

Writing Center Journal

Manuscript 2049

Front Matter

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2023

THE
Writing Center Journal

International Writing Centers Association
An NCTE Assembly

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Danielle Hart

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Anna Sicari, *Oklahoma State University*

Book Review Editor

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History of *The Writing Center Journal*

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

Lil Brannon & Stephen North
1980–1984

Neal Lerner & Elizabeth Boquet
2002–2008

Jeanette Harris & Joyce Kinhead
1985–1990

Lauren Fitzgerald & Melissa lanetta
2009–2013

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

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

Dave Healy
1994–1997

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

Albert C. DeCiccio & Joan Mullin
1997–2002

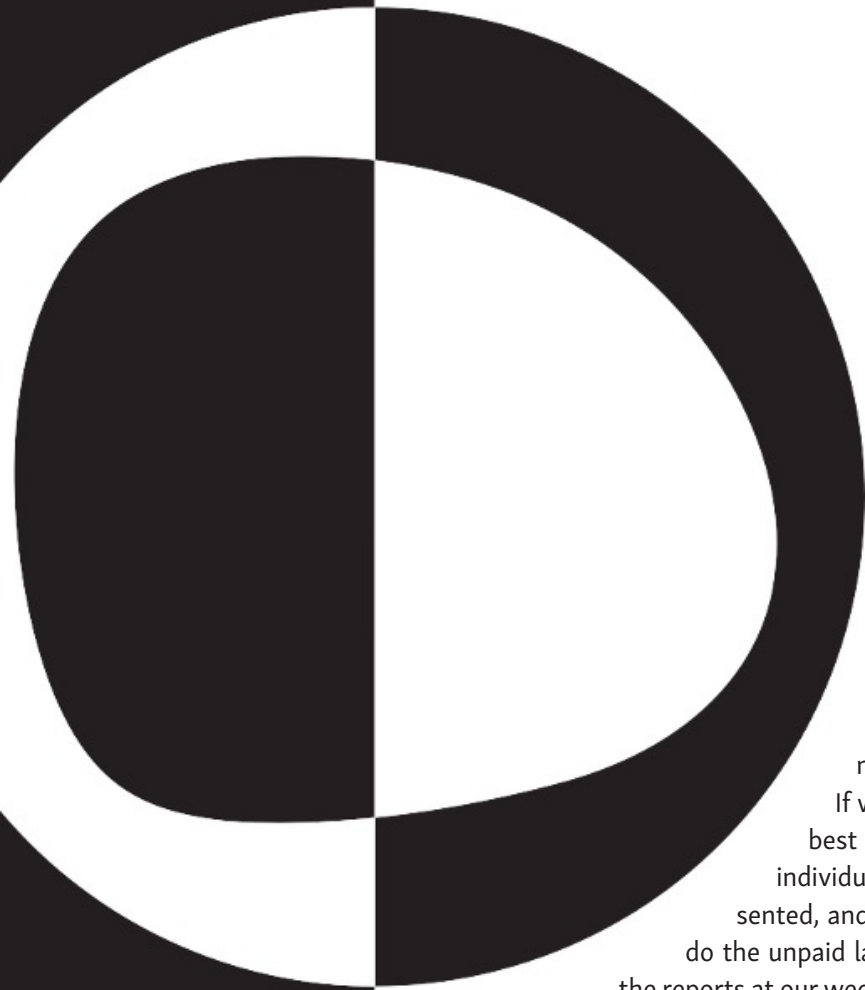
Guidelines for Submission

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

WCJ Reviewers

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

Ira Allen, *Northern Arizona University*
Arlene Archer, *University of Cape Town*
Graciela Arizmendi Gonzalez, *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Facultad de Estudios Superiores Acatlán*
Rachel Azima, *University of Nebraska*
Rebecca Babcock, *University of Texas of the Permian Basin*
Valerie Balester, *Texas A&M University*
Hadi Banat, *University of Massachusetts, Boston*
Bethany Bibb, *Southern Utah University*
Lisa Blankenship, *Baruch College (CUNY)*
Julie Bleakney, *Elon University*
Rebecca Block, *Springboard Collaborative*
Candis Bond, *Augusta University*
Elizabeth Boquet, *Fairfield University*
Gerd Bräuer, *University of Education Freiburg*
Katherine Bridgman, *Texas A&M, San Antonio*
Marna Broekhoff, *University of Oregon (retired)*
Shanti Bruce, *Nova Southeastern University*
Eric Camarillo, *Tarrant County College*
Matthew Capdevielle, *Notre Dame*
Ellen Carillo, *University of Connecticut*
Russell Carpenter, *Eastern Kentucky University*
Nikki Caswell, *East Carolina University*
Rachael Cayley, *University of Toronto*
Joseph Cheattle, *Iowa State University*
Hillary Coenen, *Midwestern State University*
Frankie Condon, *University of Waterloo*
Steven Corbett, *George Mason University*
Danielle Cordaro, *University of Mount Union*
Jennifer Daniel, *Queens University - Charlotte*
Tom Deans, *University of Connecticut*
Harry Denny, *Purdue University*
Melody Denny, *University of Northern Colorado*
Bonnie Devet, *College of Charleston*
Rasha Diab, *University of Texas at Austin*
Dana Driscoll, *Indiana University of Pennsylvania*
Rachel Dunleavy Morgan, *University of Great Falls*
Kevin Dvorak, *Nova Southeastern University*
Grant Eckstein, *University of California, Davis*
Sonya Eddy, *Texas A&M, San Antonio*
Andrea Effthymiou, *Hofstra University*
Michele Eodice, *University of Oklahoma (retired)*
Ann-Marie Eriksson, *Gothenburg University*
Christopher Ervin, *Oregon State University*
Katya Fairbanks, *Claremont Graduate University (retired)*
Wonderful Faison, *Jackson State University*
Heather Fitzgerald, *Emily Carr University of Art + Design*
Lauren Fitzgerald, *Yeshiva University*
Nadine Fladd, *University of Waterloo*
Traci Freeman, *Endicott College*
Amanda Gallogly, *University of Iowa*
Romeo García, *University of Utah*
Clint Gardner, *Salt Lake Community College*
Anne Ellen Geller, *St. John's University*
Genie Giaimo, *Middlebury College*
Layne Gordon, *Rollins College*
Roger Graves, *University of Alberta*
Neisha-Anne Green, *American University*
Laura Greenfield
Brett Griffiths
Shareen Grogan, *University of Montana*
Jackie Grutsch McKinney, *Ball State University*
Mark Hall, *University of North Carolina at Greensboro*
Susanne Hall, *California Institute of Technology*
Talisa Haltiwanger Morrison, *University of Oklahoma*
Susanmarie Harrington, *The University of Vermont*
Mary Hedengren, *University of Houston–Clear Lake*
Rachel Herzl-Betz, *Nevada State College at Henderson*
Beth Hewett, *University of Maryland University College*
Kelsey Hixson-Bowles, *Utah Valley University*
Mitchel Hobza, *Arizona State University*
Amy Hodges, *University of Texas at Arlington*
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Joe Janangelo, *Loyola University Chicago*
Amber Jensen, *Thomas A. Edison High School*
David Johnson, *Western Illinois University*
Kerri Jordan, *Mississippi College*
Karen Keaton Jackson, *North Carolina Central University*
Joyce Kinkead, *Utah State University*
Dagmar Knorr, *Leuphana University Lüneburg*
Jennifer Kunka, *Francis Marion University*
Michelle LaFrance, *George Mason University*
Steve Lamos, *University of Colorado Boulder*
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Chris LeCluyse, *Westminster University*
Elizabeth Lenaghan, *Northwestern University*
Rebecca Leonard, *University of Massachusetts - Amherst*
Neal Lerner, *Northeastern University*
Sarah Leu, *McGill University*
Katie Levin, *University of Minnesota*
Alexandria Lockett, independent scholar
Shannon Madden, independent scholar
Rebecca Martini, *University of Georgia*
Michael Mattison, *Wittenberg University*
Jennifer Mawhorter, *Azusa Pacific University*
Sue Mendelsohn, *Columbia University*
Wendy Menefee-Libey, *Harvey Mudd College*
Kristin Messuri, *Texas Tech*
Michelle Miley, *Montana State University*
Kendra Mitchell, *Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University*
Randall Monty, *University of Texas Rio Grande Valley*
Karen Moroski, *Michigan State University*
Lucie Moussu, *University of Alberta*
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Anna Rita Napoleone, *University of Massachusetts, Amherst*
Lisa Naydan, *Penn State Bucks*
Jennifer Nicklay, *University of Minnesota*
John Nordlof, *Eastern University*
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Rebecca Nowacek, *Marquette University*
Emily Nye, *University of San Diego*
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Bobbi Olson, *Grand View University*
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Amy Zenger, *American University of Beirut*



Editor's Introduction

For this issue, *WCJ* returns to the publication of articles that represent pieces that have gone through our usual peer-review process. We believe clarity around that protocol is important to the integrity of the journal and its ethos in the field. Following submission to the portal on DigitalCommons, we meet to discuss submissions, deciding whether to move forward with reviews.

If we decide to advance a piece, we debate who might be the best reviewer of the document, and our deliberations focus on individuals with expertise, those whose voices need to be represented, and an awareness of the frequency of people being tapped to do the unpaid labor. Once we receive the reviewers' feedback, we discuss the reports at our weekly meeting and make another decision on how to proceed.

Sometimes reviewers recommend we stop the publication process because the piece has serious limitations, others recommend writers "revise and resubmit" later, and another option is to accept the manuscript for publication while encouraging minor revisions and edits. When someone resubmits after developing significant revisions, our usual practice is to approach the original reviewers and ask for their feedback once more. Once everyone in the process greenlights a manuscript, it goes into our production pipeline for a future issue. Right now, that timing stretches about a year out, but it's beginning to winnow. In production, a draft of the article is sent to Purdue University Press copyeditors, who mark up and suggest edits that eventually cycle back and forth with the writers. A formatted copy of the article as it'll look in a final published version is shared for feedback, and once everyone is satisfied, the press uploads and launches the open-access journal issue on the internet.

We hope everything always goes perfectly. It doesn't. And we're fortunate in our open-access format to have the capacity to make changes that in the conventional print world wouldn't be possible. We strive for the highest ethics and integrity when publishing, and writers certify when they submit a manuscript that they are adhering to those sample principles. Eagle-eyed readers will notice that this issue republishes an article we had to retract over the winter. Brian Hotson and Stevie's Bell's "Writing Centers and Neocolonialism" contained significant errors of fact that they both acknowledged needed to be addressed. The journal does not have the editorial infrastructure to fact-check each submission, so when authors upload through the portal on DigitalCommons, their publishing agreement includes a certification that that intellectual work has been done. In Hotson and Bell's article, the fact checking was incomplete. A figure in the piece, Ron Martinez, brought it to our attention on behalf of his colleagues because he and they felt as though they were being misrepresented. Within hours of Martinez's concern being expressed, Harry and

Romeo met with the authors, who acknowledged the errors. While we were on the video conference with them, Harry contacted Purdue University Press to have the article retracted with the note as it exists. Hotson and Bell were invited to correct the article, which they did, and the revision appears in this issue. We also invited Martinez to pen a response, and it also appears in this issue. As a writing center director at Purdue, Harry has collaborated with and won U.S. State Department grants to support the very campus work of which Hotson and Bell are critical. As editors, we believe transparency in our process is critical to our leadership of the journal, and we believe that when individuals like Martinez are the subjects of criticism, they deserve an opportunity to respond. We also recognize that as faculty at U.S. institutions, we—Harry especially—have a conflict of interest in mediating a disagreement where at least one of us has a vested stake. In his capacity as a faculty director at Purdue, Harry, like Martinez, has benefited from U.S. government grant support in outreach to South America. To blunt that potential bias, some combination of all three editors participated in all dialogue or communications with Hotson and Bell as well as with Martinez.

The point of tension around the Hotson and Bell article is about individual criticism as well as the larger issue of writing centers and colonialism. The authors make a reasonable argument about the complicated history and dynamics of writing centers in the U.S. context working with educational institutions in other contexts, particularly at the intersection of governmental agencies. In the United States, research-extensive universities and their faculty face considerable pressure and incentives to pursue grant funding for research and service ends, particularly when they advance the strategic interests of a campus or its profile. We can never speak to individual motivations, though researchers are allowed to question, analyze, and speculate. Similarly, institutions and governments represent amorphous entities with complicated histories, stakes, and ever-evolving agendas. Questioning the decisions we make and the policies and practices we participate in is fair game. Nearly all of us would make changes to any given decision or performance with the benefit of hindsight. In an ideal world, we weigh all the benefits and risks before we ever do anything. Too often we make big leaps without thinking through where and how we will land. Getting to a singular truth in such contexts will always be fraught, if not outright impossible. With this issue, we hope to open a conversation for readers to imagine what truths we need to consider, not just in the case of any work we do beyond our campuses, but also what the possibilities and limitations are of any teaching and learning where we have not considered power dynamics, institutionality, positionality, and the innumerable ethical complications of what we do.

Beside these two pieces, this issue has a number of compelling pieces for readers. In “Accidental Outreach and Happenstance Staffing,” Beth Towle explores how writing center staffing and education programs can affect the experiences of first-generation students in college. She takes up the existing literature on this important population of learners to make a case for a mixed methods study involving a survey and interviews. Towle’s results indicate staffing and education programming are important to support first-generation students and need further investigation. Lizzie Hutton, Kate Francis, Danielle Hart, Anita Long, and Brenda Tyrrell explore in “Asynchronous and Rhetorical” how appointment forms affect asynchronous sessions. They discover that carefully designed intake documents can influence the type of feedback writers solicit and that consultants provide, particularly when the rhetorical demands of assignments can be captured as guidance to sessions. Traci Freeman and Steve Getty take up the question of student motivation to seek help in writing centers in “An Exploratory Study of Mindsets, Sense of Belonging, and Help-Seeking in the Writing Center.” Their study, which is influenced by social psychology theory and its insights into help seeking and sense of belonging, details the adapted use of validated inventories on these issues and finds a correlation between them, with a significant difference for minoritized students.

For “How Genre-Trained Tutors Affect Student Writing and Perceptions of the Writing Center,” Lucy Bryan Malenke, Laura Miller, Paul Mabrey, and Jared Featherstone consider a way out of the long-debated tension between generalist and specialist tutors. In their study, the researchers

compare outcomes for students who share writing with generalist- and genre-trained consultants and discover the latter produce more substantively revised drafts and more favorable impressions of their experiences. Julie Bleakney focuses on the IWCA Summer Institute in “Timely, Relevant, Practical” to better understand what participants take away from the annual professional development experience. She finds that writing center professionals have perennial issues despite the shifting landscape of education and that the Summer Institute appears to address them well. Challenging the hegemony of scholarship that centers the experiences of writing centers at predominantly white institutions (PWIs), Karen Keaton Jackson and Amara Hand, in “Effectively Affective,” foreground the context and diversity of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Detailing the philosophy and practices that have guided the writing center at North Carolina Central University, the writers describe how local context at an HBCU challenges the received “best practices” of PWIs. In addition to the influence of Fink’s significant learning theory, Keaton Jackson and Hand detail how cultivating a customer-service mindset with frontline workers, fostering community-driven/community-aware engagement, and being willing to embrace taboo places elsewhere lead to deeper and better connections with the NCCU student population. This extensive issue wraps up with Aurora Matzke sharing a review of Genie Nicole Giaimo’s *Unwell Writing Centers: Searching for Wellness in Neoliberal Educational Institutions and Beyond* (Utah State University Press, 2023).