscape: rich in the range of technologies available to them; rich in demands on their time and attention; and rich in potentials for meaning making. Although research (e.g., Pigg) suggests that students can become adept at navigating this landscape by developing productive habits and preferences, it *is* the case that not all students have had opportunities to develop such habits—in part, because of a persistent idea about what learning should look like.<sup>2</sup> Insofar as classrooms are spaces where students read and write, they are also spaces where students find support for *becoming* better readers and writers—not in isolation from but in tandem with the other contexts where they develop literacy. To acknowledge that students use a range of media outside the classroom and to allow those uses within the classroom gives them license to do what works as well as allows them opportunity to develop new practices with writing technologies: both familiar and unfamiliar.

## Notes

1. It may be the case that device-use is understood as bad classroom behavior in order to ease the transition from a highly regulated high school environment to college, but this motive is not reflected in the policies themselves, and is, therefore, beyond the scope of this study.
2. It might be the case that Southeast and Northeast students' economic backgrounds and histories of access have made it difficult to form productive habits in online environments, but ~~whether or not~~ the policies ~~collected and analyzed as part of~~ this study attempt to help students develop such habits ~~is not reflected in the policies themselves, and is, therefore, beyond the scope of this study.~~



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