PROGRAM PROFILE 3.

TAs AS ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHER RESEARCHERS: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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There is a wide range of scholarship on mentoring junior and graduate student WPAs (Edgington and Hartlage Taylor; Latterell; Moore) and the importance of mentoring new graduate students as teachers (Estrem and Reid; Fedukovich and Hall; Obermark et al.). However, there is little information on how mentoring graduate students in programmatic and teacher *research* can aid in the professional development of future writing studies professionals. The following program description discusses a series of opportunities for TAs to be mentored as administrative and teacher researchers and how these experiences prepare graduate students to be informed community members. I also discuss how TAs make the program better through their funds of knowledge (González et al.) and adaptability as new teachers (Rupiper Taggart and Lowry). Using personal experiences and programmatic documents, I will discuss my own trajectory as an advanced graduate student with mentorship, opportunity, and applied research through professional development opportunities.

Currently our writing program houses 133 graduate students in five different disciplines. This group makes up over 70% of the overall instructor population of our writing program, which teaches roughly 12,000 students a year in first-year writing courses. Thus, we need graduate students to be in administrative and research positions to attend to the large amount of data, students, and communication required for a large program. To attend to this demand the program has generated a large amount of opportunities that I outline in the description. These positions include: graduate assistant WPAs, transfer and placement advisors for assessment, GTA committee representatives, writing program specific members within the English Graduate Union, research assistantships on writing studies projects, writing center liaisons, editors for the writing program handbook, and service-learning advisory board members. These experiences are

useful for WPAs, teacher mentors, rhetoric and composition researchers, and graduate students at a wide range of institutions where they can be adapted for local needs. Additionally, my experience can speak to how faculty can mentor (and be mentored) by TAs in this research, creating less dissonance between community members and traditional hierarchies.

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