

2022

## Front Matter

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/wcj>



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#), and the [Language and Literacy Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

(2022) "Front Matter," *Writing Center Journal*: Vol. 40 : Iss. 3, Article 1.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2832-9414.2004>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries.  
Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.



2022

THE

# Writing Center Journal

International Writing Centers Association  
An NCTE Assembly

### Editors

Harry Denny, *Purdue University*  
Romeo García, *University of Utah*  
Anna Sicari, *Oklahoma State University*

### Book Review Editor

Eric Camarillo, *Tarrant County College*

### Assistant Editors

Donald Penner, *University of Utah*  
Dani Putney, *Oklahoma State University*

---

### History of *The Writing Center Journal*

*The Writing Center Journal* was launched in 1980 by Lil Brannon & Stephen North and remains the primary research journal in the field of writing centers. *WCJ* is an official journal of the International Writing Centers Association, an Assembly of the National Council of Teachers of English. Previous editors of the journal are listed below.

Lil Brannon & Stephen North  
1980–1984

Neal Lerner & Elizabeth Boquet  
2002–2008

Jeanette Harris & Joyce Kinhead  
1985–1990

Lauren Fitzgerald & Melissa Ianetta  
2009–2013

Diana George, Nancy Grimm, & Edward Lotto  
1991–1994

Michele Eodice, Kerri Jordan, & Steve Price  
2013–2017

Dave Healy  
1994–1997

Pam Bromley, Eliana Schonberg, & Kara  
Northway  
2017–2022

Albert C. DeCiccio & Joan Mullin  
1997–2002

---

### Guidelines for Submission

The current editors invite article submissions of theoretical scholarship and original empirical research on topics of interest to the writing center community. We are also interested in book reviews and review essays; please query via e-mail before submitting reviews. *The Writing Center Journal* aims to reflect diverse contexts and encourages submissions related to a wide variety of institution types and writing centers. Article manuscripts should be submitted via the online portal. Articles are typically between 6,000 and 10,000 words and should follow NCTE's Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language. Please consult our style guide for formatting instructions. <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/wcj/styleguide.html>.

## WCJ Reviewers

All submissions are reviewed anonymously by at least two external readers; those listed below are members of the active reader pool. We thank them for their contributions to writing center scholarship.

Ira Allen, *Northern Arizona University*  
Arlene Archer, *University of Cape Town*  
Rebecca Babcock, *University of Texas of the Permian Basin*  
Valerie Balester, *Texas A&M University*  
Julia Bleakney, *Elon University*  
Bethany Bibb, *Southern Utah University*  
Rebecca Block, *Springboard Collaborative*  
Candis Bond, *Augusta University*  
Elizabeth Boquet, *Fairfield University*  
Gerd Bräuer, *University of Education Freiburg*  
Shanti Bruce, *Nova Southeastern University*  
Marna Broekhoff, *University of Oregon (retired)*  
Ellen Carrillo, *University of Connecticut*  
Russell Carpenter, *Eastern Kentucky University*  
Nikki Caswell, *East Carolina University*  
Steven Corbett, *George Mason University*  
Danielle Cordaro, *University of Mount Union*  
Tom Deans, *University of Connecticut*  
Harry Denny, *Purdue University*  
Melody Denny, *University of Northern Colorado*  
Bonnie Devet, *College of Charleston*  
Rasha Diab, *University of Texas at Austin*  
Sue Dinitz, *University of Vermont*  
Dana Driscoll, *Indiana University of Pennsylvania*  
Kevin Dvorak, *Nova Southeastern University*  
Grant Eckstein, *University of California, Davis*  
Michele Eodice, *University of Oklahoma*  
Ann-Marie Eriksson, *Gothenburg University*  
Christopher Ervin, *Oregon State University*  
Katya Fairbanks, *Claremont Graduate University (retired)*  
Wonderful Faison, *Langston University*  
Heather Fitzgerald, *Emily Carr University of Art + Design*  
Lauren Fitzgerald, *Yeshiva University*  
Nadine Fladd, *University of Waterloo*  
Traci Freeman, *Endicott College*  
Clint Gardner, *Salt Lake Community College*  
Anne Ellen Geller, *St. John's University*  
Genie Giaimo, *Middlebury College*  
Paula Gillespie, *Florida International University*  
Roger Graves, *University of Alberta*  
Shareen Grogan, *University of Montana*  
Mark Hall, *University of North Carolina at Greensboro*  
Susanne Hall, *California Institute of Technology*  
Susanmarie Harrington, *The University of Vermont*  
Mary Hedengren, *University of Houston–Clear Lake*  
Beth Hewett, *University of Maryland University College*  
Kelsey Hixson-Bowles, *Utah Valley University*  
Amy Hodges, *University of Texas at Arlington*  
Nora Hoffmann, *Goethe University Frankfurt*  
Alba Newmann Holmes, *Swarthmore College*  
Monique Honegger, *Zurich University of Applied Sciences*  
Brad Hughes, *University of Wisconsin–Madison (retired)*  
Allison Hutchison, *Cornell University*  
Holly Jackson, *Mansfield University*  
Karen Keaton Jackson, *North Carolina Central University*  
Rebecca Jackson, *Texas State University*  
Joe Janangelo, *Loyola University Chicago*  
Amber Jensen, *Thomas A. Edison High School*  
Kerri Jordan, *Mississippi College*  
Joyce Kinhead, *Utah State University*  
Dagmar Knorr, *Leuphana University Lüneburg*  
Jennifer Kunka, *Francis Marion University*  
Steve Lamos, *University of Colorado Boulder*  
Noreen Lape, *Dickinson College*  
Susan Lawrence, *George Mason University*  
Chris LeCluyse, *Westminster University*  
Lisa Lebduska, *Wheaton College*  
Neal Lerner, *Northeastern University*  
Sarah Leu, *McGill University*  
Katie Levin, *University of Minnesota*  
Alexandria Lockett, *Spelman College*  
Rebecca Martini, *University of Georgia*  
Michael Mattison, *Wittenberg University*  
Jennifer Mawhorter, *Azusa Pacific University*  
Jackie Grutsch McKinney, *Ball State University*  
Sue Mendelsohn, *Columbia University*  
Wendy Menefee-Libey, *Harvey Mudd College*  
Michelle Miley, *Montana State University*  
Kendra Mitchell, *Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University*  
Rachel Dunleavy Morgan, *University of Great Falls*  
Lucie Moussu, *University of Alberta*  
Joan Mullin, *University of North Carolina at Charlotte*  
Anna Rita Napoleone, *University of Massachusetts, Amherst*  
Jennifer Nicklay, *University of Minnesota*  
Luke Niiler, *The University of Alabama*  
John Nordlof, *Eastern University*  
Georganne Nordstrom, *University of Hawai'i at Manoa*  
Rebecca Nowacek, *Marquette University*  
Emily Nye, *University of San Diego*  
Íde O'Sullivan, *University of Limerick*  
Bobbi Olson, *Grand View University*  
Innhwa Park, *West Chester University*  
Juli Parrish, *University of Denver*  
Irvin Peckham, *Louisiana State University*  
Michael Pemberton, *Georgia Southern University*  
Sherry Wynn Perdue, *Oakland University*  
Talinn Phillips, *Ohio University*  
Anja Poloubotko, *Leibniz University Hanover*  
Ben Rafoth, *Indiana University of Pennsylvania*  
Sarah Riddick, *Worcester Polytechnic Institute*  
Ted Roggenbuck, *Bloomsburg University*  
Brigitte Römmer-Nossek, *University of Vienna*  
Lynne Ronesi, *American University of Sharjah*  
Holly Ryan, *Penn State Berks*  
Lori Salem, *Temple University*  
Lorraine Savage, *Temple University*  
Ellen Schendel, *Grand Valley State University*  
Carol Severino, *University of Iowa*  
David Sheridan, *Michigan State University*  
Steve Sherwood, *Texas Christian University*  
Anna Sicari, *Oklahoma State University*  
Neil Simpkins, *University of Washington Bothell*  
Nathalie Singh-Corcoran, *West Virginia University*  
Jay D. Sloan, *Kent State University*  
Trixie Smith, *Michigan State University*  
Lingshan Song, *Mississippi College*  
Denise Stephenson, *Miracosta College*  
Beth Towle, *Salisbury University*  
Terese Thonus, *University of Baltimore*  
Kathryn Valentine, *San Diego State University*  
Anja Voigt, *European University Viadrina*  
Travis Webster, *Virginia Tech*  
Jaclyn Wells, *University of Alabama at Birmingham*  
Scott Whiddon, *Transylvania University*  
Bronwyn Williams, *University of Louisville*  
Terry Zawacki, *George Mason University (retired)*  
Amy Zenger, *American University of Beirut*  
Lisa Zimmerelli, *Loyola University of Maryland*



## Editors' Introduction

**W**e write this introduction after IWCA 2022, hosted in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. It was IWCA's first non-U.S. annual conference. By all accounts, it was a success. Many thanks are in order for Shareen Grogan, Georganne Nordstrom, and the larger IWCA board. And congratulations as well to all the Travel Grant, Dissertation and Research Grant, Outstanding Article/Chapter and Book, and Muriel Harris Outstanding Service Award recipients. Nearly 500 writing center members from across the world attended this year's conference. It was a common theme to hear how such members were glad to attend, and yet, felt haunted by the reality that they were unable to disconnect from the materiality of the everyday: the everyday challenges facing our lives, communities, and the world. This experience, it is important to note, is a familiar one for the minoritized, racialized, and marginalized. Thus, we should not be so hasty to chalk it up to a pandemic. Rather, it should be understood as a small invitation to return to and carefully reckon with everyday systemic materialities and systems of powers that cause such effects, consequences, and disconnects. But the question remains: How will you receive this invitation, sit with it, return to it, pick it up, learn from it, and pass it along? In this moment of self-reflection and reflexivity, we invite you to contend with what it means for writing centers and the writing center community not to have arrived yet.

IWCA 2022 was by all accounts a success. And yet, some of us found ourselves giving deliberative pause to and contending with the everyday tensions, contradictions, and paradoxes we find ourselves in. Because our reality is that we work within institutions that have everyday effects and carry out everyday consequences of and for land, memories, knowledges, understandings, and multiple ways of being, seeing, and doing. We participate in annual conferences that allow social, cultural, and economic disparities to go unnoticed and unchecked. Some of us found ourselves doubling down on that deliberative pause because in the irony that is our academic lives in the profession—the disparities of wage, labor, and capital—we enjoy many privileges, one being the fact that we can engage in conversation with colleagues by attending annual conferences. And we are uniquely positioned—as educators, directors, and writing consultants—because we get the opportunity to collaboratively dialogue on ideas, evolve those ideas into actions, and endeavor to implement those actions as everyday ethos, praxis, and best practices in spaces and places such as annual conferences. Whether or not we make disparities visible and audible comes down to choices made. The question remains: How will you choose to get caught up and carry out everyday

rhetorical activities otherwise? It is our hope, and another invitation to you, that this choice be understood as hardly a choice at all but a demand.

We learned much at the conference about where we are not yet as a writing center community and as writing centers. As editors, we learned from sessions like “Truth to Power” (Kelly, Green, Condon, and Inoue), where each speaker powerfully spoke to white and epistemic racism, a rhetoric of progress, misreadings, misunderstandings, and the ways critical race theory, counterstory, and decolonial aspirations can help us unsettle both the writing center community and writing centers themselves and move us toward other options. The IWCA Research Incubator held a round-robin session where participants spoke about how they are turning such theory into empirical research based on interview and survey methods to complement the stories people tell. Jonathan Rylander and his colleagues from the University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire addressed embodiment and storytelling. Research done by graduate students such as Jessie Clatterbuck’s work on empathetic and trauma-informed writing center practices and Megan Amling’s work on disability networks in writing centers makes us hopeful for future WC leadership. Current and former editors from a variety of writing center publications offered a closing day session on the possibilities and complications of replicable research. Collectively, we conversed and conspired, and yet, if we listened carefully and deeply engaged with these conversations, what we ought to recognize and acknowledge is that as a community and centers we are not yet at a point to celebrate. We have much dwelling and unsettling to do.

We held our own session because we thought it would be important to host a listening session and dialogue on future directions for the *Writing Center Journal*. We were once more reminded to pause and to recognize and acknowledge where the writing center community at large and writing centers themselves are. For example, how might we better do collaborative work between journals? Toward such ends, we made the commitment then and to those in the audience to seek opportunities to copublish. How might we better include and support undergraduate voices, writing, and scholarship? We committed to dedicate more space for regularly publishing undergraduate scholarship. How might we better carry out our vision and mission of and for mentorship? We committed to regular listening sessions where authors can share and workshop projects. How might we support the mission of IWCA and the *Writing Center Journal* in a more global context? We committed to support individual and collective efforts and projects beyond a U.S. context.

As a community and writing centers, we are not yet at a point to celebrate. That cannot be overstated. Might we converse and conspire in ways that are committed to unsettling what Asao Inoue calls habits of white language (HOWL), which themselves conform to the characteristics of whiteness and white supremacy culture? What are these habits exactly? There are six habits according to Inoue: (1) unseen, naturalized orientation to the world, (2) hyperindividualism, (3) stance that is neutral, objective, and apolitical, (4) individualized, rational, controlled self, (5) rule-governed, contractual relationships, and (6) clarity, order, and control. But how do we begin the work of unsettling? As editors, we believe we can begin this work by engaging in more robust conversations rather than relying upon settled assumptions and automatic equations between our position/alties and ethics, ethos, and praxis. And we can begin by commitments, first, to an ethic of responsibility and accountability otherwise. Second, to an ethos and praxis of unsettling the settled: the idea of writing centers, mission/izing and vision/izing statements, epistemic racism, whiteness, ableism, homophobia, rhetorics of progress and developments, and best practices. We need to unsettle the desire to celebrate our arrivals and rather dwell in and with where we are not yet.

This is a call to action. Our position/alties are not a given. We need to remain committed to investigating and unsettling our sense of self, being, and agency. Our institutions (e.g., higher education, writing centers, etc.) were architected to dominate ideal representations of knowledge, understanding, and being; to manage epistemic obedience; and to control who enters and what knowledge is valued or disavowed (Mignolo, 2011, p. 141). Thus, we need an unsettled witnessing, a commitment to “witnessing without being settled with what is constituted as legible” (Fukushima, 2019, p. 14). Our writing centers are not safe spaces, homeplaces, nor places we should celebrate

for demanding brav/er rhetorical activities and structures. Our role as educators, directors, and/or consultants cannot be overlooked in our capacity to archive a public record of HOWL. Thus, we need to both see in HOWL how it is largely shaped by semiotic interactions and contents and commit to/ward unsettling the everyday enunciations and human projects that surround its receptions and productions.

Where we are not yet is not to suggest that work is not currently taking and making spaces, places, and people otherwise. It is, however, yet another call to action. Might we return to the commitments we have made as a writing center community because of scholars such as Victor Villanueva (to unsettle the idea of race), Neisha-Anne Green (to unsettle the rhetoric of allyship), Anna Treviño and Wonderful Faison (to unsettle the settled/hidden in writing centers), Karen Moroski-Rigney (to unsettle ableist narratives in writing centers), and Travis Webster (to unsettle the hidden labor and heteronormativity/homonormativity of writing center labor)? We must allow something to remain at work and hesitate on the language of arrival. The prospect of a decolonial option is one case in point. As we write this introduction, there remains an inadequate response and commitment toward both unsettling epistemic racism and HOWL and undertaking antiracist and social justice for all positions. How, then, can we move toward a decolonial option for writing centers if we as a writing center community have not all got on board to doing the work essential for even contemplating such an option? Thank you, Neisha-Anne Green, for making sure we do not put the cart before the horse.

The articles in this issue reflect and highlight the important work of these concerns we call attention to. Articles in this issue take on topics ranging from the potential of writing centers to enact and effect institutional and political change (Williams), to the role of stress in everyday tutoring, to making visible the value of academic diversity and caregiving labor in graduate writing centers, to the microdecisions students might make about what tutor to make an appointment with and how to interact with them based on the tutor's online profile (Wells and Robbins), to entanglements and complicities in racist structures and the messiness that comprises the endeavor to carry out antiracist frameworks into practice (Cicchino et al.). We are encouraged by the articles in this issue because they unsettle, cause friction, and inspire theoretical frameworks, dispositions, and deliberative actions. In this issue, we have a review of Travis Webster's *Queerly Centered: LGBTQIA Writing Center Directors Navigate the Workplace*, a work that makes visible the labor of queer writing center directors and how their labor shapes writing center practices. Overall, we are energized by the conversations that did and did not take place at IWCA 2022 and are encouraged by the writing center professionals and scholars included in this essay. Both took/take dialogue seriously, insofar as that dialogue provides the grounds by which to articulate our commitments to another set of choices, options, and responsibilities.

Bronwyn Williams explores the unique yet vulnerable positions of writing centers and their ability to effect institutional and political change in "Writing Centers, Enclaves, and Creating Spaces of Change within Universities." Utilizing a theory, framework, disposition, and process of institutional change—an "inside-outside" method/ology—the author speaks to a vision of writing centers not only to effect change from within but also to impact larger institutions. The article situates writing centers, first, as "enclaves of different practice," referring to the pedagogical and participatory values and practices entrenched within writing centers and the capacity of writing centers to work from the inside out instead of top-down. Williams recognizes how institutional identities are already entangled and complicit in and with reproducing dominant cultural ideologies of power, identity, and privilege. Yet, through the inclusion of several examples, the article makes one central proposition: a theory, framework, disposition, and process of "enclaves of different practice" can inform decision-making and goals. Overall, the article will encourage the writing center community to see in micropolitical moments the ability to challenge macropolitical narratives, and hence, effect institutional and political change.

Representing one of the journal's more novel publications in recent years, Matthew Nelson, Kathleen Weaver, Sam Deges, Pornchanok Ruengvirayudh, Savannah Garcia, and Sarah Dunn take



on the issue of the stress around peer-to-peer tutoring and work to understand it from both physiological and qualitative perspectives. Based on pre-/postsession surveys of tutors that included items that inventoried their stress and documented conferencing experiences, the researchers collected saliva samples to gain insight into the physiological indicators of stress happening around sessions. These methods were specifically chosen and detailed to serve as an example of replicable research, any parts of which colleagues at other institutions could repeat in their local context. The study finds that tutors who enter a session already experiencing increased stress were more likely to find it in their shift, while those who came to work not stressed were unlikely to experience it. Beside the stress tutors carry to sessions (or not), Nelson et al. explored whether stress impacted tutors' ability to tune into their peers' stress. They found that tutors who were more stressed were less likely to perceive that of their peers. The study notes interesting limitations that make the case for further investigation, among them: Location conditions that prompt stress are different, and points of time during an academic period lead to variable stress (e.g., midterms versus other "down times"). The researchers invite others to take up their conversation and extend or replicate it.

Nancy Welch, Diana Hackenburg, Leigh Ann Holterman, Judith Keller, Seth Orman, Vanessa Liliana Perillo, Rebecca Stern, and Ashley Waldron take up the issue of graduate writers, narrowing in on the divides between student knowledge and faculty expectations around writing. While the greatest need to intervene in problematic dynamics and learning cultures in graduate education is interdisciplinary, the researchers note much of the scholarship is siloed in writing, writing center, and multilingual education studies; too little dialogue and research is happening in or across the disciplines. The writers also want to push at the binary of expert/novice tutoring, where the value of confident/experienced writers as consultants brings a different sort of confidence and reflexivity to sessions. This article works to highlight the importance and value of interdisciplinarity in graduate writing centers, drawing on the experiences of staff at one center where non-English graduate students represent over three-quarters of the crew. In addition to the value placed on interdisciplinarity in staffing, the researchers also emphasize how the local must overlap with awareness of the importance and visibility of caretaking and provisioning labor, all the more critical in writing centers where the work we do is marginalized in multiple ways. The article connects these insights with the story of the creation, launch, and fifth anniversary of the Graduate Writing Center, as the inaugural faculty director prepares to retire. This research, like other articles in this issue, begs for other locations to share their experiences as well as critical lessons as they adapt to ever-changing campus conditions.

Jaclyn Wells and Jessica Robbins explore the online information available to students and faculty about the writing center and tutors at their institution, such as their website and their meet the staff page. This study examines what students think about tutors based on information available on writing center websites, scheduling systems, and social media pages. The article raises questions about the microdecisions students make about what tutor to see and how to interact with them and raises complex questions about how writing center administrators share tutors' identities. This study raises important questions about staff makeup and what we can learn about the lack of diversity in our writing centers from student responses, and what writing centers need to do in terms of better supporting students of color, students from marginalized communities, LGBTQ students, and students with disabilities—as well as how to better protect the emotional and intellectual labor of our tutors, particularly our tutors from marginalized backgrounds. This article calls for other writing centers to better study our online presence (echoing Eric Camarillo's call), as it aids in examining the writing center's "positives and negatives in a new light."

Amy Cicchino, Katharine Brown, Christopher Basgier, and Megan Haskins's article, "Beyond Transactional Narratives of Agency: Peer Consultants' Antiracist Professionalization," reports on a qualitative study on the impact of antiracist curriculum and professional development on consultants of the writing center. Interested in the commitments by the writing center community to/ward anti-racism, consultant agency, and consultants' abilities to practice antiracism in face-to-face sessions, this study conducted at a predominately white institution (PWI) combs through



reflective writing, survey results, and interview responses and articulates a central proposition: While social-justice, linguistic-justice, and antiracist frameworks are good in theory, they are messy in practice. The intention of the authors is not to take away from the importance of and demand for such frameworks. Rather, it is to demonstrate through data analysis the ways whiteness, oversimplifications, and differences complicate the ease by which such work can unfold. This affords, according to the authors, both the opportunity to embrace messiness and to (re)problematize, (re)imagine, and (re)weave knowledge(s), understanding(s), and being otherwise.

**Book Review:** In this issue's book review, Tyler Martinez offers an incisive look at Travis Webster's *Queerly Centered: LGBTQIA Writing Center Directors Navigate the Workplace*. In a vignette that opens the review, Martinez distills Webster's key claim: "Queer identities provide writing center professionals and practitioners with unique capital, orient them toward activism, and foster a hyper-awareness of local, national, and global tensions regarding non-normative identity" (p. XX). The review is organized around three central themes of queer writing center labor: as capital, as activism, and as tension, highlighting how queer writing center directors are uniquely positioned to transform academic spaces even as they must contend with implicitly and explicitly hostile workplaces. Martinez also brings attention to Webster's acknowledgment of potential weaknesses in his project, particularly the lack of more queer people of color sharing their experiences. Martinez writes that, even as Webster "celebrates queer people working in writing center administration and researching in writing center studies," Webster also "provides a sobering view of the mostly white cisgendered field" (p. XX). Another salient feature of Webster's work that Martinez identifies is the challenge to replicable, aggregable, and data-driven (RAD) research Webster's methods present. Martinez urges, "Before asking whether research is replicable, ask if the research should be replicated from your positionality" (p. XX). Ultimately, though, Martinez ends his review with an enthusiastic call to action to support and celebrate students while working toward increasingly intersectional social justice initiatives.

Ultimately, we do hope you, our readers, have the time to read slowly, to listen carefully to the words of your colleagues, to deeply engage with their ideas, and to converse and conspire with others on where we are and how we can carry out work otherwise. We invite you all to remain committed to investigating and unsettling the settled.

—Romeo, Anna, Harry, and Eric

## References

- Fukushima, A. (2019). *Migrant crossings: Witnessing human trafficking in the U.S.* Stanford University Press.
- Mignolo, W. (2011). *The darker side of Western modernity: Global futures, decolonial options.* Duke University Press.