CHAPTER 17.

EMOTIONAL LABOR, MENTORING, AND EQUITY FOR DOCTORAL STUDENT AND FACULTY WRITERS

Shannon Madden
North Carolina State University

Sandra L. Tarabochia
University of Oklahoma

Writing Across the Curriculum scholars are well positioned to improve educational access and maintain the free exchange of ideas by developing pedagogy, policy, and programming rooted in research on faculty and doctoral student writers' needs and experiences. This chapter uses results from a study of emerging scholars' writing development to examine the effects of emotional labor in mentorship experiences. Although emotion is a natural aspect of writing, learning, and development, our analysis reveals how institutional discourses impose normative expectations that create additional labor for writers in managing emotions; this labor impacts some groups of writers more significantly than others. The chapter concludes with recommendations and structural interventions for revising writing mentorship practices.

Historically, WAC researchers have not focused on graduate student and faculty writers. Two decades ago, *WAC for the New Millennium* (McLeod et al., 2001)—much like this volume—sought to document a moment in time. In that collection, "faculty writers" did not appear in the index at all. Faculty were treated as potential allies in cross-curricular writing instruction but not as writers in their own right. Graduate student writers garnered slightly more attention. Thankfully, interest in graduate student and faculty writers has expanded. The call for increased attention to graduate student mentorship, in particular, is represented in this collection; Rachael Cayley (this volume) describes a genre systems approach to mentoring publication-based thesis writers and Alisa Russell, Jake Chase, Justin Nicholes, and Allie Sockwell Johnston (this volume) highlight the need for mentorship as a factor leading to the founding of WAC's growing graduate

student organization, WAC-GO. Acknowledging that many late-stage doctoral students and early-career faculty—a group we refer to collectively as "emerging scholars"—naturally struggle to navigate changes in their writerly habits and identities as they transition into high stakes writing situations, recent volumes offer programmatic strategies for supporting these writers (e.g., Badenhorst & Guerin, 2016; Geller & Eodice, 2013; Lawrence & Zawacki, 2019; Simpson, Caplan et al., 2016). Nevertheless, despite the established need and burgeoning scholarship, research findings do not inform writing support efforts as much as they should (Caplan & Cox, 2016; Simpson, 2016). Although researchers across disciplines provide struggling writers with strategies and habits to increase productivity (Silvia, 2007; Sword, 2017; Tulley, 2018), writers' needs are rarely addressed from a developmental perspective. As a result, WAC efforts focused on faculty and graduate students do not always support the holistic development of these writers. The effects are dire as the current climate of higher education marked by neoliberalism and austerity continues to intensify the stakes of the publication imperative. The consequences of failure impact not only individual careers but the advancement of knowledge; when scholars lack access to academic publishing, the free exchange of ideas suffers (Gray et al., 2018). Although WAC researchers and practitioners have historically paid little attention to graduate student and faculty writers, we are perfectly positioned to improve educational access and maintain the free exchange of ideas by supporting these writers in meeting the demands of our historical moment. Empirical research is essential in this effort.

Toward that end, we present new findings from our ongoing study of graduate student and faculty writers' development (Tarabochia & Madden, 2018). In this chapter, we explore one new insight: that writers perform significant emotional labor around mentoring. Drawing on Arlie Russell Hochschild (1983), we define emotional labor as the work writers do in handling emotions, others' and their own (p. 11). Emotional labor is not always negative but can be disruptive and have cumulative effects if not addressed from a structural perspective. Our study suggests that emotional labor in some cases hinders writers' development. Faculty and graduate student writers, their writing mentors, and WAC consultants who support these writers and their mentors know that writing involves emotion, but we are not always prepared to understand and engage with emotion in meaningful ways. Too often writing mentorship practices reinforce dominant discourses that treat emotions as barriers to writing success that individuals must overcome. Rather than framing emotion as a personal problem to be avoided or ignored, our analysis offers vantage points from which to rewrite this narrative of what writing-related emotions look like. It is essential for writing mentors across the disciplines, including WAC practitioners, faculty devel-

opers, administrators and dissertation advisors, to challenge problematic norms and engage in healthier ways with the range of emotions associated with high stakes writing demands. The time is right for this move as the WAC community attends more deliberately to the writing needs of emerging scholars and, we argue, empirical research focused on emotion and mentorship should drive the effort. Using data from our larger study of faculty and doctoral student writer development, we examine how emotional labor is legible in writers' mentoring experiences and offer strategies for revising mentoring structures to mitigate long term impacts of emotional labor. Before theorizing emotional labor and illustrating how it impacted writers from our study, we describe the methodology that led us to this insight.

STUDY DESIGN

To investigate emerging scholars' writer development, we cross-analyzed data from two separate studies, one on doctoral student writers (Madden) and one on faculty writers (Tarabochia).[1] Participants in the doctoral student study (N = 195) were writers from 19 different U.S. universities in the dissertation phase of their programs. Survey participants responded to several multiple choice (Likert scale) and open-ended questions. For the purposes of our cross-analysis, we focused on five of the seven open-ended questions. Of the respondents who self-identified, 68.9% (n = 93) identified as women, 29.6% (n = 40) identified as men, and 1.5% (n = 2) identified as trans or gender nonbinary; they were pursuing degrees in a range of fields such as geology, educational leadership, anthropology, and art history, among others. Respondents located their dissertation research in the social sciences (43.7%, n = 59), humanities (20.7%, n = 28), STEM (32.6%, n = 44), and design/creative disciplines (3%, n = 4). Study participants self-identified as white (80.3%, n = 94), Black/African American (2.6%, n = 3), Hispanic/Latinx (7.7%, n = 9), Indigenous/Native American (2.6%, n = 3), and Asian American/Pacific Islander (1.7%, n = 2). Several participants identified as multi- or biracial (4.4%, n = 5; [Black/white biracial 2.6%, n = 3; Asian/white 0.9%, n =1; Black/Indigenous/white 0.9%, n = 1]). Participants in the faculty study (N=9) were writers from a doctoral university with R1 Carnegie designation and represented the following disciplines: education (4), modern languages (2), architecture (1), social work (1), and geography (1).

---

1   The faculty study was approved by the University of Oklahoma IRB (#6811). The doctoral student study was approved by the University of Rhode Island IRB (#998118–4). Faculty consent forms allowed participants to specify whether to use their names or pseudonyms in published material. Their specifications have been honored here to respect participants' rights to claim authorship as well as their right to privacy.

Faculty participants identified as women (9), white (6), Black (1), Latina/Puerto Rican (1), and "no idea" (1); all but one were on the tenure track.[2] Faculty participated in one-hour qualitative interviews conducted using the Subject-Object Interview protocol (Lahey et al., 1988/2011), an approach based on Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory, which centers on changes in what individuals treat as subject (part of self, unable to be seen or reflected on) vs. object (outside oneself, able to be critically considered). Faculty were given keywords (e.g., angry, torn, anxious/nervous, success) previously shown to elicit responses in which changes in subject/object orientation becomes visible, and asked to recall related memories from their writing lives. The interview was designed to shed light on faculty writers' developmental trajectories by identifying how they made sense of their writing-related experiences.

We combined these two data sets (doctoral students' survey responses and faculty interviews) and analyzed them by adapting Cheryl Geisler's (2004) method of verbal data analysis, Peter Smagorinsky's (2008) process of collaborative coding, and Johnny Saldaña's (2016) guide for magnitude and evaluation coding. As we explain elsewhere (Tarabochia & Madden, 2018), our methodology represents an innovative approach to studying writer development. Our goal was to learn about the developmental experiences of emerging scholars without relying on traditional longitudinal methods that demand time and resources not always feasible given career and institutional constraints. We argued that separate data collection protocols allowed us to respect the unique realities of each participant group while experimenting with the possibility of repurposing existing data to study development. Because both studies captured writer's lived experiences and both produced qualitative data, we saw an opportunity to combine the datasets in order to create a more texturized view of writers' experiences.

The overall data set included 721 segments of verbal data (350 segments from doctoral student surveys and 371 segments from faculty interviews). We segmented our data by topical chain, a unit of analysis bounded by the topic of discourse and typically identified by pronouns, demonstratives, and definite articles (Geisler, 2004, p. 35). Then, we used an iterative process of open and focused coding to identify the following writing-related concerns: mentoring, structure, social interaction, professional identity development, writing approaches/practices/routines, and life. A null category was used for segments that lacked sufficient detail to identify a dominant concern. "Concern," for our

---

2   We acknowledge that fewer faculty were included in the study than graduate students and do not claim that our findings are generalizable in a traditional sense. Instead, we suggest that our move to consider faculty and graduate student perspectives in relation to one another illuminates potential convergences and divergences in their experiences that deserve closer attention from researchers.

purposes, does not necessarily have a negative connotation. Therefore, we coded each segment a second time for positive, negative, or neutral magnitude in relation to the original concern (Saldaña, 2016).

We observed that emerging scholars' experiences with Mentoring and Structure were mostly negative, whereas all other concerns were mostly positive. We coded as Mentoring (M) any segments that were primarily concerned with writers' relationships with senior advisors, mentors, or their behavior, and we coded as Structure (S) segments concerned with institutional conditions that impact writing, including department culture or environment. We coded concerns as Negative (N) when participants described conditions of lack, problems, or struggle, or when they used negative terms (e.g., "burden," "anxiety"). Overall, 58% (52/89) of verbal data segments coded Mentoring were Negative (36/63 or 57% of doctoral student segments; and 16/26 or approximately 62% of faculty segments). The prevalence of negative experiences associated with mentoring concerns is significant given the important role that mentoring is known to play in supporting advanced writers' development and academic socialization (Casanave, 2016; Costello, 2015; Cox & Brunjes, 2013; Kim, 2016; Maher & Say, 2016; Morita, 2004; Simpson, 2016; Simpson, Ruecker et al., 2016; Stillman-Webb, 2016). At the same time, approximately 68% of segments coded Structure were Negative (135/200 total; 69/118 or approximately 58% of doctoral student Structure codes and 66/80 or approximately 83% of faculty Structure codes).

We used evaluation coding (Saldaña, 2016) to document the many different experiences reported in relation to Negative Mentoring and Negative Structure. Often used to assess programs or organizations, evaluation coding involves locating "patterned observations or participant responses of attributes and details that assess quality." Evaluation coding is not about identifying representative experiences; instead the goal is to use "attributes and details" in participants' responses to assess quality (of programs, policies, conditions; Saldaña, 2016, p. 141). We used evaluation coding to explicate the full range of negative experiences related to our codes of interest. When we considered evaluation codes related to Negative Mentoring and Negative Structure segments together, we discovered emotional labor as a recurring feature across these domains and realized that structure concerns shed light on the trends we noticed in writers' mentoring experiences. By interpreting writers' negative mentoring experiences through the lens of emotional labor, we highlight access and equity issues as well as structural factors that constrain writing and mentoring relationships. Our goal is not to generalize about the needs of all faculty and graduate students based on our findings; instead, we reveal several ways emotional labor can manifest in writing mentorship and call for WAC researchers and practitioners to attend more carefully to emotional labor in the context of writing and writer support.

THEORIZED FINDING: EMOTIONAL LABOR AND WRITERS' DEVELOPMENT

To conceptualize emotional labor, we rely on cultural theorist Sara Ahmed (2004a, 2004b, 2010) and sociologist Hochschild (1983) who theorize emotion, as well as scholars in writing studies who study emotion in relation to teaching, learning, administration, and the job market (Micciche, 2002, 2007; Sano-Franchini, 2016; Stenberg, 2015; Worhsam, 1998). Emotional labor as it is explicated by these scholars is useful for our analysis because it treats emotion as socially constructed, rather than (only) located within the individual, and emphasizes the variable costs of emotions as they are performed and compelled within social interactions. Although emotions are commonly framed as psychological states individuals inhabit, the framework of emotional labor "challenges any assumption that emotions are a private matter, that they simply belong to individuals, or even that they come from within and *then* move outward toward others" (Ahmed, 2004a, p. 117). Emotions are produced through relationships among people and with objects (Micciche, 2016, par. 4); they are practices and interactions shaped by social and cultural systems that imbue meaning (Ahmed, 2004b; Micciche, 2002). In the context of our study, a view of emotion as socially constructed challenges the tendency to blame writers who express certain feelings (e.g., anxiety, anger, frustration, depression, self-doubt) and foregrounds the role of academic culture and institutional context in determining how writers should or shouldn't feel.

Although the social construction of emotion is not inherently value-laden, Hochschild (1983) pointed out that the work of "doing emotion" (Micciche, 2007, p. 2) always has a cost; the question becomes whether the cost is worthwhile. We perform emotions all the time and often find value in the relational effects of emotion management. For example, we see the personal and social "use value" in expressing sadness at a funeral or pretending to enjoy a boring party (Hochschild, 1983, pp. 7, 18). Rebecca Jackson, Jackie McKinney, and Nicole I. Caswell (2016) found that writing center administrators value many forms of emotional labor, including "mentoring, advising, making small talk, putting on a friendly face, resolving conflicts, making connections, delegating and following up on progress, working in teams, disciplining or redirecting employees, gaining trust, and creating a positive workplace" (par. 2). They discovered that emotional labor often "greases the wheel and makes other tasks easier, lighter, faster" (2016, par. 11). In these cases the cost of emotional labor seems necessary.

Problems arise, however, when an "instrumental stance" to our natural capacity for emotional labor is "engineered and administered by large organizations" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 20). In the context of our study, academic cultures implicitly communicate "latent feeling rules" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 18) through

which writers are bound to experience and express only institutionally sanctioned emotions. Lynn Worsham (1998) called this "the schooling of emotion," a process that "inculcate[s] patterns of feeling that support the legitimacy of dominant interests" as emotions become "intertwined with issues of power and status" (p. 223; Micciche, 2002, p. 442). Popular self-help guides for dissertation writers and tenure-track faculty, for example, urge struggling writers to ignore or push through emotions that keep them from writing (Johnson, 2017). Such models favor productivity and publishing record—objectives that clearly serve universities' interests as they compete for funding and international recognition—but that may not cultivate healthy writing lives for emerging scholars.

The more institutions intervene in emotional management, the less individuals understand and trust their feelings. For example, a doctoral student who has internalized the norm that she should feel confident and able to write a dissertation independently, may distrust and redirect feelings of outrage she experiences when her advisor ignores her requests for support and assume she deserves her advisor's berating comments that take the place of meaningful feedback. Emotional estrangement is problematic because, according to Hochschild (1983) emotions serve an important "signal function" by providing clues to understanding who we are in relation to others (p. 30). When we are "schooled" to bury feelings or to pretend to feel a way we don't, we lose access to "reflection and spontaneous feeling" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 45). As a result, "we come to distrust our sense of what is true, as we know it through feeling" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 47). The graduate student who distrusts her legitimate feeling of outrage at her advisor's behavior may convince herself to feel unworthy of her advisor's attention and incapable of writing her dissertation. Thus, the cost of institutional emotion management "affects the degree to which we listen to feeling and sometimes our very capacity to feel" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 21). Moreover, restricting the signal function of emotions keeps people from recognizing the forces and circumstances that impact their ability to survive and thrive in their environments. Of course, power dynamics (related to age, race, gender, sexuality, ability, mental health, and institutional position, among others) affect the stakes of enduring emotion management. Emotions become "sites of social control" (Micciche, 2002, p. 440) as the culture of academia and institutional structures "nurture, stunt, and amplify certain emotional habits" (p. 453) and compel writers from marginalized groups to interpret feelings of anxiety or frustration as personal failures rather than indicative of a problematic reality.

By foregrounding the social construction and variable cost of emotion, emotional labor allows us to reconceptualize the relationship between the emotion work writers associate with mentoring experiences and larger institutional structures that can constrain mentorship and the work of writing. Highlighting the

variable costs of emotional labor in mentoring interactions enables us to challenge dominant scripts of emotion in writer development and imagine mentoring structures that mitigate inhibitive emotional labor.

ANALYSIS: EMOTIONAL LABOR IN MENTORING EXPERIENCES

Analyzing comments from writers in our study through the lens of emotional labor suggests that mentoring experiences can trigger strong feelings and create additional work for writers. Writers frequently complained that not receiving timely feedback or not receiving feedback at all created affective complications for them. When asked to recount a memorable feedback experience, several doctoral students indicated they do not receive any feedback on their dissertation drafts. One participant stated, "My advisor asked me not to give him anything until I had a complete draft. I can understand his sentiment but it's also a little alarming to think that I'll have written three or four chapters without his having seen any of it until the end." Another doctoral student framed the lack of feedback in terms of their emotional wellness, saying, "My entire committee is very hands-off. I do not expect help or comments until my defense. This is not conducive to a healthy grad school experience." These responses index feelings of alarm and being unhealthy, showing how a negative "affective context circumscribes" the work of writing (Micciche, 2002, p. 443). In addition to struggling to write without guidance, these writers also must manage their feelings around doing so.

While lacking advisory feedback may understandably be difficult for dissertation writers, our study shows that the emotional labor caused by "hands off" mentoring can impact self-efficacy and confidence beyond graduate school. For example, Lorna, a faculty member, described feeling anguish when she mustered the courage to share a draft of an article with a mentor outside her department and did not hear back for months. She was convinced her writing was so bad that her mentor was embarrassed to discuss it, when in reality the mentor read the draft right away, made comments, and then was swallowed by the business of the semester and forgot to follow up with Lorna. The lens of emotional labor makes evident that mentoring relationships entail uneven power dynamics and that writers in transition are uniquely vulnerable. As institutional representatives, writing mentors "transmit meanings [they] may not intend or endorse" but nevertheless have significant costs when it comes to emotional labor (Micciche, 2002, p. 438). Lorna's mentor did not intend to generate self-doubt as a form of emotional labor in Lorna. Yet their actions exacerbated the cost of that labor, especially considering how Lorna had been historically "schooled" to feel about her writing ability.

Lorna's case demonstrates the cumulative effects of emotional labor as self-

doubt and low confidence emerged in response to repeated lessons about herself as a writer. In her words, "I feel like I've been told that I'm not a good enough writer." As a writer for whom English is an additional language and who self-identifies as Latina/Puerto Rican, Lorna's experience aligns with scholarship that suggests that individuals from historically marginalized groups are more likely to feel like imposters in the academy (Burrows, 2016; Dancy & Brown, 2011; Dancy & Jean-Marie, 2014; Young, 2011). Identifying Lorna's comments as revealing emotional labor highlights the complex web of factors that shape how writers interpret their mentors' behaviors as well as the significant and lasting repercussions mentors' decisions have on individual writers' self-confidence.

As her comments show, Lorna's feelings of impostorship were exacerbated each time she received the message that she was a poor academic writer. In this light, it becomes evident that the particular feedback writers receive has the potential to incite emotional labor and have a lasting impact. For instance, Seema, a faculty writer in modern languages and linguistics, explained how negative interactions with her mentor in graduate school shattered her confidence: "[My dissertation advisor] would have one-on-one meetings with me and go page by page . . . [and] most of the time I went out of there crying. . . . She never had anything good to say." Seema emphasized the sustained impact of these meetings: "I don't think I had any confidence in my writing and the quality of my work." Similarly a doctoral student explained how their dissertation director's inconsistent advice inhibited their ability to develop a self-sustaining strategy for composing and revising their work:

> My committee Chair provides feedback, but then forgets
> what suggestions she gave. She then gives me counter advice
> in a few months [sic] time. This is very frustrating, and erodes
> confidence in the writing process. "Does my hair really know
> what she is doing when she gives counter advice" is the ques-
> tion I ask myself.

While writing feedback should evolve over the course of a long-term project such as a dissertation (Guerin, 2018), the writer in this case interpreted shifting feedback as contradictory and inconsistent as a result of the committee chair's forgetfulness. This suggests that writing mentors should be aware of—and communicate with their advisees about—writing and feedback as developmental processes so that writers and their supervisors can communicate openly about the kinds of feedback that are most useful at a particular moment in the process. These examples also reiterate that writing mentorship which is not rooted in a developmental perspective and responsive to writers' needs and perceptions of their experiences can have cumulative effects and set writers up to deal with the costs

of emotional labor at various points throughout their developmental trajectories.

Because we gathered doctoral student and faculty writers' experiences of mentoring, we can see how emotional labor resulting from negative mentoring interactions in graduate school can follow writers into faculty positions. Significantly, most of faculty members' Negative Mentoring segments referred to graduate school (13 segments out of 16) rather than writing mentorship during their time as faculty. Faculty writer Julie traced her struggle to turn her dissertation into the book she needed for tenure to "a weird experience" with her committee. She described cryptic, demoralizing feedback; she believed several committee members went to the defense without having read her dissertation. One signed off on the project intimating that they would not have done so if they were chair, and another responded with vague, positive commentary that meant little to Julie. The reluctant approvals and lack of substantive feedback left Julie questioning the legitimacy of her project and wondering if she deserved to graduate. In her faculty position, those doubts made it difficult to write her book because she questioned the value of her research. At the time of her interview, Julie was immersed in the emotional labor of rewriting not only her book manuscript but the stories she told herself about her professional identity based on these troubling incidents. The fact that negative graduate school memories persist for faculty writers suggests that these experiences are prevalent and formative, which highlights an urgent need to address the costs of emotional labor in writing mentorship.

As we have shown, mentoring experiences can trigger powerful emotions that are not always conducive to healthy writer development. Participants in our study also revealed the cost of emotional labor when they were compelled to perform particular emotions in order to stay on good terms with advisors. According to Hochschild (1983), we all "act" sometimes when it comes to emotion. Through "surface acting," "we change how we outwardly appear" even if the appearance doesn't align with feelings we are experiencing; through "deep acting" we express "a real feeling that has been self-induced" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 35). In both cases, the feeling performed is separated from "the idea of the central self" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 36). Hochschild noted that estrangement becomes problematic when "the psychological costs of emotional labor are not acknowledged" (1983, p. 37). We discovered several such instances in writers' descriptions of performing emotion for mentors. Faculty writer Elizabeth described pandering to her dissertation advisor:

> So for an hour meeting I'll have 30 minutes of pandering and
> like self-flagellation you know like I'm worthless and then . .
> . the last 30 minutes would be nuggets of useful information
> but it's just such an awful process. [. . .] I mean I'm just eating

> poo until (laughing) making to the end of this process and
> then that's it. I'm just like wash my hands and just walk away.

Doctoral students similarly described emotional labor in power imbalances with mentors. In answering the question, "What can be done to improve support for doctoral student writers at your institution?" one student recommended, "cut down on extra service that one feels indebted to participate in in fear that professors will pull away if the grad student doesn't agree to help with service." These responses highlight how uneven power dynamics generate emotional labor. Study participants illustrate how individuals lose agency over their feelings when "the locus of acting, of emotion management, moves up to the level of the institution" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 49). The loss of agency is particularly troubling given that emotions are an important way we perceive reality and constitute identity. Academic institutions, and mentors as institutional agents, control how writers perceive development and success—the possible ways of doing and being available to writers—and shape not only feelings but experiences to align with institutional objectives.

Of course, the work of sustaining relationships has a natural affective dimension; performing emotion can be a useful tool for relational work. However, writers in our study often described emotional labor that was not mutually productive. Instead, it was leveraged to meet the demands of inequitable conditions or to alleviate disenfranchising relationships. In such cases emotional labor was not undertaken as an investment in relationships but because writers were compelled toward institutionally sanctioned performances. Thus, writers in our study reveal the exchange value of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983); they show how emotions are not merely internal, personal problems but "circulate and are distributed across a social as well as a psychic field" (Ahmed, 2004a, p. 120; Ahmed, 2004b, p. 10). Moreover, because emotions "are intertwined with issues of power and status in the work world" (Micciche, 2002, p. 442), the value and effects of circulation are not neutral or evenly distributed.

Faculty writer Seema illustrates how emotional labor can become a form of social control. As mentioned above, Seema felt degraded by interactions with her dissertation advisor. Additionally, Seema explained how her advisor deliberately put up obstacles to thwart her progress in the program, even refusing to sign Seema's immigration papers. Although the relationship was abusive, Seema rationalized her advisor's behavior and performed the dutiful student. In her interview, Seema cited cultural differences between them as one explanation for their fraught relationship and convinced herself it was up to her to find a way to learn from the situation. It was not until another faculty member named her experience as abusive that Seema recognized that the relationship was dysfunctional. Seema's experience exemplifies

how emotional labor can become habituated over time; because she had low confidence as a result of repeated negative mentoring encounters, she was predisposed to read the situation from that perspective and assumed it was her responsibility to sustain the mentoring relationship despite its impact on her well-being. Acknowledging emotional labor in mentoring experiences reveals the vicious cycle of disempowerment perpetuated by problematic mentoring relationships.

So far, the lens of emotional labor has highlighted how mentoring moments can provoke costly affective work and compel writers to perform emotions to the point where estrangement limits their ability to trust feelings as clues for interpreting reality. Emotional labor also reveals how institutional discourses demand particular kinds of emotional performances. In *The Promise of Happiness,* Ahmed (2010) described the "sociality" of emotion, in her case happiness, as a phenomenon in which social bonds determine the objects of our emotions and emotions become objects shared among others (p. 56). She identified the happy housewife and the feminist killjoy as figures that orient women to definitions of happiness and shape their perceptions of themselves and others based on whether or not they fit those definitions. Similarly, writers in our study described emotional work around assumptions about others' perceptions of their work habits and writerly identities in relation to tacit institutional ideals. The need to appear busy in front of others is one example of this type of emotional labor. For instance, Julie indicated a need to hide her struggles with writing and procrastination: "I really feel the hierarchy of [people in my department who] are going to be voting on my tenure case, and I don't know how much weakness I can show as far as I don't know where my writing is going, or I am having trouble writing." Later, Julie mentioned the need for appearing productive to faculty colleagues: "I sometimes feel like oh I should just only be writing and advancing, and I feel like I have to put up a very good front and be really positive about how I am advancing." Responses like Julie's reveal institutional discourses that compel academics to appear busy, competent, and confident as writers. The discourse has material effects as writers like Julie expend emotional labor hiding natural feelings of uncertainty and the often slow evolution of writing projects. We see this as distinct from emotional performances compelled directly by mentors because whereas the latter is rooted in interpersonal relational work, this type of emotional labor is compelled implicitly by academic culture.

Relatedly, several doctoral students shared a perception that faculty were too busy to give them feedback. One student wrote, "My professors are often too busy with their own research to offer quality feedback." Given the pressures on faculty writers to publish and produce, these perceptions are likely correct. Additionally, the institutional discourses that compel faculty to appear busy likely exacerbate emotional labor for their doctoral student mentees. One doctoral student expressed this

advice for faculty mentors: "Don't cause students to feel as if they are a burden for the work that their dissertation is causing for the members of the department." The perception that mentors are too busy may lead writers to feel guilt over asking for help or prevent them from asking for help at all. At the same time, it reinforces the "latent rul[e]" (Hoschild, 1983, p. 18) that successful academics are busy, as writers are "schooled" to perform similarly as graduate students and faculty, perpetuating a problematic "pedagog[y] of emotion" (Worsham, 1998, p. 216). Foregrounding how institutional discourses regulate writers' feelings in the context of mentoring reveals how "academic institutions function at the affective level to generate loyalty, create perceptions of good workers, and suggest what workers should be willing to contribute to the professional community" (Micciche, 2002, p. 442). Just as Betty Friedan's happy housewife "is a fantasy figure that erases the signs of labor under the sign of happiness" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 50), the figure of the perpetually busy, competent, productive academic writer becomes a way to hide and justify emotional labor. Productive mentorship is difficult to achieve when professional discourses make writers' and mentors' natural feelings seem inappropriate.

Moreover, the emotional labor incited by institutionally sanctioned success narratives and evaluative structures places undue strain on writers from marginalized groups whose identities and perspectives challenge the status quo. Sadie described feeling like her work, which used Black feminized frameworks to study Black women faculty, was dismissed by colleagues in her department and by one department leader in particular. As a Black woman whose research is tied to her embodied identity, Sadie described experiencing these circumstances as "a general lack of support—and almost resistance to support, even beyond a lack of support." Sadie reported that the pattern of undervaluing her research impacted her self-worth and sense of capability. In her words, these "constant onslaughts . . . create[d] a space where I get very anxious about my writing; I get very fearful about whether or not I will make it." Sadie explained that this lack of support also materialized in the formal annual review process:

> On paper if you look at my annual evaluations I always get very satisfactory progress but the qualitative feedback in those conversations . . . I always have to fight when the annual evaluations come; I always have to fight with my [tenure committee]. I always feel like I have to gear myself up and . . . I have to really argue for myself and for some people that is—you know I have colleagues, particularly male colleagues, who enjoy the banter, they gear up—

Perhaps Sadie's male colleagues could revel in the challenge of defending their work during annual review because a positive outcome was likely. Howev-

er, because Sadie's work was constantly discredited, she experienced emotional labor disproportionately as she worried that she did not belong in the academy. Sadie was not supposed to feel the emotions she did (self-doubt) and was compelled to engage in self-advocacy that she believed her white male colleagues likely experienced as playful banter. Sadie's situation demonstrates how the costs of emotional labor can be disproportionate for writers from minoritized groups.

As these examples show, writers are compelled to perform emotions on multiple levels within their mentoring relationships. Sometimes writers value emotional work; at other times, emotional labor can be disempowering and dehumanizing. Our study suggests that regardless of the cost, emotional labor is rarely acknowledged, appreciated, or supported. By analyzing doctoral student and faculty writers' mentoring experiences in relation to one another, we challenge the assumption that negative mentoring experiences are the result of poor individual mentors alone, surfacing broader structural issues that limit access to mentoring and that compel particular emotional performances as the cost of participation in institutional discourses.

RECOMMENDATIONS: REVISING WRITING MENTORSHIP

Based on our analysis of emotional labor in graduate student and faculty writers' mentoring experiences, we offer the following practical recommendations for writing mentors, including dissertation advisors, writing center directors and consultants, faculty developers, journal editors, and WAC leaders working with writers and their mentors.

First, writing mentors should acknowledge emotional labor and be mindful of how mentoring behaviors may cause unintended emotions. Respecting writers' emotional labor might take the form of small changes in practice, such as clear expectations about turnaround time and open communication about developmental support needs. Mentors who recognize the emotional impact of giving or withholding feedback can alleviate the additional work writers do in establishing self-confidence. Further, because emotional labor reported by emerging scholars too often stems from experiences of systemic disempowerment and because U.S. writing policies and pedagogies reflect Western, "whitely" values (Inoue, 2016), we call for mentoring structures that center the needs of writers from historically marginalized groups. In other words, we must acknowledge that writing "mentorship is about equity" (Costello, 2015, p. 3) and do more to create mentoring relationships that reflect the experiences of marginalized writers.

Second, emotion should be intentionally and explicitly addressed in professional development and mentoring contexts. For example, Lisa Russell-Pinson and M. Lynne Harris (2019) described "psychoeducational" dissertation sup-

port groups "founded on the strengths-based goal of building resilience" (p. 64). These groups help graduate students address the sources and repercussions of anxiety related to dissertation writing. Although they focus in their article on multilingual writers, Russell-Pinson and Harris asserted—and our study confirms—that all writers experience writing-related emotional stressors and must learn how to navigate complicated emotional situations in their academic relationships and writing lives.

Although these changes in practice are essential, our study suggests that acknowledging emotion in one-with-one and professional development mentoring situations will only be partial solutions unless we challenge the broader structural forces that compel emotional performances and create emotional labor (see also Tang & Andriamanalina, 2020). For example, as Jill Belli (2016) suggested, the popular movement toward "well-being," seems to respect emotional needs but actually stands to reinscribe a neoliberal agenda that encourages individuals to achieve happiness so they can be incorporated into dehumanizing structures. Likewise, Lesley Erin Bartlett and Brandon L. Sams (2017) asserted that practices such as mindfulness that are becoming more popular in the context of self-care "can become oppressive in their emphasis on individual action (or lack thereof), leading people to understand their circumstances strictly as a personal failing and to ignore the influence of institutions and culture" (pp. 6-7). Our analysis draws attention to how emotional labor in the context of mentoring always operates within problematic structures that constrain relationships and limit access. Thus, we advocate redressing the problems of the broader system rather than merely encouraging individuals to adapt to bad situations.

One way to address emotional labor from a structural perspective is to revise traditional approaches that too often associate emotions with individual behavioral causes and solutions (Johnson, 2017). We advocate for support that goes beyond strategies for dealing with anxiety or other negative emotions around writing to include explicit discussion of how writers internalize the need to hide or overcome their emotions, perpetuating a "survival of the fittest" mentality that characterizes higher education (Boice, 1990; Geller, 2013). Talking in support groups about emotion as constructed can transform individual experiences of emotional labor into what Mara Holt, Leon Anderson, and Albert Rouzie (2003) called "emotional work," which involves "building emotional solidarity in groups, and using one's own or others' outlaw emotions to interrogate structures" (cited in Jackson et al., 2016, para. 3). In this way, writing groups might do more than provide emotional support and become sites of collective and individual empowerment.

Another way to address systemic issues impacting writer support is to revise traditional mentoring structures toward collectivist approaches. According

to Beth Godbee (2018), "Multiple mentoring relationships can disperse the concentrated power associated with a single supervisor [and] can help [writers] with reclaiming personal power and becoming empowered to stand tall in one's research and professional identity" (para. 8). Dispersed mentoring models might include co-mentoring communities and peer-to-peer support initiatives. Jeannette D. Alarcón and Silvia Bettez (2017) called for inclusive mentoring efforts such as nonhierarchical mentoring, the development of partnerships and coalitions, and valuing "community cultural wealth." Michelle Maher and Brett H. Say (2016) promoted more collaborative authorship among faculty and students and co-chaired committees. The MiSciWriters group at the University of Michigan (see https://misciwriters.com/) and the North Carolina State University Catalyst group (see https://transforming-science.com/catalyst) provide good models of student-led co-mentoring structures that are created for and by graduate students. In addition to alleviating the labor burden of individualized mentoring, co-mentoring also mitigates the danger that one-with-one mentoring relationships may become abusive or toxic, as was reflected in responses to our study.

As we suggested, revised writing mentorship models will have limited impact unless we challenge the climate in which mentoring relationships are constituted. Indeed, the value of mentoring is embedded in institutional practices such as professionalization, tenure, and promotion. For that reason, we agree with Lisa A. Costello (2015) that campus actors must work to change how "chairs, deans, and provosts . . . formally recognize this mentoring as crucial to the hiring, retention, and promotion of strong faculty members" (p. 22). Without more global structures in place, the recommendations we make will never be fully realized.

CONCLUSION

By focusing on emerging scholars, an understudied population of writers, we were able to consider how high-stakes mentoring situations create emotional labor that can interfere with development and productivity. Our project reveals how writers' emotional labor is inseparable "from social contexts and power relations" (Stenberg, 2015, p. 46) and makes evident problematic assumptions about what writing a dissertation or publishing for tenure should *feel* like. The lens of emotional labor uncovers "naturalized conceptions of emotion as individualized, internally located, and privately experienced" (Stenberg, 2015, p. 48), which in our neoliberal educational climate can result in blaming writers for negative emotions and requiring them to overcome those feelings in order to succeed. We argue that interrogating emotional labor is necessary because "it shows that an affective context circumscribes how we work—how we function

on a daily basis, how we envision the possibility of creating changes, and how we develop a sense of efficacy and purpose in our [writing] work lives" (Micciche, 2002, p. 443). Acknowledging "the reality of negative experiences that frequently structure our [writing] work lives" is vital if WAC's mission is to promote strong cultures of writing. Our research findings should urge WAC leaders as well as writing mentors and writers across disciplines to repurpose the inevitable emotion involved with writing and cultivate responsive and empowering mentorship experiences.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REFERENCES

Ahmed, S. (2004a). Affective economies. *Social Text, 79, 22*(2), 117-139. https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-22-2_79-117

Ahmed, S. (2004b). *The cultural politics of emotion* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Ahmed, S. (2010). *The promise of happiness*. Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822392781

Alarcón, J. D., & Bettez, S. (2017). Feeling brown in the academy: Decolonizing mentoring through a disidentification "Muxerista" approach. *Equity and Excellence in Education, 50*(1), 25-40. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2016.1250234

Badenhorst, C., & Guerin, C. (2016). Post/graduate research literacies and writing pedagogies. In C. Badenhorst & C. Guerin (Eds.), *Research literacies and writing pedagogies for masters and doctoral writers* (pp. 3-28). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004304338_002

Bartlett, L. E., & Sams, B. L. (2017). Telling time: Practicing clock wisdom in audit culture. *English Leadership Quarterly, 40*(2), 6-8.

Belli, J. (2016). Why well-being, why now?: Tracing an alternate genealogy of emotion in composition. *Composition Forum, 34*. http://compositionforum.com/issue/34/why-well-being.php

Boice, R. (1990). *Professors as writers: A self-help guide to productive writing.* New Forums Press.

Burrows, C. D. (2016). Writing while Black: The Black tax on African American graduate student writers. *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal, 14*(1), 15-20.

Caplan, N. A., & Cox, M. (2016). The state of graduate communication support: Re-

sults of an international survey. In S. Simpson, N. A. Caplan, M. Cox, & T. Phillips (Eds.). *Supporting graduate student writers: Research, curriculum, and program design* (pp. 22-51). University of Michigan Press.

Casanave, C. P. (2016). What advisors need to know about the invisible "real life" struggles of doctoral dissertation writers. In S. Simpson, N. A. Caplan, M. Cox, & T. Phillips (Eds.), *Supporting graduate student writers: Research, curriculum, and program design* (pp. 97-116). University of Michigan Press.

Costello, L. A. (2015). Standing up and standing together: Feminist teaching and collaborative mentoring. *Feminist Teacher, 26*(1), 1-28. https://doi.org/10.5406/femteacher.26.1.0001

Cox, M., & Brunjes, A. (2013). Guiding principles for supporting faculty as writers at a teaching-mission institution. In A. E. Geller & M. Eodice (Eds.), *Working with faculty writers* (pp. 191-209). Utah State University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt4cgs6g.16

Dancy, T. E., & Brown, M. C. (2011). The mentoring and induction of educators of color: Addressing the impostor syndrome in academe. *Journal of School Leadership, 21*(4), 607-634. https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461102100405

Dancy, T. E., & Jean-Marie, G. (2014). Faculty of color in higher education: Exploring the intersections of identity, impostorship, and internalized racism. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 22*(4), 354-372. https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2014.945736

Geisler, C. (2004). *Analyzing streams of language: Twelve steps to the systematic coding of text, talk, and other verbal data.* Pearson/Longman.

Geller, A. E. (2013). Introduction. In A. E. Geller & M. Eodice (Eds.), *Working with faculty writers* (pp. 1-18). Utah State University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt4cgs6g.5

Geller, A. E., & Eodice, M. (Eds.) (2013). *Working with faculty writers.* Utah State University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt4cgs6g

Godbee, B. (2018). The trauma of graduate education. *Inside Higher Ed.* https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2018/07/09/how-trauma-affects-grad-students-their-career-search-opinion

Gray, T., Madson, L., & Jackson, M. (2018). Publish and flourish: Helping scholars become better, more prolific writers. *To Improve the Academy: A Journal of Educational Development, 37*(2), 243-256. https://doi.org/10.1002/tia2.20081

Guerin, C. (2018). Why do supervisors contradict themselves? Development of feedback. *Doctoral Writing SIG.* https://doctoralwriting.wordpress.com/2018/09/11/why-do-supervisors-contradict-themselves-development-of-feedback/

Hochschild, A. R. (1983). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling.* University of California Press.

Holt, M., Anderson, L., & Rouzie, A. (2003). Making emotion work visible in writing program administration. In D. Jacobs & L. Micciche (Eds.), *A way to move: Rhetorics of emotion and composition studies* (pp. 147-160). Boynton/Cook.

Inoue, A. (2016). Afterword: Narratives that determine writers and social justice writing center work. *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal, 14*(1). http://www.praxisuwc.com/inoue-141

Jackson, R., McKinney, J. G., & Caswell, N. I. (2016). Writing center administration and/as emotional labor. *Composition Forum, 34*. http://compositionforum.com/issue/34/writing-center.php

Johnson, K. (2017). Writing by the book, writing beyond the book. *Composition Studies, 45*(2), 55-72.

Kegan, R. (1982). *The evolving self: Problem and process in human development.* Harvard University Press.

Kegan, R. (1994). *In over our heads: The mental demands of modern life*. Harvard University Press.

Kim, K. M. (2016). Post/graduate feedback in second language writing: The feedback network on the dissertation proposal. In S. Simpson, N. A. Caplan, M. Cox, & T. Phillips (Eds.), *Supporting graduate student writers: Research, curriculum, and program design* (pp. 238-256). University of Michigan Press.

Lahey, L., Souvaine, E., Kegan, R., Goodman, R., & Felix, S. (1988/2011). *A guide to the subject-object interview: Its administration and interpretation.* Minds at Work.

Lawrence, S., & Zawacki, T. M. (2019). *Re/writing the center: Approaches to supporting graduate students in the writing center*. Utah State University Press. https://doi.org/10.7330/9781607327516

Maher, M. A., & Say, B. H. (2016). Doctoral supervisors as learners and teachers of disciplinary writing. In C. Badenhorst & C. Guerin (Eds.), *Research literacies and writing pedagogies for masters and doctoral writers* (pp. 277-294). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004304338_016

McLeod, S. H., Miraglia, E., Soven, M., & Thaiss, C. (Eds.). (2001). *WAC for the new millennium: Strategies for continuing writing across the curriculum programs*. National Council of Teachers of English.

Micciche, L. (2002). More than a feeling: Disappointment and WPA work. *College English, 64*, 432-458. https://doi.org/10.2307/3250746

Micciche, L. (2007). *Doing emotion: Rhetoric, writing, teaching*. Boynton/Cook.

Micciche, L. (2016). Staying with emotion. *Composition Forum, 34*. https://compositionforum.com/issue/34/micciche-retrospective.php

Morita, N. (2004). Negotiating participation and identity in second language academic communities. *TESOL Quarterly, 38*(4), 573-603. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588281

Russell-Pinson, L., & Harris, M. L. (2019). Anguish and anxiety, stress and strain: Attending to writers' stress in the dissertation process. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 43*, 63-71. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2017.11.005

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Sano-Franchini, J. (2016). "It's like writing yourself into a codependent relationship with someone who doesn't even want you!": Emotional labor, intimacy, and the academic job market in rhetoric and composition. *College Composition and Communication, 68*(1), 98-124.

Silvia, P. J. (2007). *How to write a lot: A practical guide to productive academic writing*. American Psychological Association.

Simpson, S. (2016). Introduction: New frontiers in graduate writing support and program design. In S. Simpson, N. A. Caplan, M. Cox, & T. Phillips (Eds.), *Supporting graduate student writers: Research, curriculum, and program design* (pp. 1-20). University of Michigan Press. https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.8772400

Simpson, S., Caplan, N. A., Cox, M., & Phillips, T. (Eds.). (2016). *Supporting graduate student writers: Research, curriculum, and program design*. University of Michigan Press. https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.8772400

Simpson, S., Ruecker, T., Carrejo, D., Flores, B. C., & Gonzalez, H. C. (2016). Leveraging development grants to create graduate writing support at three Hispanic-serving institutions. In S. Simpson, N. A. Caplan, M. Cox, & T. Phillips (Eds.), *Supporting graduate student writers: Research, curriculum, and program design* (pp. 171-191). University of Michigan Press. https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.8772400

Smagorinsky, P. (2008). The method section as conceptual epicenter in constructing social science research reports. *Written Communication, 25*(3), 389-411. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088308317815

Stenberg, S. J. (2015). *Repurposing composition: Feminist interventions for a neoliberal age*. Utah State University Press. https://doi.org/10.7330/9781607323884

Stillman-Webb, N. (2016). Writing beliefs and mentoring practices: Advisor perspectives on post/graduate writing instruction in the sciences. In C. Badenhorst & C. Guerin (Eds.), *Research literacies and writing pedagogies for masters and doctoral writers* (pp. 257-276). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004304338_015

Sword, H. (2017). *Air and light and time and space: How successful academics write*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674977617

Tang, J. K., & Andriamanalina, N. (2020). "I cut my hand off and gave it to you, and you gave it back to me with three fingers": The disembodiment of doctoral student writers of color in the US nation state. In S. Madden, M. Eodice, K. T. Edwards Williams, & A. Lockett (Eds.), *Learning from the Lived Experiences of Graduate Student Writers*. Utah State University Press.

Tarabochia, S. L., & Madden, S. (2018). Writing in transition: Researching the development of graduate student and faculty writers [Special issue: Writing Development Across the Lifespan, Charles Bazerman, Ed.] *Writing & Pedagogy, 10*(3), 423-452. https://doi.org/10.1558/wap.34576

Tulley, C. (2018). *How writing faculty write: Strategies for process, product, and productivity*. Utah State University Press. https://doi.org/10.7330/9781607326625

Worsham, L. (1998). Going postal: Pedagogic violence and the schooling of emotion. *JAC: Journal of Advanced Composition, 18*(2), 213-245.

Young, V. (2011). *The secret thoughts of successful women: Why capable people suffer from the impostor syndrome and how to thrive in spite of it*. Crown.