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A JOURNAL OF WRITING CENTER SCHOLARSHIP

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Editor's Note

Julia Bleakney

Elon University

This issue of *WLN* is all about learning. What can we, as writing center tutors and administrators, learn from our writing centers or what can writing centers and their tutors teach us? In this issue, authors invite us to embrace the value of play and empathy in our centers, and to learn from our tutors about creative writing and accountability.

The starting place for Michelle Cohen and Sara Wilder's "Taking Play Seriously: Using the Multimodal Gutter for Writing Center Reflection" is a workshop they led at the International Writing Centers Association. The workshop introduced the concept of the "multimodal gutter," the space between two panels in a graphic narrative where meaning-making and interpretation often reside. In the workshop, participants were asked to juxtapose visual materials with writing center reflections to find meaning in the "gutters" between these two. Discussing the outcomes of this workshop, Cohen and Wilder reflect on the value of creative play and exploration for generating new perspectives, relaxing, and building relationships; they end their article with some suggestions for designing similar activities in your own writing centers.

Graduate student writers often need ways to stay accountable and on task, especially when working on long dissertation projects. In "Accountability in the Writing Center: Graduate Writing Consultants' Perspectives," Weijia Li examines accountability-related writing practices of graduate writing consultants (GWCs) and also shows how writing consultations are a potential site for accountability. Using a mixed-methods approach combining interviews and observations, Li learned about the GWC's accountability practices and then observed how accountability practices showed up in their writing center appointments.

In my writing center, my tutors tend to feel nervous when working with creative writers; Emma Catherine Perry's article, "'Don't Forget to Tell Me That I'm Really Brilliant!': Working with Creative Writing and Writers" should be a useful resource for them as they develop their confidence. Based on interviews with writing center tutors who are also creative writers, Perry identifies several ways tutors can support creative writers, including recognizing "emotionality as inseparable from the writing," practicing specific praise and supportive talk, inviting reflection, and–among tutors–encouraging a feedback culture. Perry ends her piece by suggesting that these strategies can apply to all writers.

In their Tutors' Column, "Writing Center Administration: Demystifying Success," graduate student Mohi Uddin takes us through their experiences as a student writer first, then as an intern in the writing center, as they observed writing center appointments and participated in research. Uddin's motivation for recording these observations is to introduce writing center scholarship and practice to their home country of Bangladesh. Uddin describes observing a "pedagogy of empathy" that reinforces empathetic listening and collaboration with diverse writers.

From the Blog Editors of
Connecting Writing Centers Across Borders

Happy 2025 from the WLN blog *Connecting Writing Centers Across Borders.* The blog team is excited to share that we have a group of Regional Editors joining our team who include Abigail Villagran-Mora, Allen Ho, Brenda Wambua, and Inas Mahfouz. The blog team's Lead Editor Anna Habib and Production Editor Weijia Li are stepping down to focus on family and other exciting scholarly projects. Anna will stay on as Consulting Editor with the blog. Esther Namubiru is now Lead Editor. Thanks to the whole team for serving the blog!

We are looking for a new Assistant Editor. If you or someone you know might be interested in this role, please share this call with them:

https://wlnconnect.org/2025/02/21/call-for-assistant-editor/

Taking Play Seriously: Using the Multimodal Gutter for Writing Center Reflection

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It's October 2023, and we stand at the front of a conference room at the International Writing Centers Association (IWCA) Conference, smiling a little sheepishly as voices from our former writing center consultants echo from a Bluetooth speaker.

"If you can articulate an idea … then you can write, you *are* a writer," muses the consultant. At the same time, a vintage clip of Wile E. Coyote appears on the screen. Wile E. attempts to fire a bow and arrow but instead tumbles backward off the cliff.

For the next minute, the voices of consultants continue to fade in and out, confidently describing their thoughts about writing as Wile E. experiences his signature slapstick misfortunes. Some workshop participants laugh audibly; others smile, looking up occasionally as they continue cutting images out of magazines. Wile E.'s struggles are decidedly at odds with the speakers' tone, and our group finds it funny.

As the workshop leaders–and creators of the video–we were relieved by the positive reaction; we had felt a little silly sharing this odd composition, the product of an assignment we'd completed nearly ten years ago as graduate students. The assignment had asked us to create a video using juxtaposition and nonlinearity as guiding concepts for composing, resisting a thesis-driven structure. As grad students in composition studies, we'd found it equally uncomfortable and liberating to eschew the rhetorically purposeful writing conventions we'd been so carefully studying, practicing, and passing on to our students. Our final video featured audio clips we had collected while interviewing writing center tutors, which we paired randomly with video assets collected from YouTube: clips not only of *Roadrunner*, but of a storm, whale sharks, line dancing, and more. We collaged these audio and video clips to form something quite strange–at times funny, at times even meaningful–sparking an unexpectedly rich conversation among our classmates about writing anxiety, affect, and writing center work.

Figure 1: Workshop participants collage materials to accompany their writing center questions.

The surprising meaning-making that emerged from turning our composing processes on their head showed us the rich possibilities for multimodal play in composition.

Figure 2: Excerpt from our graduate school video project: https://youtu.be/cjXeIAVPltc

Years later, we found that Amy Anderson's theory of the *multimodal gutter* helped to explain why this activity had been so memorable. Therefore, it was Anderson's concept we shared with the writing center practitioners (WCPs) who attended our IWCA workshop. In her 2017 *Enculturation* piece, Anderson uses comic theorist Scott McCloud's concept of the gutter–the space between two panels of a graphic narrative–where, he argues, the reader makes meaning through a process called *closure*. Like all meaning-making, this process is highly context dependent and socially situated, relying on the audience's past experiences and expectations. In our example in Figure 3, we suspect that most readers who grew up with Disney's *Cinderella* would fill in the narrative by assuming the mouse made the dress.

Anderson extends the concept of the gutter to show how audiences create closure not only between two panels of a comic, but also between two modes of communication. In the case of Figure 3, if we wanted to generate a multimodal gutter, we might add another element from a different mode, like sound. What meanings emerge if we
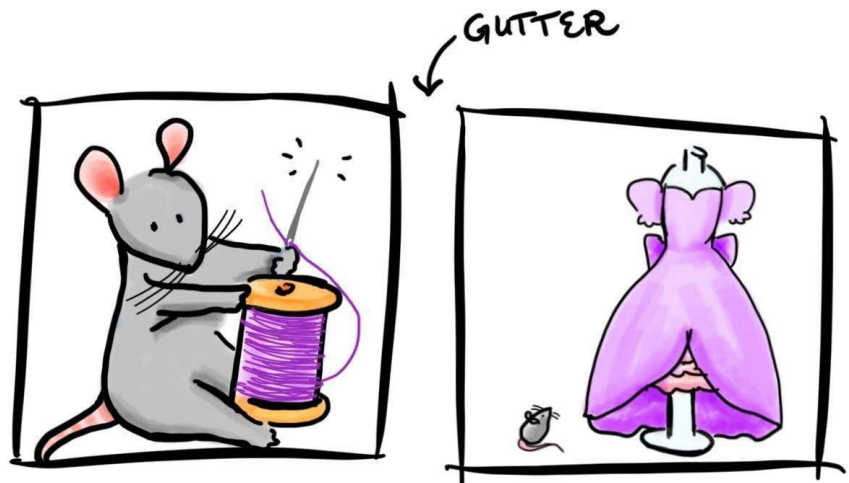

Figure 3: Readers make meaning by imposing a narrative that closes the gap between panels.

pair these images with the sound of applause, or the screech of a hawk? What if we layered in someone's voice saying, "But I'm not a real writer"? In the context of our IWCA workshop, the multimodal gutter is what made the Wile E. Coyote joke funny to an audience of WCPs. They brought their own experiences to resolve the juxtaposition between sound and image, imagining Wile E. pummeled by the ups and downs of the writing process.

At the conference, we used our video to set the stage for a collage workshop, one in which we also asked participants to juxtapose visual material with writing center reflections and see what meanings might emerge. In this essay, we'll reflect upon the collage workshop's use of the

multimodal gutter to argue for the value of creating deliberate time for generative, multimodal play in writing center work.

MULTIMODAL PLAY IN THE WRITING CENTER

Our invitation to play in and with the multimodal gutter extends the work of a number of scholars who call for more play in the writing center. Most recently, Holly Ryan and Stephanie Vie's 2022 collection *Unlimited Players* encourages WCPs to explore the intersections of writing center and game studies, reviving earlier conversations about play in writing center studies. In their 2007 book *The Everyday Writing Center*, Anne Ellen Geller et al. describe using a range of creative practices–knitting, earring-making, origami–to invite tutors to cultivate a "speculative, exploratory mindset" (57), a mindset we might also call playful. Kevin Dvorak and Shanti Bruce's 2008 collection *Creative Approaches to Writing Center Work* invites WCPs to consider how creativity and play both "enhance and complicate" (xiii) writing center work, including approaches to staff education and responses to campus demands.

Much of this scholarship on play in the writing center makes a point of de-emphasizing purposeful, audience-centered composing. For example, in *Creative Approaches to Writing Center Work*, both Scott L. Miller and Julie Reid's contributions encourage readers to design activities that don't necessarily have a persuasive purpose; rather, the purpose is the act of play itself. As Miller writes, when tutors play, "they create cool stuff like funny poems and new friends and also create new selves and new ways of using words"; and they do so in freedom from the expectation that their poems or wordplay need to be rhetorically effective (42). This playful approach can offer a generative, restorative set of practices to add to our existing, rhetorically focused approaches to multimodal composition. For Miller, and for us, play–especially the kind of play that invites us to take a break from our professional, rhetorically purposeful selves–offers opportunities for learning, reflection, and community that make the writing center a rich, vibrant, and engaging space.

In this essay, we amplify past calls for play in the writing center, suggesting the multimodal gutter as one way to engage in creative play and meaning-making. In the next section, we offer our workshop as one example of how to use this concept for playful reflection. Finally, we'll put forth considerations for WCPs to develop their own multimodal gutter activities.

THE WORKSHOP: GENERATING MULTIMODAL GUTTERS

To introduce our workshop participants to the multimodal gutter, we had to consider the time, space, and audience afforded by the conference setting. We brainstormed hands-on, lower-threshold activities (collaging with paper and glue rather than video editing software) and ultimately decided to walk our participants through the five-step collage assignment outlined in Figure 4. In brief, the activity asked them to spend some time cutting pictures out of magazines and then to randomly pair those images with questions they had written about their writing center work.

We were careful to design this activity in a way that would discourage participants from "coming to closure too quickly" (Garrett et al.). For example, we de-emphasized any association between

the disparate visual and textual activities (cutting out images and writing about writing center work, respectively), and we later stressed that the text/image pairings were meant to be random. Resisting closure was important to us because, as digital media scholars Bre Garrett et al. remind us, "Composing is a process of making connections, rearranging materials (words, images, concepts) in unexpected ways.". We knew from experience how tempting it would be to try to select the image that seemed to best fit the text, but we were eager to explore the multimodal gutters that would emerge from embracing unexpected juxtapositions.

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

In our large-group discussion at the end of the workshop, our participants reflected on the experience of playing with collage materials to generate multimodal gutters. They responded positively to the activity, noting two distinct outcomes: (1) generating new perspectives on their writing center questions; and (2) generating opportunities for both rest and low-stakes networking.

Generating New Perspectives

First, participants shared how the exercise invited them to pursue unexpected metaphors and motifs, offering them new perspectives on their questions. Looking more closely at details from their images, or putting them in conversation with one another, seemed to help reframe preexisting ideas. For example, one participant reframed her questions about tutor learning alongside an image of a plant; while it was easy to make the initial metaphor about growth, she looked more closely at the image's context to consider her own institutional constraints, noticing walls that trained the plant in particular directions. Another participant reframed her concerns about AI pedagogy by imagining her questions through the eyes of the "characters" that appeared in her collage.
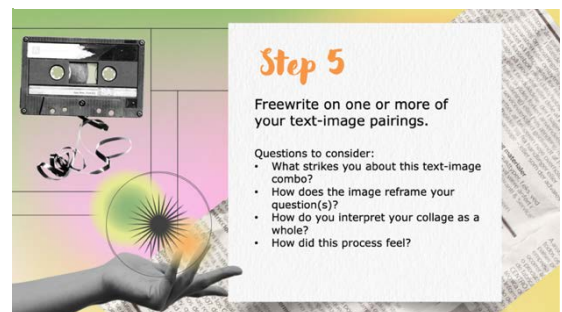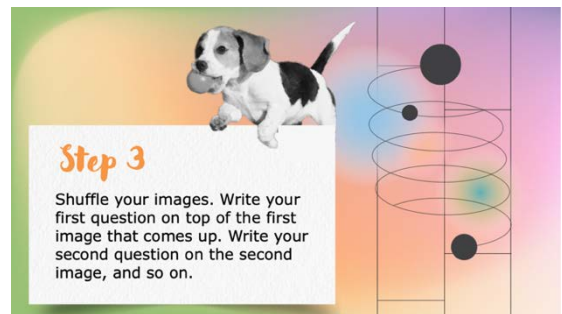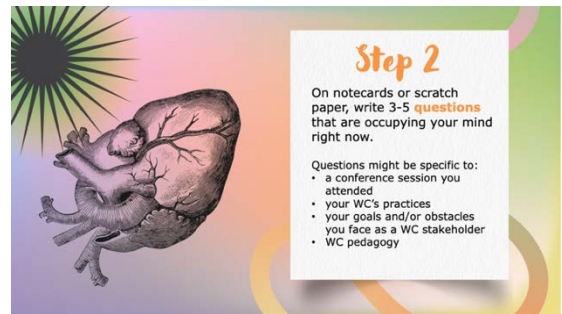

Figure 4.5: Collage activity prompt slides

Generating Rest and Relationships

Second, participants told us that after attending IWCA's morning sessions, they appreciated a "brain break" from typical conference activities. One said, "more sessions should involve crafting," and another said that she appreciated having permission to "pay partial attention," as we had encouraged them to continue flipping through magazines and cutting out images while we delivered our introductory slides and screened our video. We also noticed that participants spent time chatting with each other as they completed the activity. We knew conference networking can feel overwhelming, and it seemed the crafting experience made participants feel comfortable opting in or out of socializing at their leisure.

These outcomes are particularly well-supported by scholarship outside of composition and writing center studies. For example, education research has highlighted art-making and crafting as activities through which researchers can play with ideas, build relationships, and access flow states that make our bodies and minds feel well (Lemon). And although the activities we discuss in this article are not art therapy activities, research from art therapy can help us understand how working with craft materials not only invites new ideas or perspectives, but can actually lower stress, anxiety, and cortisol levels, and contribute to our overall well-being. In an interview with NPR, art therapy researcher Girija Kaimal summarized, "Anything that engages your creative mind — the ability to make connections between unrelated things and imagine new ways to communicate — is good for you" (qtd. in Gharib). Kaimal further explains that the process of "engaging in any sort of visual expression" activates our brains' reward pathways–despite the common concern that the product won't be good enough. Kaimal's explanation describes why engaging with crafting materials can feel like a relief, even when abandoning academic conventions may initially be a bit discomfiting.

WHAT WE LEARNED AND WHAT WE CARRY WITH US

Although creative play can help us relax, explore ideas from new perspectives, and even build relationships, we don't always prioritize this kind of exploratory making. In writing center circles, we all know about prioritizing process over product, but we do generally hope to reach a product eventually. Playing in the multimodal gutter–both in our video production and our workshop– invited us to let go of the expectation of a product, instead demonstrating how valuable such play can be in and of itself. We want to amplify, then, the value of generative, multimodal play, taking up Scott Miller's "call for playful noise from the writing center, for divine shenanigans that can teach us how to be better actors as well as better people" (44).

However, we know how easy it is to ignore this call when life gets busy. We have found that, in the writing center, as in conference spaces or classrooms, we need more than space and materials; we need dedicated time with other people when we're not expected to accomplish anything else. For example, Sara introduced a zine project in her writing center during a pre-semester training where tutors were invited to collage, draw, and write individual contributions that could then be photocopied and compiled into a zine. Following the training, Sara encouraged tutors to use free hours to continue the practice throughout the semester. Most tutors indicated that they liked the activity, saw value in it, and planned to make zine pages. However, two months later, the project had fallen by the wayside. Without dedicated time, this creative play won't take priority over other kinds of work. Recognizing this truth–particularly after reflecting on our workshop–Sara offered her tutors additional staff meeting time to create collages but let go of the expectation of compiling and distributing a writing center zine. Grouped around a table, sifting through magazines and markers, tutors reflected on their ongoing practice in the writing center. The best outcome of this recent activity was that, like our workshop, it seemed to

encourage some of her quieter tutors to speak more freely as they cut and pasted images together. This generative play seemed to nurture community.

Considerations for Designing Multimodal Gutter Activities

In this section, we put forth some considerations for designing a "multimodal gutter activity" tailored to your own writing center community. The context in which you facilitate your activity–whether a staff meeting, tutor training course, dissertation bootcamp, or perhaps in individual sessions–will present different opportunities and challenges with respect to accessibility, audience, and material constraints.

We hope you'll design your activity with accessibility in mind, doing your best to offer all participants ways to engage in the activity fully. While drafting our workshop plan, we considered a number of potential media (music, playdough, conference programs, polaroids, and more) and how WCPs might engage with these vastly different sensory materials. We ultimately decided on a workshop that relied heavily on visuals, hoping that the large, high-contrast images often found in magazines would be accessible to our anticipated audience, including those with low vision. We also knew that these were low-threshold materials that we would be able to provide for everyone, thanks in large part to the generosity of our neighbors who donated old magazines. Additionally, we provided print accessibility copies of what we planned to say and instructions for the activity. We also invited participants to engage with us and one another as worked best for them, a choice that worked well for the restful, restorative space we were trying to create. We want to encourage you, then, to consider how design choices for multimodal gutter activities can increase accessibility for you and your participants in your particular context.

As a final reminder, when designing a multimodal gutter activity, choose practices that encourage your participants to resist closure. Remember: participants will not be crafting a purpose-driven piece. This process can be uncomfortable for many of us (participants and facilitators alike), as fully embracing play requires us to let go of our expectations for an outcome. Some participants might also feel a little resistant to working with new materials, thinking or voicing things like "I'm not an artist," or "I'm too old for this." That's ok, and it's worth prompting reflection on how that discomfort may be similar to that of students who come to the writing center saying, "I'm not a writer." In fact, scholars note this kind of reflection on discomfort is one way to nurture a learning culture in writing center communities of practice (Geller et al.). The activity you design might bring exciting new perspectives for some. For others, it might just be a break from the humdrum of academic life. There is no imperative here to make something meaningful; in fact, we trust that the act of play without imperative is what makes it valuable.

Overall, we hope this piece invites you to consider how you might create time for yourselves, your colleagues, and your students to engage in multimodal play and reflection. We end on this challenge: Go make something, or give someone else the time and resources to make something. Let go of any expectations for a cohesive rhetorical product, and instead see how it feels to upend your own ingrained composing habits, allow yourself to get into the flow of making, and spend time with others. Who knows what will happen? Maybe it will help you think of something you haven't thought of before. Maybe it will be a welcome relief from day-to-day stressors. And just maybe, taking play seriously will strengthen community in your writing center.

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Accountability in the Writing Center: Graduate Writing Consultants' Perspectives

Weijia Li

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I first encountered the term 'accountability' in my work as an academic coach and a writing consultant in graduate school. As an academic coach, I held one-to-one appointments with undergraduate students to discuss academic practices such as making study plans for final exams. For writing consulting, I sat down with graduate students to go over, for example, course assignments or dissertation chapters. At that time, I thought accountability referred to the ability to persist and power through whatever one needs to do in action. Practices such as starting a project early and breaking down the project into small, actionable tasks were what I would typically recommend.

Although I did not set out to study accountability in my dissertation, it emerged as one of the themes in the findings. My dissertation focused on the reflective experiences of graduate writing consultants (GWCs) as writers and consultants in a research-intensive, private university in the U.S. I wanted to see how their positionality and experiences as both writers and consultants overlapped. Specifically, I wanted to understand GWCs' perspectives on writing and connect these perspectives to their approach to talking about writing with other graduate students during writing center consultations. For this article, I will describe GWCs' accountability-related writing practices and identify writing consultations as a potential site for accountability. My research questions are: what accountability-related writing practices did GWCs engage in? Based on GWCs' perspectives, how can writing consultation provide accountability for graduate students?

In the literature, research related to writing and accountability tends to focus on writing groups or writing accountability groups (e.g., Bourgault et al.). Some were hosted by writing centers (Wilder) while others may be hosted by departments within the institution (Skarupski and Foucher) or a group of likeminded writers (Bell and Hewerdine). These studies argue that frequent, purposeful gathering (i.e., writing groups) helps hold writers accountable in the writing process and allows them to write more (Scott et al.). However, in these studies, what accountability means in writing has not been well defined. Borrowing from the field of public administration, which defines accountability as "being called to account for one's actions" (Mulgan 555), my working definition is the ability to commit to writing with consistent time and effort. This definition makes clear that the writer accepts responsibility and takes ownership of the process. For example, creating a plan for a writing project and following it through is an example of accountability because it demonstrates the writer taking ownership of their process.

In what follows, I first define what I mean by accountability in writing and share the study context and methods, followed by participant information. Then, I report my findings on accountability in two parts, starting with the accountability-related practices GWCs identified and moving into how writing consultations function as a potential site for accountability. I conclude with implications for future research and writing centers.

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STUDY METHODS AND CONTEXT

My study took place at the University of Rochester, a private, R1 institution in the northeast United States. The University of Rochester has a writing center (Site 1) that serves the entire university and a separate graduate writing service that resides in the graduate school of education (Site 2). Both writing centers staff GWCs. Using purposeful sampling (Creswell and Poth), I recruited study participants from both sites after obtaining approval from the Research Subject Review Board in November 2020. For Site 1, I asked the administrative staff to forward my invitation email with the information sheet attached to all the GWCs. For Site 2, I sent the invitation with the information sheet as a group email to my colleagues since, as a fellow consultant, I already had access. For those who were interested, I then scheduled a one-to-one meeting to discuss the goals of the study, the data I intended to collect, and the logistics of data collection. In those meetings, I also responded to questions and concerns before obtaining consent to participate in my study. By mid-January 2021, I had six participants in total (three per site). Overall, my selection criteria were that they had been working at least for a year as a GWC and they would still be working as a GWC during my data collection period in spring 2021.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I collected data completely on Zoom from February 2021 to May 2021. Data sources included observations of one-to-one consultation sessions and two types of interviews (semi-structured interviews and session debriefs). Because my focus was entirely on the GWCs, I did not interview any of the writers. The small portion of data from the writers were only collected as field notes through session observations. In the two rounds of semi-structured interviews, I asked GWCs about their writing experiences, whereas in session debriefs, I asked them about their thoughts on the sessions and the writers' experiences.

After I completed the first round of interviews in early February 2021, I started observing immediately. Incorporating observations helped strengthen my findings through triangulation of data (Creswell and Creswell) because literature on tutors' experiences tends to depend solely on the tutors' perspectives (DeFeo and Caparas; Hughes et al.). I observed as long as my own schedule allowed until I had reached a point of saturation (Charmaz) in the initial data analysis of my observational field notes. In other words, I stopped observing when I began to identify repetitive codes from the data. Then I scheduled a debrief with my participants to talk about the observed sessions. The number of observations with each participant ranged from one to five due to logistics and availability. Between late April 2021 and mid-May 2021, I conducted the second round of interviews, which allowed me to probe more regarding my participants' experiences with writing and consulting.

Data analysis began after I completed transcribing the first round of interviews. I analyzed the data, adopting Johnny Saldaña's first and second cycles of coding. In the first cycle of coding, the majority of my codes were taken verbatim to honor my participants' voice. To transition into the second cycle of coding, I merged or re-coded with repeated and/or similar codes. For the second cycle of coding, I used focused coding by comparing the codes from the first cycle and compressing the number of codes within the same data source. I then specifically focused on how codes from observational field notes converged or diverged with those from the two rounds of interviews. Next, I examined the convergence and divergence with codes from the session debriefs. By merging codes across from data sources, I finalized my categories and generated themes. Additionally, I kept writing analytic memos consistently during data collection and analysis (Charmaz; Saldaña).

In this article, three of my participants—Bill, Eliot, and Elizabeth (pseudonyms)—will be the focus because compared to other participants, accountability was a much more salient theme with

them, based on my data analysis. In spring 2021, they were at different points in pursuing a PhD in English: Bill was about to graduate in a few months; Eliot was working on his dissertation proposal; and Elizabeth was in preparation for her doctoral candidacy examination. All of them had been working at Site 1 for three years or more.

GWCS' ACCOUNTABILITY-RELATED WRITING PRACTICES

Bill, Eliot, and Elizabeth reported several practices that I characterized as practices related to accountability: 1) breaking down a writing project into short-term goals to guide execution, 2) being persistent about writing by doing it regularly, and 3) making use of writing groups.

Both Bill and Elliot emphasized putting consistent effort into writing. For example, Bill reported that he always broke down writing projects into short-term tasks, which enabled him to manage the workload and meet the deadline. I relate Bill's practice to accountability because it indicated his personal effort and commitment to complete on time. For example, he tackled the seminar papers by dividing them into a few weeks' work:

> Through my coursework, I'd try to have a draft by Thanksgiving. At that point I can take basically seven to nine days and each day I'd have a daily editing task. ... The process of doing that so many times, you know when looking through which sort of editing to put on. (Bill, Interview 1)

Bill said that he approached the seminar papers methodically with daily tasks. Evidently, Bill employed a similar approach for working on his dissertation, which he described as "the long form of going about it daily" (Interview 1).

Like Bill, Eliot stated that holding himself accountable meant being persistent about daily writing: "My relationship with writing is everyday an attempt to hold myself to a higher level of you still need to write even if you don't feel what you're producing is great" (Interview 1). Eliot emphasized setting aside negative feelings toward his draft and engaging in the action part of writing. The mention of "everyday" suggested Eliot's need to work on writing regularly, rather than sporadically (i.e., his prior practice). He explained, "I often revert to the write-a-great-deal-in-a-short-timeframe, which I don't like. I'm trying to train myself out of that and write more diligently and write every day" (Eliot, Interview 1). Moreover, Eliot stated that prolific writers often had good habits, including writing regularly: "I think a lot of the people who publish the most are just the most effective. I don't know whether it's because they don't feel a resistance to writing or because they're just very good at overcoming it. But they write regularly" (Interview 2). What Bill and Eliot shared suggests that writing regularly helped them write more and stay on task, which is consistent with findings from research on writing groups (Bell and Hewerdine; Skarupski and Foucher). For instance, Kimberly Skarupski and Kharma Foucher's 10-week Writing Accountability Group helped faculty participants develop better writing habits such as writing frequently in shorter sessions. Those habits allowed them to write and build writing time into their schedules amid multiple commitments.

Furthermore, both Elizabeth and Eliot reported that participating in writing groups helped them write and share progress and challenges in a social setting with like-minded peers. For instance, Elizabeth stated that participating in the writing group helped her commit to writing: "Up until the pandemic happened, I had a writing group and we met every week. ... It helped to hold me accountable" (Interview 2). Meanwhile, the writing group resembled Elizabeth's view of writing: "Even though we oftentimes are [writing] by ourselves, it's meant to be shared with other people" (Interview 2). To Elizabeth, writing groups—writing together and reading each other's writing—made writing social. Similarly, Scott et al. found that participating in a Facebook writing

accountability group offered writers a sense of community that they were not alone in writing the dissertation.

Eliot also mentioned the value of writing groups for being accountable. He reported that attending writing groups was helpful for writing more:

> That process of committing to a certain amount of time, writing, setting goals and talking with other people about their projects—that has been incredibly useful, incredibly important. ... If I had been doing that, ... I would have written a lot more than I already have. (Eliot, Interview 2)

As described earlier, Eliot tried to switch his practice to writing regularly in order to write more. Participating in the writing group helped him write frequently and more importantly, allowed him to commit to writing surrounded by other committed writers. Both Elizabeth's and Eliot's experiences suggested "a sense of social responsibility" (301) that Deborah E. Tyndall et al.'s writing group allowed its members to develop. Likewise, Tiffany Kinney et al. emphasized that in their self-directed writing group, the motivational support members gave to one another helped writers stay committed to writing.

WRITING CONSULTATIONS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

My participants shared practices for holding themselves accountable in writing, which had similarities with what the literature has discussed on accountability in writing. Their perspectives also suggest that writing consultations are a potential site for accountability in the writing process. My data show that during the session, participants spent most of the time focusing on a writing project, which usually fell anywhere between an idea in conception or a soon-to-be-submitted draft. From the writers' point of view, the working together part, whether it was working on the writing in real time, or discussing the project and/or the process, echoed the social aspect of a writing group (Scott el al.; Skarupski and Foucher). For instance, in Eliot's session, the consultee shared their screen with Eliot and made edits as they reviewed the dissertation chapter line-by-line. In other words, the consultee utilized the session to make progress on her writing in the company of a GWC.

Indeed, writing consultations offered writers a definite space and/or time to think about and discuss writing, as Elizabeth described: "It's just like having that routine time where we meet and talk" (Session Debrief 2). This resonates with the writing-related interaction in writing groups (e.g., Tyndall et al.). For example, one of Bill's sessions was about drafting a cover letter for a research fund application. As Bill was wrapping up the session, he checked in with the writer to see how she was feeling, asking, "Do you feel like you have a way forward?", to which the writer responded, "Yeah, even the verbal talk helps me" (Field Notes, 04-14-2021). Therefore, the session allowed the writer to discuss the cover letter with a peer and helped her move forward with the writing.

More importantly, when the writer continued meeting with the tutor on a weekly basis, those sessions could help them stay on task, as Bill described:

> Graduate students who may not feel the strongest writers are probably sometimes more successful than others... So they make weekly appointments with the writing center to get things on track or to execute a deadline. ... They're going to have a weekly appointment every week until they get that done. (Interview 2)

Bill noted that attending a series of writing consultations was a feasible way for writers to hold themselves accountable in meeting deadlines. To elaborate, each session served as a checkpoint

for writers to review and reflect on their progress, receive feedback, and set goals that they would like to accomplish before the next session. When writers worked on their own between sessions, working toward specific short-term goals based on the last session helped them stay on top of writing. Therefore, writing consultations, when intentionally scheduled on a regular basis, share similar characteristics with my participants' accountability-related practices, which can help writers stay on task and write more.

IMPLICATIONS

I have found that my participant GWCs employed accountability-related writing practices for their own writing. I have also drawn connections between the GWCs' practices and what writing consultations can offer. Reflecting on my findings, I wonder if the issue with accountability is related to the pressure to produce writing with noticeable progress (i.e., how much is written) and result (i.e., "get that done," in Bill's words). In the literature, while some studies suggested that utilizing writing consultations helps writers to move forward with their writing (e.g., Natalie DeCheck), what writing consultations can do for writers in terms of accountability has not been much explored. Hence, my study offers preliminary findings that support the idea that writing consultations can be a critical site for accountability in writers' process. Since my sample was small, I recommend that writing centers continue examining accountability in order to theorize it in the context of writing. Future research, for example, can include perspectives on accountability from both GWCs and the graduate students with whom they meet. Additionally, writing centers that serve graduate students may highlight accountability when publicizing writing consultations to those writers.

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"Don't Forget to Tell Me That I'm Really Brilliant!": Working with Creative Writing and Writers

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As a writing center tutor in my first year of college, I was happy to have a campus job that encouraged me to do one of my favorite things: talk about writing. As a novice creative writer, I felt similarly about creative writing workshops. Because both creative writing programs and writing centers are situated in colleges and universities, if I was enrolled in a creative writing class, I was usually picking up a few shifts a week in the writing center, as well. In all the writing centers where I have worked, I have met people whose interests in writing and talking about writing align with mine. However, there is little empirical research into the experiences of the creative writers who gravitate to writing center work. I am conducting an IRB-approved research study to address this dearth. Through this research, I am finding that, though creative writing has long been neglected in the constellation of writing center practice, the self-sponsored and affective aspects of many creative writing center sessions invite writing center practitioners of all backgrounds to consider strategies for truly writer-centered consultations in any genre.

This article addresses the value of non-specific positive feedback through the context of creative writing center appointments. The creative writers and tutors I interviewed for this project were largely in agreement: when working with creative writing in a writing center appointment, positive feedback from a tutor is essential for building and maintaining writerly efficacy. While this appears to conform with traditional tutoring approaches, the interviews underpinning this research invite writing center tutors and leaders to consider positive feedback anew: this type of motivational scaffolding (Mackiewicz and Thompson) may be more important for writerly efficacy and deserving of more attention in tutor development than it receives. Rather than trying to leverage positive feedback to establish rapport or to facilitate writer uptake of more direct instruction, these creative writing center practitioners emphasize the importance of communicating to a writer that their efforts to connect with readers are seen and celebrated.

In conducting this study, I join other scholars who are contributing empirical research to our knowledge of the ways creative writing works (or does not work) in writing center appointments. Lizzie Hutton has analyzed bids for support in appointment forms to explore the motivations of creative writers who bring their work into the writing center. Havva Zorluel Ozer used surveys to capture tutor attitudes toward working with creative writing. Like mine, Hutton's and Ozer's work emerges from the fact that, historically, creative writing has been considered an outlier with respect to traditional writing center practice. While creative writing techniques may be successfully implemented in writing center sessions (Masiello; Neff), creative writing center practitioners like Hans Ostrom and Kenneth Pobo have long noted that tutors can struggle to ask fruitful questions in the absence of formal assignments or rigid genre conventions. However, the presence of creative writers in writing centers offers an alternative perspective on these difficulties and offers a way forward: far from being strange or atypical, creative writing center sessions can exemplify valued writing center practices.

CHALLENGES IN TUTORING CREATIVE WRITING

There is a persistent wariness around working with creative writers and writing in writing centers (Cassorla; Hutton; Ostrom; Ozer; Pobo). One strand of this conversation has focused on a perceived difficulty in giving feedback on creative writing: If we bring more creative writing into the writing center, will tutors be equipped to respond? Ostrom argues that a tutor prepared to address unfamiliar scholarly genres is also prepared to address a play or a poem. He writes: "[M]y overarching suggestion is that you treat the creative writing that students bring to you pretty much as you would treat drafts of essays…you should, in general, proceed as you usually do…. Don't change any of the fundamental training you have received in WC work; don't change your professional behavior" (150). Similarly, Pobo notes, "What applies in freshman composition, technical writing, journalism, and advanced prose writing also applies in creative writing" (5). Pobo goes on to assert that the attentiveness to word choice in writing center conferences mimics the emphasis on accurate diction by creative writing classroom instruction.

While noting the similarity of working with creative writing and other genres, Pobo also notes a crucial difference: the intensity of identification that a student may feel toward their creative writing as opposed to their academic or technical work. In a description of hypothetical interactions with creative writers, Pobo writes: "One difficulty… is that the student's ego is often easily bruised. Students who may be very cooperative when we talk with them about an essay for freshman composition may be more defensive about their own creative work" (5-6). Vulnerability around creative writing is also an emergent theme in my ongoing research. However, Pobo's interpretation of student sensitivity is challenged by the accounts of the tutors I have interviewed. While Pobo urges tutors to push creative writers who may be resistant to feedback, vulnerability and a strong connection between creative writing and the writer's sense of self are assets writing center practitioners can learn to work with. Furthermore, the way we work with creative writing and writers can apply to writing center sessions with any writing, with any writer.

THE CREATIVE WRITING CENTER PRACTITIONERS OF NEBRASKA

The first phase of this research study took place at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). While working as the associate director, I noticed that not only were many of the students staffing the UNL Writing Center creative writers, but that they worked with creative writing in appointments often. This was likely due to the placement of the UNL Writing Center in an English department with a very active creative writing program. Not only does the English department at UNL offer a PhD in creative writing, but it also supports a prominent international literary journal, several active reading series, and a vibrant undergraduate program, as well. While the richness of this creative writing ecology may seem to make the UNL Writing Center an outlier, I encourage readers to reconsider: how many creative writers are already working in your writing center? There may be more than you think.

With IRB approval, I recruited eight tutors to participate in 60-minute, semi-structured interviews, recorded over Zoom. The entire interview protocol can be found here. Not every question in the interview protocol was asked in every interview. While the tutors varied in life stage and experience, all participants had tutored in a university writing center, had brought their own creative writing work into the writing center for feedback, and had tutored other writers on creative writing, as well.

Once the interviews had been conducted and transcribed, I conducted a thematic analysis of the data, reading through transcripts and looking for patterns. I chose to segment the data using topic chains—longer segments of text that allowed me to capture context and nuance more effectively than single words or phrases might. Because the insights of the creative writing center practitioners in this study are informed by their dual experiences as both creative writers and writing center tutors, their responses tended to be very thoughtful, thoroughly articulated, and already couched in the terminology of writing center practice.

In this article, I address only one aspect of the interviewees' experiences: their experiences as creative writers who have brought their poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction into the writing center for feedback. I highlight one point on which our creative writing center practitioners were nearly unanimous: as writers, they found positive feedback of paramount importance, suggesting that it is crucial for an emotionally safe and intellectually productive writing center appointment. I have chosen to focus on this insight because of its immediate salience and its applicability to writing in all genres.

"WHAT DO YOU WISH WRITING CENTER TUTORS KNEW BEFORE THEY GAVE YOU FEEDBACK ON YOUR CREATIVE WRITING?"

I wrote this question with tutor training implications in mind. Before conducting these interviews, I had hypothesized that the creative writing center practitioners' experience with creative writing, on both sides of the writer-tutor interaction, would enable them to identify relevant creative writing craft knowledge and writing center strategies. However, by far the most frequent type of response to this question focused on the affective dimensions of creative writing. *All but one of the eight respondents* answered this question with a statement about how strongly they feel about their writing, how important it is to them. As creative writers, these interviewees would want their tutors to know just what Pobo wrote: they are attached to their writing; their identity is wrapped up in their creative work.

One of the writers I interviewed said that specific praise was helpful, noting that, "praise helps early on and especially in creative writing work. And encouragement, right? Pointing to the places that are working, asking questions. I think that's really really important." This approach to positive feedback—a specific, pointed moment of praise—is in line with past descriptions of effective strategies used by tutors (Mackiewicz and Thompson). However, most of the interview participants emphasized the importance of positive feedback in general. For example, one creative writing center practitioner said, "I think, yeah, with creative writing, I especially…want [the tutor] to be gentle because it's something that [the writer] consider[s] creative… I would just want [the tutor] to be, like, especially tender." Another tutor answered, "I would want [tutors] to know that I…like to receive…praise before any sort of constructive criticism… It's like, 'Don't forget to tell me that I'm really brilliant because I could really use that right now!!'" While this tutor gave this answer with a knowing laugh, they were also earnest. Like the other interview participants in this study, this tutor had amassed enough creative writing and writing center experience to be able to ask for exactly what they needed; they knew that before they can feel receptive to a reader's response, they need to be reassured that this writing project is more than a whim or a self-indulgence: It's a worthwhile endeavor.

EARLY IMPLICATIONS FOR TUTOR TRAINING

I expected responses from the interviewees that confirmed past suggestions for training tutors to work with poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. Specifically, I expected the interview participants would recommend any tutor faced with a creative writing appointment to focus on

questions that build genre awareness (Ostrom; Ozer) or to focus on the details of language to support artistry at the level of the sentence or line (Pobo). The responses of these interviewees, however, point in a different direction.

The emphasis the interviewees placed on supportive and encouraging feedback at the outset of an appointment confirms some aspects of earlier, practitioner inquiries into working with creative writing in a writing center context. However, the way these creative writers talked about this affective dimension of writing center work differs in attitude and in implication from previous scholarship. Comparing the results of these interviews with Pobo's recommendations for tutors is particularly interesting. While Pobo, like the interviewees here, notes that tutors "do not want to discourage students" (6), he returns his focus from the affective to the textual when he advocates for the importance of clarity and diction in creative writing, reminding readers, "On the other hand, we do not want to encourage mediocrity" (6). According to Pobo, tutors should skate over the emotionality often present in creative writing appointments to encourage the writer toward objective improvement in the writing.

The results of these interviews, however, ask us to understand that the emotionality present in creative writing appointments is inseparable from the writing itself. There is no creative writing without the creative writer's presence, without their messy, difficult emotions—without their fragility and without their resilience. The difference between a professional writer and a beginning writer is not necessarily the difference between a perfectly chosen word and a merely expedient word in a line of poetry. Rather, the difference is that the professional writer writes another line, and another, and another. Writers, and not just creative writers, need reassurance that their grand risk has been worth it—that their vulnerability will be met with appreciation, not with tepid, niggling judgements.

POSSIBILITIES FOR TUTOR TRAINING AND CULTURE-BUILDING

Practicing praise and supportive talk may help tutors work with a range of writers and writing; it will prepare them particularly well for working with creative writers and with creative writing. While I have not conducted specific assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of the following strategies, I have found them useful for creating a culture of positive feedback.

Make Room for Reflection: Reflecting on their own experiences with feedback may help tutors absorb the importance of positive feedback for writers writing in any genre. A reflective activity to promote encouraging talk in tutoring sessions can involve freewriting in response to the prompt: What is one memory of feedback that made you want to keep writing? What is one memory of feedback that made you want to never write again? The group can then generate scripted phrases to use in appointments.

Make a List: Watching other tutors practice this type of emotional scaffolding may normalize phatic praise and encourage new tutors to engage in similar talk with writers. To reap this benefit in tutor training, I recommend recording an appointment with an experienced tutor and then watching it back with your staff. Ask staff to note every time the tutor in the recording uses positive feedback in their conversation with the writer.

Make it Part of Writing Center Culture: Giving and receiving positive feedback can be difficult! To make this part of our workplace and pedagogical culture, we have started a practice of receiving and giving affirmations every staff meeting. There is a jar in our writing center labeled "Affirmations for Writers." At the beginning of our staff meetings, we all take one slip of paper, reflect on the message, and potentially share with the group. Then, at the end of the meeting, we write new affirmations to go into the jar.

AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This first insight from this research study is necessarily limited. However, the intersection of creative writing pedagogy and writing center practice could be a fruitful site for learning more about valued practices in each complimentary sphere and in their overlap. Future research may consider the following:

Evaluate claims from different perspectives: The creative writers in these interviews are all empowered to identify and verbalize their support needs as writers. However, not all creative writers coming into writing center appointments will have an extensive writing center vocabulary. Future research may involve talking to creative writers who use the writing center but who have never studied or practiced tutoring themselves.

What else works in creative writing center appointments? For tutors unsure of the best way to approach creative writing, positive feedback provides a useful, harm-reducing place to start. To build a more complete understanding of valued writing center practices in the context of creative writing appointments, more research is needed. The data generated by interviewing creative writers seems promising for providing insight into the complexities of these conversations.

CONCLUSION

I want to challenge the notion that the insights offered by this data apply only to creative writers and creative writing. While the affective dimension of tutoring may be more pronounced in creative writing appointments, it is not absent in others. Even in tutoring technical writing, as Jo Mackiewicz has noticed, compliments and other motivational scaffolding strategies are important facets of the tutoring conversation. Mackiewicz notes that a blend of "formulaic" complimenting (compliments that take a common, non-specific form, like "This is good") and "nonformulaic" complimenting (compliments that take a specific, nonstandard form) is typical for tutors working with technical writers (25).

Mackiewicz does place a higher tutoring value on nonformulaic compliments, noting that formulaic or non-specific compliments "lacked specificity and, therefore, instructive value" (25). However, Mackiewicz cannot entirely discount these nonspecific expressions of praise and their positive effects on tutoring results. She writes, "they seemed to generate worthwhile outcomes…motivating students to continue to work on their writing and bolstering students' confidence about their writing" (25). In short, telling a technical writer and/or a creative writer (they might be both!) that what they are working on is interesting and worthwhile may have similar, positive, motivating effects. Therefore, I suggest—and look forward to exploring further through research—that what works in creative writing center sessions also works when tutoring other types of writing. In fact, looking at these strange, emotional writing center tutoring interactions may nuance established, valued writing center practice.

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Tutors' Column: "Writing Center Administration: Demystifying Success"

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As an English MA student, I paid several visits to the Writing Studio at the University of Arkansas to tailor my course assignments and projects. My experience as a student writer seeking help led me to working as an intern there. What drew my attention to the Writing Studio is the *pedagogy of empathy*, which welcomes students of diverse backgrounds, identities, programs, and degrees to meet with the consultants and work on a wide variety of writings (Leake). During Fall 2023, I enrolled in a graduate internship that counts as a three-credit course, and it required me to work for ten hours weekly with the Writing Studio. The opportunity to work with the Writing Studio as an intern allowed me to explore the studio further, including learning its values and mission, virtually touring other writing centers in the US, participating in College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) training, and researching English language learners' needs. As an international student and aspirant to contribute to higher education, I intend to introduce writing center scholarship and practice to help students in my home country, Bangladesh. As such, I was very curious and focused on learning how a writing center administration should function. Through my writing center internship, I developed an administrative toolkit, informed by the pedagogy of empathy, which makes a writing center successful in serving the student community.

With the progress of my internship, I began to see a connection between the skill sets that consultants support and the Writing Studio's recruitment principles in order to support a diverse student population. I was assigned to observe a couple of consultations between the Writing Studio consultants and students for a week. One important aspect I observed is that the Writing Studio is not a "fix-it shop," which some students believe it to be (North 435); rather, consultants at the Writing Studio work on a whole range of skill sets, such as: supporting students with drafting thesis statements, working through their revisions, and formatting citations according to various citation methods. In addition, the consultants facilitate pre-writing support, that is, when students show up at the Writing Studio before they start their first draft of the projects. Over the course of a week, I observed five consultations by four consultants, each from a different program: psychology, anthropology, creative writing, and English. Louise Z. Smith discusses the value of this diversity in consultants' recruitment in her article "Independence and Collaboration: Why We Should Decentralize Writing Center," where she recommends that writing center graduate and undergraduate consultants be recruited from all departments, not just from English (5). This disciplinary diversity is important to better support students working across different academic programs with distinctive academic terms, keywords, phrases, and styles. I believe the recruitment of consultants from various academic backgrounds helps diversify the writing support offered to the student population on campus in addition to ensuring emotional support and encouragement.

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During my observation, in addition to supporting students' writing skills, I recognized that consultants employed *empathetic listening*, regardless of the students' color, creed, race, sexual, and ethnic orientations. Consultants' empathetic listening cultivated confidence to help students grow into self-reliant writers for future assignments and projects. I recall a session when a student felt reassured by the consultant who was listening to her attentively and non-judgmentally, while also demonstrating emotional support through eye contact and body language. Moreover, consultants worked with students on how to solve problems together instead of editing and proofreading their assignments. This collaboration instilled confidence so that students can solve problems themselves. As a result, I noticed at least two students were sighing with a sort of relief from the stress of their projects. Albert Bandura, in this regard, believes that self-efficacy is influenced not only by the student's own physiological and emotional reactions to a task but also by past experience and verbal feedback from others (cited in Martinez et al. 352).

Furthering their pedagogy of empathy, the Writing Studio at the University of Arkansas is committed to protecting the identities and credentials of the students who visit it. As a part of this commitment, the Writing Studio provides graduate interns and new consultants with College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) Level-I training, in which I had the privilege to participate. The Writing Studio Coordinator facilitated the training that involved discussing the challenges, limitations, and approaches with the students. I appreciated being introduced to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 during the eight-week-long training sessions. FERPA—a federal law that applies to all educational institutions in the US—is highly prioritized in the US educational environments, such as writing centers where consultants and students exchange personal documents, because it protects the academic results, personal records, and credentials of the students from being shared with anyone else without the consent of the concerned students (U.S. Department of Education 3). A large number of students from different programs and academic departments visit the Writing Studio to have their assignments, projects, or academic papers reviewed by consultants and guided to their final submissions. The CRLA Level-I training also included some consultation tools like identifying students' challenges and strengths, understanding their research argument or project instructions, creating a collaborative learning atmosphere, and providing need-based feedback. These strategies are intended to improve the critical writing skills and protect the identities and records of the students. It feels great that the Writing Studio makes the interns, consultants, and admins aware of the privacy of students' records and credentials through training. Protecting the privacy of academic credentials in this manner is an important prerequisite on which trust between writing center consultants and students can be built and makes the writing center a safe and reliable place for the students community.

Among other core practices, the Writing Studio's attempt to facilitate need-based support for English Language Learners (ELL) intrigued me. The Writing Studio was planning to start a pedagogical recalibration initiative in Fall 2023 for students who speak and write English as a second language. The Studio could have simply jumped on the project; instead, it followed a methodological process. The Writing Studio was offering special writing consultations to the ELL students on Thursdays from 6:45 PM to 9:00 PM. To best plan for this recalibration initiative, the Writing Studio at the University of Arkansas distributed a questionnaire among multilingual students to further assess their needs. As a part of the project, the Studio asked me– since I was interested in the needs of ELL students– to carry out a needs assessment informed by scholarship and existing frameworks. I also leveraged my role as a graduate intern to research US writing centers by visiting multiple centers' websites to learn about the services they provide with ELL students. It was a wonderful learning experience for me to explore writing center scholarship and

virtually tour other writing centers. As the next step, I was asked to write an ELL report reflecting my findings. It amazed me that the Writing Studio would use my needs assessment to advance the process to its reporting authority. My major focus of my own work was writing center administration, and so I found this process very effective—that is, doing some groundwork using relevant scholarship and observing others before taking any fresh initiatives.

The Writing Studio at the University of Arkansas has been a place of friendship, empathy, and growing together, where the mutual cooperation of the interns, consultants, and administrators made it one of my two best places on campus. I really enjoyed the *community sense,* as if everyone is always ready to help each other at the Writing Studio, furthering the work of writing center scholar Judith Summerfield who states, "The nature of the writing center, then, is community" (7). I observed wonderful cooperative vibes among the consultants, admins, and interns in many cases, like sharing resources and exchanging duty rosters. The writing consultants and students also develop a good rapport during consultation hours; at least, this is what happened to me when I consulted with some consultants for my academic writing. To conclude with a focus on writing center administration, I believe fostering a sense of everyone-for-all is the best mantra of a successful writing center.

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Call for Reflection Papers: Tutors' Voices in Practice: Naming the Impact of Tutors' Columns in Writing Centers & Beyond, Submission deadline May 15, 2025

Writing center studies as a field is built on understanding the value of peer voices. And as multiple publications have moved to include peer tutors' perspectives in research–either through participation or authorship–WLN's Tutors' Column has long been a mainstay of centering the perspectives of peer tutors who do the important labor of working with student writers.

This call is interested in featuring voices of **current and past tutor-authors** as well as **writing center administrators** who have utilized and been impacted by Tutors' Columns throughout their time in writing centers.

We are open to a variety of types of submissions, including short responses of a few hundred words to longer studies or reflective pieces. **There is no minimum word count, and we are looking for a maximum word count of 3,000 words.** We encourage administrators to forward this call to tutors they've mentored through publication of Tutors' Columns.

Potential questions to address **for current or past tutor-authors** might include:
- How has authoring a Tutors' Column contributed to your academic or career journeys?
- How did a specific Tutor's Column change your writing center practice?
- Have you used your Tutors' Column in other professional spaces?

Potential questions to address **for writing center administrators** might include:
- How do you use Tutors' Columns in your writing center pedagogy courses or consultant training curriculum?
- Describe your process of mentoring writers working on Tutors' Columns. How did the project begin? How did you leverage the project for you or your writing center?

Submission Deadline: May 15, 2025
How to Submit a Reflective Paper
Prior to submission, all authors should review *WLN*'s submission guidelines.
Title your submission with the prefix "TVP"--for example, "TVP: [Title]"--so we route your submission accordingly for this special issue.

Follow these steps to submit reflective papers for this special issue through our submission portal at https://submissions.colostate.edu:
- Create a profile at the submission portal and log-in.
- At "Step 1," select "Submit to a Journal."
- At "Step 2," select "WLN: A Journal of Writing Center Scholarship" & click "Continue."
- At "Step 3," complete the relevant fields for your reflective paper. Once you've finished, click "Complete Your Submission."

If you'd like feedback while you're drafting or thinking about your reflection ahead of the submission date, please feel free to reach out to andrea.efthymiou@qc.cuny.edu.

Muriel Harris Outstanding Service Award (MHOSA), Nominations due June 15, 2025

Named after its first recipient and given at every other International Writing Centers Association (IWCA) conference, the Muriel Harris Outstanding Service Award (MHOSA) recognizes a writing center professional for outstanding and sustained service that has had an enduring impact on the writing center community over the course of their career in significant and broad-based ways. We encourage all members of the writing center community to consider nominating, or re-nominating, an individual whose professional service in the form of leadership, scholarly contributions, mentoring, and teaching have had an enduring impact on the field and merit recognition in the form of this award.

Nominations should be sent electronically to Michael Pemberton, Chair of the committee, at michaelp@georgiasouthern.edu. They should be sent as a single PDF document with pages numbered, and should include the following materials:

- A letter of nomination that includes the name and institution of the nominee, your personal knowledge of or experience with the nominee's service contributions to the writing center community, and your name, institutional affiliation, and email address.
- Supporting documents (maximum of 5 pages; approx. 3000 words). These documents may include an abbreviated curriculum vitae that emphasizes writing center work, published material, or original work by the nominee.
- Letters of support (optional but limited to 2).

If you have previously nominated a deserving candidate, please consider submitting an updated nomination.

All materials must be received by Michael Pemberton by June 15, 2025. The winner of the Award will be announced at the 2025 IWCA Conference in Cincinnati, OH, October 16-18, 2025. Read about the history of the MHOSA in _Writing Lab Newsletter_ 34.7, pp. 6-7.

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Middle East North Africa Writing Centers Association (MENAWCA) Conference

Middle East North Africa Writing Centers Association (MENAWCA)
October 9-12, 2025
New York University Abu Dhabi
"Co-Creation with AI: Navigating New Horizons in Writing and Learning"

The proposal form to fill out is on the conference website:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSenByANRmdDeB10kyndd5kdyCsi9bMgEIfs-930Z7Bj6vSL7g/viewform
Send the completed CFP form to nyuad.menawca@nyu.edu.
Submission deadline: April 30, 2025.

2025 IWCA/NCPTW Joint Conference

The 2025 IWCA/NCPTW joint conference will be held October 15-18 at the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza in Cincinnati, OH. Look for our forthcoming call for proposals, which will be due on May 1, 2025! Early registration will open in April.

2025 OWCA Professional Development Symposium

The Online Writing Centers Association invites members to submit a presentation or workshop plan for our online symposium: a one-day event with engaging online sessions and opportunities for networking on Tuesday, May 20, 2025. Please see the attached invitation below for more information and additional details on submission materials.

Note that we have a priority and final deadline for those interested in presenting. You can submit your materials via this **OWCA 2025 Professional Development Symposium Submission Link.**

For transparency, the OWCA conference committee would like to let members know that this Professional Development Symposium is happening in lieu of the originally scheduled conference this year. Preparations are already underway for an OWCA 2026 conference.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the OWCA Conference Chair: Jenny Torres.

CONFERENCE CALENDAR

May 20, 2025: Online Writing Centers Association Professional Development Symposium
Contact: owca-conference@onlinewritingcenters.org
Website: https://www.onlinewritingcenters.org/calendar/2025-owca-conference/

June 16-18, 2025: Canadian Writing Centers Association, Virtual
Contact: Christin Wright-Taylor: chtaylor@wlu.ca

October 9-12, 2025: Middle East North Africa Writing Centers Association, in Abu Dhabi
Contact: nyuad.menawca@nyu.edu
Website:https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSenByANRmdDeB10kyndd5kdyCsi9bMgEIfs-930Z7Bj6vSL7g/viewform

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Archives, Resources, and Submissions:

Visit wac.colostate.edu/wln for archive access, Digital Edited Collections, resources, and manuscript submission guidelines.

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