Dear Dr. Rodriguez and Members of the Search Committee:

I am writing to apply for the position of Assistant Professor in Rhetoric and Composition at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona advertised in the MLA Job Information List. I am a PhD candidate in the Rhetoric and Composition program at the university of Texas at El Paso with research and pedagogical interests grounded within theories of multimodal rhetoric and new media. I believe that my scholarly record, effective pedagogical practices and extensive administrative and mentoring experience will make me an ideal colleague committed to meaningfully contributing to an already thriving institution.

My dissertation, *Video Composition: Tracing Documentary Assemblages*, questions and complicates current approaches to integrating digital videography, and new media at large, within academic environments. Given the field’s persistent desire, if not struggle, to take on alternative modes of composing, I provide an exploration of the distinct affordances, composing practices and rhetorical principles of digital videography. In particular, I trace the means by which video-making practices are taught, taken up, resisted, and even paved over. To this end I conducted a series of actor-network case studies within first-year-writing classrooms engaged in documentary video-making. The case studies draw disciplinary common places into conversation with actual sites of production to create productive questions, provocations, and insights. One such commonplace that I interrogate is the claim that instructors needn’t necessarily have any familiarity with the modes they teach because larger rhetorical principles apply to all forms of writing. The empirical work of the dissertation reveals the more distinctive practices of digital documentary video-making, such as non-linear editing, that do not readily fall within generalizable principles. Based upon these studies I claim that instructors, students and scholars can take on a more complex and persuasive relationship with composing technologies by adapting to the particularized practices of a new media. Based upon the absence of grounded studies exploring videographic composing practices, I anticipate that the dissertation research will contribute to scholarly conversations in a timely and productive manner. I intend to revise the dissertation into multiple article length submissions alongside a collective electronic manuscript aimed toward Computers and Composition Digital Press.

The dissertation acts as an extension of my larger research agenda which traces, problematizes and even intervenes in the relationships that rhetors maintain with(in) composing technologies. My research agenda began with the publication of a video project, “Lost in Translation: Emplacement Disruption and Digital Videography” with *Computers and Composition Online* in 2013. “Lost in Translation” argues for, and embodies, the possibilities of digital video as a distinct composing medium for academic scholarship. Currently I am collaborating with John Scenters-Zapico on an electronic book project, contracted with Computers and Composition Digital Press, entitled *Literacy in the Margins: The Emergence of Electronic Literacies in Low Wage Workplaces* (expected Summer 2016). *Literacy in the Margins* ethnographically details the literacy practices of low-wage workers, revealing modes of skillful coping that challenge stereotypical representations of “low-skill” positions. The digital project employs videos and images, alongside traditional text, to allow interview participants to engage scholastic audiences in ways previously not possible. In this way the e-manuscript also theorizes the pathos of videography within the context of empirical studies that call upon human subjects. Though my research ostensibly focuses upon issues of digital composing and multimodality my interests also extend to larger questions concerning rhetorical theory. I am in the midst of revising a manuscript on comparative rhetorical methodologies that was submitted to *Rhetoric Review*. “Toward a Comparative Rhetoric Made Antifoundational,” currently advised as a revise and resubmit, uses the work of Friedrich Nietzsche to propose a comparative methodology that transcends notions of accuracy and inaccuracy. I show that an antifoundational methodology would not question whether a rhetorician accurately or inaccurately accounts for non-western rhetorics but rather would question the degree to which a rhetorician's account creates *new* understandings or reasserts the customary-already-understood.

Much of my research has arisen from and informs my pedagogical approaches to teaching writing and composition. As an instructor I work to challenge my students to explore the complexities of writing, language and persuasion with the goal of cultivating rhetorical dispositions that afford students the ability to shift to meet the needs of indeterminate rhetorical situations. One challenge that I set forth for my students is to consider that the genres, modes and discourses that *matter* to them may operate beyond the walls of academia. I invite students to consider what it would mean to perform for an audience past the instructor, promoting them to shift, fuse, or even transform academic norms to meet the needs of actual communities. Addressing an outer audience necessarily entails an exploration of the operant modes of composing and styles of performance at play within the communities students seek to address, which allows students to engage in and adapt to forms of composing that branch beyond conventionalized texts or academic registers. Alongside these pedagogic maneuvers students in my courses actively engage disciplinary materials from Rhetoric and Writing Studies to help them work through questions concerning the nature of language, culture, race, multilingualism and language ideology.

Working within the linguistically and culturally diverse environment of UTEP has necessitated a persistent commitment to exploring the dynamics of language use, ideology and negotiation. Student engagement with RWS disciplinary materials addressing the nature of standard language ideology and multilingualism, in particular, promote students to explore the role language plays in their civic, personal and academic lives. Attending to disciplinary sources also creates the possibility for experiments in code-meshing practices—affording modes of expression typically bounded off from academic environments. While developing my own pedagogy, I have also addressed and facilitated differing approaches to the instruction of writing via invited talks to both the composition program at large and composition theory courses in the PhD program—moves emblematic of my desire to provide service to my home institution which I would in turn like to bring to Cal-State Polytech.

I believe that my considerable administrative experience will bolster the English and Foreign Languages department in advising and mentoring graduate students as well as forwarding writing-in-the-disciplines initiatives. Over the course of the PhD program I have acted as a Puentes Doctoral Tutor, Assistant Director to the Rhetoric and Composition PhD program and am currently the assistant director of the University Writing Center. During my first and second years in the PhD program (2012-2014) I successfully worked within the Puentes Doctoral Tutoring Program, a UTEP graduate school initiative to support, mentor and assist underrepresented doctoral students. As a member of Puentes I provided extensive mentorship and tutoring of the dissertation process, oversaw data collection for the Puentes grant, trained new Puentes tutors and conducted seminars on dissertation writing. During my third year of the PhD program I acted as Assistant Director to the Rhetoric and Composition PhD Program, where I facilitated the orientation of first year doctoral students, organized and helped lead weekly colloquia for students to explore developing research interests, recruited prospective doctoral students and created promotional materials for the program. As Assistant Director of the University Writing Center I am creating mentorship and training structures for new tutors while also collaborating with UTEP faculty from the business and engineering departments to help cultivate writing curricula in the disciplines. At Cal State Polytech I look forward to calling upon my administrative experience to communicate the praxis of writing studies to the larger institution while also fostering a collaborative mentoring environment for graduate students.

Enclosed you will find a copy of my vita, research statement and teaching philosophy. Should you need additional information please contact me at 520-260-3455 or by email at zawarzecka@utep.edu. I look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your consideration.