

*Computers and Composition*  
AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL



# GUEST EDITOR'S MANUAL

*REVISED WINTER 2006*

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## **SPECIAL ISSUE POLICY**

*Computers and Composition's* editors try to limit special issues to a maximum of one or two a year. Generally, interested colleagues develop an idea for a special issue that they believe will be of scholarly interest to *Computers and Composition's* readers. Inquiries for special issues should be directed to Cynthia L. Selfe or Gail E. Hawisher in a formal letter of proposal. Colleagues interested in proposing a special issue should first request a Guest Editor's Manual. Guest editors should read this manual carefully, paying particular attention to the section, "Arranging to Edit a Special Issue," and then prepare and submit a proposal to the *Computers and Composition* editors.

### ***PROPOSING A SPECIAL ISSUE***

Proposals for special issues should indicate the name(s) and address(es) of guest editors (including an email address), describe the scholarly interest and its relationship to *Computers and Composition's* readers, and the procedure for acquiring articles. Guest editors should include with their special issue proposals a call for papers and a timeline for completion.

### ***ARRANGING TO EDIT A SPECIAL ISSUE***

Recent special issues have focused on global issues; multimedia; sound; distance learning; software; electronic portfolios; gender issues; coding and programming in the classroom; and issues of tenure in the twenty-first century. Generally, such issues come about when interested colleagues develop an idea for a special issue that will be of scholarly interest to *Computers and Composition's* readers. Inquiries about special issues should be directed to Cynthia L. Selfe or Gail E. Hawisher, who as Co-Editors decide if your idea is feasible and fits within the publication schedule of the journal.

During your negotiations with the Co-Editors, you should address the following questions:

- ✧ Why do you think this special issue would be of scholarly interest to *Computers and Composition's* audience? Although your initial contacts with one of the editors may be oral, as you pursue your Guest Editorship, provide a written rationale for the issue or a tentative "call for manuscripts" that shows both the relevance and the scope of the issue for those in computers and composition. This ensures that your focus isn't altered or misconstrued.
- ✧ Do you have the time to commit to such a long-term project? Putting together such issues can be time consuming; think about deadlines (we recommend allowing at least a year and a half from the time the first call for manuscripts is issued to the actual publication date (actual copyediting, typesetting, and printing of the issue once the Guest Editor has compiled it takes approximately six to eight months). (See the discussion of publication schedules below.)
- ✧ How are you going to acquire the articles? Occasionally, Guest Editors have been involved in an ongoing discussion or conference where a number of people working on a topic are each willing to produce a relevant article. More commonly, however, Guest

Editors will prepare a call for manuscripts that appears in various journals and on electronic discussion lists and news groups.

- ✧ What should be the contents and length of the issue? Early on, you will want to determine the length of the issue you will submit. At the same time, you will want to seek the advice of the editors on the number of articles that should be included and discuss any issues such as how theoretical, practical, or pedagogically focused articles might be. Four to seven articles of twenty-five to thirty double spaced pages (140-200 total pages) are typical.
- ✧ Who do you work with on preparing a special issue? Although initial discussions are with the Co-Editors, Guest Editors also work closely with the Associate Editor, a graduate student who takes primary responsibility for copyediting the paper journal. The Associate Editor assists as much as possible with Guest Editors to publish calls for manuscripts and arranging publicity for special issues as well as being responsible for supervising Assistant Editors in preparing the special issue to meet our standards and conventions, and coordinating with the publisher for a timely printing and distribution of issues. Once the special issue has been submitted for copyediting, Guest Editors work almost exclusively with the Associate Editor.

## **PUBLICATION SCHEDULES**

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Once a special issue has been arranged, deadlines for a number of major steps should be established. We publish four times a year (March, June, September, and December). Guest Editors need to be concerned primarily with creating a suitable publication schedule for the entire issue. Typically, guest-edited issues take at least 2 years to put together. The following example is for an issue to be published in September.

Issue printed and mailed  
**September 1, 2008**

Associate Editor emails issue to publisher  
**June 1, 2008**

Guest Editor submits special issue to Associate Editor after reviewing and finalizing manuscripts  
**April 1, 2008**

Authors' deadline for submitting revised manuscripts to Guest Editor\*  
**January 1, 2008**

Guest Editor sends accepted manuscripts back to authors  
**November 1, 2007**

Deadline for authors' manuscripts to Guest Editor  
**September 1, 2007**

Deadline for abstracts to Guest Editor  
**March 1, 2007**

Guest editor prepares and submits cfp to Associate Editor  
**February 1, 2006**

### ***SETTING YOUR SCHEDULE***

To set your schedule, it is easiest to work backwards from the printing date. The Associate Editor will provide a timeline listing suggested dates for Guest Editor tasks and the required Associate Editor and publisher deadlines:

- ❖ One year to eighteen months in advance of when manuscripts are due to Guest Editor: Calls for proposals sent out
- ❖ Six months to one year in advance of when manuscripts are due to Guest Editor: Calls for manuscripts sent out
- ❖ Three months to eight months in advance of when manuscripts are due to Associate Editor: Guest Editor prepares issue contents-receives manuscripts, sends to peer reviewers (if applicable), edits the manuscripts, works with authors
- ❖ Three months in advance of when manuscripts are due to publisher: Issue due to Associate Editor\*
- ❖ Three to six months in advance of publication date: Associate Editor and Assistant Editors copyedit issue and prepare it for publication
- ❖ Three months in advance of publication date: Publisher receives issue; typesets issue; sends out proofsheets to authors, Guest Editor, and Associate Editor; prints; and mails issue

\*Manuscripts must be entered into the online submission system when they are submitted to the Associate Editor.

### **WORKING WITH THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR**

Although Guest Editors negotiate special issues with the Co-Editors, the editor they work with most closely is the Associate Editor. The Associate Editor is the most knowledgeable person about our style, procedures, and editing process. Thus, Guest Editors are encouraged to remain in contact with the Associate Editor and should feel free to use him or her as an information source and problem solver. As the special issue enters the copyediting phase of production, the Associate Editor will generally make author queries directly rather than routing routine copyediting questions through the Guest Editor.

The Associate Editor works with the Assistant Editor and Co-Editors to copy edit each manuscript submission for C&C house style. Manuscripts should be submitted in a format as

close to this style as possible. The *Computers and Composition* Style Manual is available at the *Computers and Composition* Web site and should be distributed to authors for reference as they are preparing their manuscripts.

The Associate Editor is the person responsible for presenting your special issue to the publisher through the online submission system. She or he will negotiate any special features in the issue, anticipate printing problems, consult with the publisher, and work to make sure the issue gets the publicity it deserves.

## **SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS ELECTRONICALLY**

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All manuscripts submitted to our publisher, Elsevier, must be submitted through the Elsevier Electronic Submission (EES) Web site (<http://www.ees.elsevier.com/cocomp/>) for tracking purposes. The Associate Editor grants Guest Editors limited access to editorial functions on this site. If you have not already registered at this site when your special issue is accepted, you must do so in order for the Associate Editor to grant you access to the system. Instructions at the previously listed address will guide you through the registration process. Once you are granted Guest Editor status simply log in as “editor” when you enter your user name and password. If you are already registered use the same user name and password.

Guest Editors typically handle the majority of their manuscript negotiations directly. Once any revisions are approved and the manuscript is finalized the Guest Editor should request that authors submit electronic manuscript files and individual files for graphics and tables by registering as authors at the online submission site (<http://www.ees.elsevier.com/cocomp/>). All files should be clearly labeled with the special issue title abbreviation and journal volume and number.

Once the author files are submitted the Guest Editor should contact the Associate Editor to confirm the status of the files and begin the copy editing process.

## **EDITING PHILOSOPHY AND PROFILE**

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*Computers and Composition* is devoted to exploring the use of computers in writing classes, writing programs, and writing research. It provides a forum for discussing issues connected with writing and computer use. It also offers information about integrating computers into writing programs on the basis of sound theoretical and pedagogical decisions, and empirical evidence. Articles, reviews, and letters to the editors that may be of interest to readers may include descriptions of computer-aided writing and/or reading instruction; discussions of topics related to computer use of software development; explorations of controversial ethical, legal, or social issues related to the use of computers in writing programs; and discussions of how computers affect form and content for written discourse, the process by which this discourse is produced, or the impact this discourse has on an audience.

Not only do the editors of the journal look for articles that have sound theoretical and/or pedagogical bases, but they strive to publish articles that in their very writing demonstrate the high-quality writing the discipline teaches. This is generally accomplished through a coherent

organization, well-developed arguments, well-written sentences, and accurate documentation. Authors should introduce subject matter within the context of those interested in computers and composition, using terms and cultural references that either are commonly understood within our international community or are carefully explicated within the article itself.

Because the journal has primarily an academic audience, it is generally scholarly and more formal than magazines; yet, it strives to avoid a preachy or labored tone. Nor should it be jargon filled. When making decisions on grammar and punctuation, Guest Editors should lean toward a more conservative choice when the appropriate approach is questionable (e.g., if the use of a comma is being debated, use the comma in instances where to do so may clarify meaning for some readers and will not muddy it for most).

APA style (5th edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association) provides the guidelines used by authors and editors to format and copyedit the journal. This guide is supplemented by the *Computers and Composition* Style Manual that notes where, due to the nature of the discipline or by the Co-Editors' choice, the journal deviates from the APA guidelines.

## **FEATURES OF THE JOURNAL**

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As with most journals, *Computers and Composition* has several sustaining features that readers can count on encountering as they browse issues. These sections are outlined in our style manual. The Letter from the Editor may be written by the Guest Editor should she or he wish to do so; however, if the Guest Editor has written an introductory article or essay that establishes the focus and content of the issue, this may serve as the Guest Editor's "letter." In most cases, special issues include both a Letter from the Guest Editors and a Letter from the Editors. Guest Editors may include poetry and/or book reviews but are not required to do so. The Associate Editor collects and prepares the announcements for each issue, so the Guest Editor does not need to provide those materials.

## **PREPARING THE MANUSCRIPT**

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*WHEN PREPARING THE MANUSCRIPT, GUEST EDITORS NEED TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:*

A statement of the title of the special issue as it should appear on the cover page of the journal, for example, "Computers and the Writing Center, From Codex to Code: Programming in the Writing Classroom." Additionally, the Review Editor needs to know which article should appear on the *Computers and Composition* online Web site as the "teaser" article (we publish one article from the upcoming issue as well as abstracts of the other articles for that issue online as soon as the copyedited manuscript is sent to the publisher).

Table of contents page that provides section headings (if any) and article titles and authors' names as they should appear in the journal.

*EACH ARTICLE SHOULD BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY AND INCLUDE:*

**A manuscript title page that provides the following:**

- ✧ article title
- ✧ author name(s) as they should appear in final version
- ✧ author(s) name(s), title(s), affiliation(s), postal address(es), phone number(s), fax number(s), and e-mail address(es). (Note in the case of dual authorship, the first author listed is the one we will contact with copyediting queries)
- ✧ a running head of up to 50 characters
- ✧ # of manuscript pages (including title page and abstract but excluding any graphics)
- ✧ # of tables, if any
- ✧ # of figures, if any

**Permissions**

It is the author's responsibility to obtain necessary copyright permissions to reproduce illustrations, tables, and lengthy quoted passages. These letters of permission must be submitted with the revised text of any article and will be filed with the publisher.

**Abstract and keywords page**

A 100-200 word informative/descriptive abstract and 5-10 keywords suitable for indexing.

**Body of the paper**

Authors should use footnotes (not endnotes); acknowledgments, thank yous, and the author's biographical note should appear immediately after the concluding paragraph, followed by the references.

**Appendixes**

List of table and figure captions; tables and figures themselves in the order they should appear in the article. Clearly label the back of each table and figure page with author name, article title, and figure or table number. For the label, use a self-adhesive label positioned, if possible, away from the table or figure body. Fill out the label before affixing it to the page so that indentations are not made on the page.

**PUBLICIZING THE SPECIAL ISSUE**

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One of the interesting aspects of special issues is how they often cross or broaden disciplinary communities. Guest Editors are encouraged to work with the Associate Editor to reach as large an audience as possible. We publicize at two times during the preparation of the manuscript: when the call for material is needed, and when the issue is printed to increase our readership.

In the past, Guest Editors have used three primary strategies to gather appropriate material: Calls for proposals/manuscripts, contacting colleagues, and drawing from panels presented at conferences and workshops. Each strategy has its benefits and drawbacks. For the best results we recommend using these strategies together in order to gather as broad a sampling of work on your topic as possible.

### **Calls for Manuscripts**

Placing announcements in appropriate journals, at the *Computers and Composition* Web site, and on electronic discussion lists and news groups is typically how Guest Editors publicize their need for articles. Such calls reach a larger segment of potential authors and can encourage those outside the US to contribute to our conversation. However, one drawback is that authors often do not have a manuscript ready to send off. If calling for manuscripts (i.e., you want the authors to submit a full article), sufficient time for interested authors to write their articles must be provided when setting submission deadlines. If calling for proposals, additional time must be allotted for reviewing and accepting the proposed articles and the final submission date for the authors to write them and have them reviewed/content-edited by either the Guest Editor or her/his review panel.

### **Drawing from Panels**

Occasionally, a Guest Editor has participated in a conference or workshop where potential articles have already been presented and could be expanded to article length and style. Rather than doing a broad call, the Guest Editor might invite workshop participants to expand their presentations for the special issue. Drawing from such sources makes a focused, coherent issue possible as the Guest Editor already knows what the content will be (in essence, the conference is used for the initial review of proposals); in addition, preparation time of individual articles should be considerably shorter (although reviewing and revising will still be required). However, if the Guest Editor is unfamiliar with an author's writing, more work may be necessary when offering revision advice during the content editing phase of issue preparation.

### **Colleagues**

A Guest Editor who knows of a colleague (or a group of colleagues) working on a relevant idea may invite that person or group to submit. Often, groups will coordinate their articles in such a way as to create a "section" or play upon a theme, for example, see the Selfe, Selfe, Grimm, and George articles in Volume 12, Number 3 (December 1995). Although approaching colleagues allows the Guest Editor to more fully discuss directions articles might take and how they might fit within a special issue, it may be difficult to find enough colleagues willing and able to provide work at the time.

### **Contents of a Call**

Guest Editors are encouraged to examine back issues of *Computers and Composition* for examples of calls. Although they provide the same information (focus/rationale, possible topics, deadlines, query procedure, etc.), each call is unique and can be written only by the Guest Editor. The call will appear in the journal; thus the Associate Editor can assist in its preparation to some extent. The call can also be sent to other journals and handed out at conferences and workshops to generate interest among potential authors.

### **Publicizing the Final Product**

Once the issue is published, we work to make its availability known in each relevant scholarly community. *Computers and Composition* relies heavily on its Guest Editors to determine where the issue should be publicized. There are several avenues for such efforts:

The publisher will produce appropriate flyers for a special issue for dispersal at CCCC and other conferences. However, a minimum of two months lead time is necessary for designing, production, and delivery of such materials. Typically, the Guest Editor (or her or his assistants) will hand out copies of the flyers at sessions pertinent to the issue as well as place copies on the informational tables around the conference site. Additionally, copies are available at the publisher's booth if the company is exhibiting at the conference. Although subscriptions are normally for one year, in the past, the publisher has made a one-issue price available for special issues. The Associate Editor will make these arrangements; the Guest Editor should alert the Associate Editor of the actions she or he desires.

### **Exchange of Announcements**

Although *Computers and Composition* cannot pay for announcements in other journals, Guest Editors may work out an exchange of publicity for special issues or calls for manuscripts with other journals (e.g., the Guest Editors of the special issue on writing centers and computers exchanged announcements with *The Writing Center Journal*).

### **Electronic Announcements**

Guest Editors may wish to design announcements of their special issue's availability for appropriate electronic discussion lists or news groups. Typically, such announcements will provide a brief description of the issue, a table of contents, and information on how to get a copy. As the focus of special issues varies, Guest Editors should work with the Associate Editor to find useful sites for such announcements and avoid simply "dumping" the announcement on lists.

## **WORKING WITH AUTHORS**

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As a Guest Editor, you will be working with your authors on revising the content of their articles both to build coherence into the special issue and to retain the high quality of the journal. Advising authors on the content and direction of their thoughts is an art in itself. Style also is idiosyncratic to some extent, and we rely on the Guest Editor to assist the author in eliminating wordiness, redundancy, and inappropriate tone shifts. To this end, Guest Editors are encouraged to examine the *Computers and Composition* Style Manual for examples of basic requirements and changes we will typically make in manuscripts as we copyedit. Here we attempt to provide some tips on working with authors that basically answer frequently asked questions or are intended to alert you to "unwritten" guidelines. We hope that familiarity with these items will streamline your efforts in preparing your issue.

### ***Formatting the Text***

We do not expect authors to match our formatting choices of font or point size; indeed, this is nearly impossible to do. However, authors can greatly assist us if they use a standard font such as Times, Palatino, or Helvetica. Ornate fonts such as Architect, Braggagocio, Desdamona, or Mistral should be avoided, as we probably do not have them on our computers. But, more importantly, we have to coordinate with our publisher for any special fonts or unusual layout. If you have an author who requires a special font or special characters, we suggest you discuss the

need with the Associate Editor as soon as possible while the article is being revised as coordinating such needs can take considerable time.

Authors occasionally ask how they should prepare their electronic version. You may wish to offer them the following advice:

- ✧ Use the "ruler bar" feature of the word processing package rather than tabs and spaces for indents and centering as this reduces reformatting during the production phase of preparing articles.
- ✧ Do not use the hyphenation feature as this makes copyediting difficult.
- ✧ Use a ragged-edge right margin rather than a right-justified margin.
- ✧ Graphics should be submitted separately from the text itself. Authors should indicate where a table or figure should be inserted with the phrase: INSERT FIGURE X HERE. We will attempt to place the figure as close to this location as possible.
- ✧ Footnotes should be used sparingly and should not be excessively long. Notes are indicated by consecutive numbers in the text. Authors may use the same point size as the text, should they wish, but footnote numbers must appear in superscript position. Authors who have substituted pseudonyms for actual names should indicate this in a note at the first such substitution.

When preparing their articles, authors should examine previous issues (Volumes 13 and 14 preferably) to determine layout of specific items such as email messages, journal entries, conversation transcripts, and DAEDALUS Interchange transcripts. Should there be a question about how something might be done, the Guest Editor should contact the Associate Editor as early as possible in the editing process.

Perhaps the overriding problem we have with manuscripts is inaccuracies in references. As we would like to bother your authors as little as possible during the copyediting process, we encourage Guest Editors to hold strictly to APA standards and the *Computers and Composition* Style Manual. Particularly, authors may need to be reminded to double-check that items cited in the text actually appear in the references and vice versa.

### ***Formatting Graphics***

Graphics can be difficult to reproduce given our current printing process. Our best advice is to encourage the use of graphic elements when they will enhance the reader's understanding of the text, but keep in mind that the printing process used for the journal wipes out much of the gray scale. We may have to work closely together as an article is being revised to make sure we get the best quality graphics.

We offer the following advice on preparing such elements:

- ✧ Tables and figures should be completely understandable independent of the text. However, as in all good writing, they must be integrated into the argument of the paper as well (e.g., the author should explain the significance of the information).
- ✧ Each table or figure must be mentioned in the text, given a title, and consecutively numbered with Arabic numerals.
- ✧ Authors must provide good-quality black-and-white or grayscale images (at least 300 dpi if possible) or photographs of all figures to be directly reproduced for publication. We understand that "undoctored" screen captures are 72 dpi; authors should understand that such figures will reproduce poorly. Originals will not be returned.
- ✧ Originals must be legible after reduction to a maximum of 5" wide by 7" high. Small tables may be reduced to fit a space as small as 5" by 3.5" high. Photographs are particularly difficult to reproduce, so authors should double-check image quality when reduced to make sure the image isn't too dark. When in doubt, send the material to the Associate Editor as soon as possible. We often can determine quality and offer advice here; failing this, we will consult with the publisher and assist the author in getting the best possible results.
- ✧ Graphs and charts must look professional.

## **PROOFING THE ISSUE**

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Generally, the production process works in the following manner. The Guest Editor sends the manuscript to the Associate Editor. The Associate Editor takes the next two months to copyedit the issue and prepares a final manuscript that is sent to our publisher, Elsevier Press at JAI Press. After the publisher has typeset the issue, copies of the proof or galley sheets are mailed as follows:

- ✧ A complete set to the Guest Editor
- ✧ A complete set to the Associate Editor
- ✧ A copy of the individual articles to the contact author. (Each contact author receives a "master" proof and a copy, which may be forwarded to a coauthor if desired and/or if time allows.)

Each group has 48 hours to proof their material. Guest Editors generally just skim the issue looking for any egregious errors or omissions rather than doing a word-for-word proofing because many changes may have been made to meet our style standards and/or have been previously approved by the author. The Associate Editor's staff does a word-for-word check against the original version sent to the publisher and clarifies any changes that seem odd. Authors proof their articles and supply any omitted information.

## **A FINAL NOTE AND CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESSES**

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We hope this manual serves as a good jumping-off place as you contemplate or begin guest editing a special issue for *Computers and Composition*. We always profit from the new perspectives Guest Editors bring to the journal. Please let us know if we can be of any other service or of any ways this manual can be improved.

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