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A JOURNAL OF WRITING CENTER SCHOLARSHIP

WLn

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Guest Editors' Note
Bridget Draxler and Maglen Epstein

As a writing center director and a librarian, we are very pleased to introduce this special issue on collaboration between writing centers and libraries. Research and writing are both iterative, exploratory, and messy processes; they are intellectually rigorous yet often deeply personal and emotional. In an era of higher education marked by multimodal communication, open concept learning centers, and inclusive pedagogies, librarians and writing center directors across the country have been finding in one another kindred spirits.

BRIDGET DRAXLER

At St. Olaf College, we are no exception: we developed a joint initiative between the library and Writing Center to integrate research and writing support. We piloted our program in first-year writing preparation courses, providing each student with weekly support from a tutor cross-trained in research and writing. Collaborating to provide intensive, individualized mentoring has affirmed the benefit of more deeply intertwining the processes of researching and writing for students as well as tutors. One of those tutors, Tashonna Douglas, describes her experience as a writing and research tutor in this issue's "Tutors' Column."

MAGLEN EPSTEIN

While the value of collaboration between writing centers and libraries can seem self-evident, the following essays reveal some ways in which these partnerships can result in unexpected transformations. In particular, these essays consider what we can learn from one another in our notions of welcomeness (Pregent, Marcyk, Williams, and Haywood) and privacy (Parsons, Dolinger, and Tirabassi), and the ways in which we can challenge the boundaries between our work (Albanese and Fena). They offer a diversity of models from one-time collaborations to more integrated programs with shared data systems and joint training. As you read, consider ways that your own work benefits, or could benefit, from closer partnerships between your writing center and library. Thank you to the *WLN* editors and previous special issue editors for their support and mentorship for this collection.

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Welcomeness and Identity in Campus Partnerships

Grace Pregent, Emilia Marcyk,
Teresa Williams, and Constance Haywood
Michigan State University

GRACE PREGENT

EMILIA MARCYK

TERESA WILLIAMS

CONSTANCE HAYWOOD

Welcomeness is a dynamic act and an explicit shared value for writing centers and libraries. For decades writing center scholarship largely espoused a grand narrative of writing centers as "cozy homes" replete with comfy couches and coffee, the overly simplistic narrative Jackie Grutsch McKinney interrogates in *Peripheral Visions for Writing Centers* (25). While no single, unifying metaphor is used in library research, related descriptions of academic library spaces include public forums, "third places" on campus (Elteto et al. 334; Whitmire 60), and repositories of knowledge. A common theme in these descriptions is the idea of neutrality; by adopting a neutral stance, libraries make themselves equally welcoming to all patrons.

Writing center studies and library studies have begun questioning the implications of storying our work in this way, for within our spaces, dynamics of power and privilege exist. In these "neutral homes," which are deeply coded as white/heteronormative/able-bodied, there are tensions, conflicts, misunderstandings, and differing viewpoints in moments of "meaningful discomfort" that provide us with opportunities to "participate more fully in the (re)negotiation of meaning" (Geller et al. 19, 22). Recent writing center scholarship, such as the 2019 special issue of *The Peer Review* on *(Re)defining Welcome*, has interrogated constructs of hospitality, recognizing the gross privilege inherent in a "focusing on the writing" approach to our work that diminishes our identities and downplays the political nature of the spaces within which we work together. Co-editors Elise Dixon and Rachel Robinson write, "Does welcome equate a certain level of comfort and/or safety? Should it?"

As we research and dialogue about identity, welcomeness, writing centers, and libraries, we return continually to

the role of discomfort. Though in some ways writing centers and libraries are "kindred spirits," our very collaboration entails acts of hospitality that necessarily involve discomfort as we—"we" being administrators, our employees, and our clients—negotiate shared values, spaces, and programming. Our insights come from four individuals: Constance and Teresa, graduate coordinators and doctoral students; Emilia, a teaching and learning librarian; and Grace, a writing center administrator. Each of us has a different vantage point on the collaboration between the Library and the Writing Center at Michigan State University (MSU), a Research I and land-grant institution. We are particularly interested in how reciprocal library and writing center partnerships and collaborative training can help us negotiate embodiment and identity as we enact welcomeness in our shared spaces.

BODIES SHARING SPACES

Constance, the Writing Center's former library coordinator, shared an occurrence that transpired when a white female Writing Center receptionist asked a Black male student to move from a table in the library space that was reserved for writing center consultations. This encounter occurred later in the semester, and at this time, MSU's library is usually packed. The Writing Center receptionist had already told numerous students to relocate that day and was becoming annoyed with those who seemed to disregard the reserved Writing Center spaces.

Walking over to a table where a young Black man had decided to sit, the receptionist firmly asked him to move, stating that her request was not personal but a requirement of policy. With the messaging coming off as abrasive, the student ended up responding defensively, asking the receptionist why he needed to move if the table was not being occupied. Seeing his point as valid, Constance, observing that over half of the Writing Center tables were empty, intervened by speaking with the student and making the decision to let him stay.

This story highlights a central tension in writing center and library collaborations that emerges from our simply sharing physical spaces, which is a common situation for these two units. Libraries operate as a site of intersection, and within universities, students across ages, disciplines, and cultures congregate within the library, where the default stance has historically been and can still be whiteness and privilege or maintaining the comfort of some at the expense of others.

In the MSU Library's main space, Writing Center consultants are guests within the library in the sense that we borrow space or are

stewards of a specific space during specific times. This space we borrow also has an open design, compounding uncertainty for consultants and clients about the boundaries between the library and the Writing Center. While we do place signs during our open hours on each table and in front of the elevator adjacent to the space, these signs are not permanent, and during crowded hours within the library, they are easily and understandably overlooked. This then leads to a dilemma: how do we establish what space is ours without alienating students from either the Writing Center or the library? In cases like the one presented in our story, consultants make in-the-moment decisions and must balance the idea of hospitality for the writing center against general hospitality for library student users.

But in weighing these decisions, our bodies and intersectional identities are, of course, present and integral. By intersectionality, a concept developed by theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw (in 1989) specifically in reference to the complex social realities and discriminations of Black women, we refer to the multiple overlapping identities we carry as well as how those identities relate to and are impacted by power and privilege. The library exists as a particular site to discuss intersectionality considering how it brings together people with different identities and ways of being and experiencing the world. While the particular student from this story may have felt defensive for several reasons, students of color who already feel marginalized within a predominantly white institution (PWI) might understandably express frustration and irritation when being asked to physically relocate. We know from the library literature that Black students in particular feel less welcome in academic library spaces than their white peers (Elteto et al. 326). Black students also feel like they are subject to microaggressions and surveillance, particularly by white students (Stewart et al. 28), including displays of visible surprise at seeing Black people studying (Brook et al. 262) or critiques of how they and other people of color are using the library space (263). There is also potentially a connection between perceived racism on campus and feelings of welcomeness in the library (Stewart et al. 27). Against this backdrop, we begin to understand that what might seem like a passing interaction between a writing center employee and a student might be part of a larger or systemic pattern, resulting in the student feeling unwelcome and unfairly scrutinized.

When Constance and Grace met next, Constance shared that this occurrence had transpired. Together, they spoke about how to provide consultants working in the library with guidance on embodiment, intersectionality, and space. With this in mind,

Constance met with the center's library receptionists and facilitated a conversation on thinking more critically about how we present ourselves (our voices, bodies, stances, etc.) when interacting with each other both within and between the Writing Center and library spaces. Pulling from Black feminist social theories (e.g. Combahee River Collective, Patricia Hill Collins, etc.), Constance initiated the conversation by discussing how individuals' overlapping identities shape their experiences and perceptions of others in drastically different ways. While discussing the benefits of critical self-reflection, Constance and the receptionists used their time together to consider casually the power dynamics created by variances in race, gender, class, sexuality, and other identity factors. Encouraging receptionists to reflect on and think about their positive and negative experiences in writing center spaces, as well as the contexts, emotions, and bodies present in/around those situations, helped receptionists spend time locating the ways in which their experiences are "always and already" multidimensional. Though this conversation proved to be difficult, as most of the receptionists' more uncomfortable moments included men and male-presenting clients, leading the conversation to focus heavily on power inequities created by and through gender, receptionists were still able to identify how differences in identity create varied meaning(s) for people. During the Writing Center's next orientation, an internal task force led a similar conversation for consultants on navigating sessions when they might feel uncomfortable, de-escalation tactics, and ways of signaling for support from their colleagues.

IDENTITY AND INTERVENTIONS

In addition to MSU Library's main library space, writing consultants and the library's peer research assistants (PRAs) have collaborated across many smaller spaces in the university's neighborhoods since 2013.[1] From the beginning, although both groups of student employees were aware of each other and their different services, we found that offering these cursory explanations and simply sharing physical proximity did not automatically lead to collaboration between PRAs and writing consultants. Furthermore, since writing and research are inextricable processes, PRAs and consultants shared moments of discomfort as they navigated student frustration at choosing the "wrong service" at the wrong time. At the same time, the physical proximity of the services allows both PRAs and consultants to refer students to each other, and this has even created instances when the two student employees work together with a student.

While on one hand we realize that all spaces will never be welcoming

for all people, we do believe that considering nuanced questions of intersectionality and embodiment during training aids us in thinking more critically and inclusively about welcomeness. Currently, the Writing Center welcomes the PRAs into its space during consultant orientation and facilitates a discussion about how writing and research help differs, intersects, and overlaps. The discussion is built on scenarios where both consultants and PRAs could have a role and during which they consider the interplay of "the dynamics of identity" in each session (Denny 96). The scenarios were originally drafted by writing center graduate coordinators and then modified by Emilia.[2] In one scenario, for example, a white female student pursuing a doctorate in education comes to the Writing Center with a dissertation on the "literacy practices of African American high school students in Detroit." PRAs and consultants address various aspects of the session and consider how the student's identity and their own identities would factor into the session as well as dynamics of power and privilege.

Here the connection between language and identity and the Writing Center's Language Statement informs conversations. The Language Statement specifically addresses the concept of Standard Written English, stating that "We challenge the notion of Standard English as the only correct expressive form; rather, we recognize and value a number of Englishes."[3] Similarly, the PRA program is informed by library literature that urges programs to be aware of how language can assist or put up barriers to students' successful use of the library. Students may "code-switch" for different information tasks (Albarillo 641), so Emilia coaches PRAs to recognize that patrons might not use "standard" library terminology to describe their needs (Fauchelle 613). They may also be more willing to discuss their information needs with someone who understands their language or culture (Danquah & Wu 69) or feel less anxiety about communicating in a familiar language (Koenigstein 79). While PRAs do not reflect the full range of language diversity at MSU, Emilia does encourage PRAs to speak to students using their preferred language and mode, when possible, and tries to hire PRAs from a variety of linguistic backgrounds. This emphasis on language diversity emerges as a particular point of connection in the literature from library scholarship and writing center studies as well as a unifying value between our units.[4]

One example from the co-training session is a scenario about an international student who wants to make his grammar sound "like a native English speaker." In discussing this scenario, PRAs and consultants surfaced themes like unspoken expectations for college writing, differing cultural norms, and language privilege that would

help them welcome and bring this student to the table, rather than pass judgement about "bad" writing and citation practices. Having both PRAs and consultants present to discuss this scenario helped participants articulate how their personal and professional identities might affect their approach to assisting the student, and they began to see how these different approaches could work collaboratively to welcome similar students.

Another scenario from the co-training session invoked PRAs and consultants to discuss how they might go about working with students whose writings were blatantly racist and/or offensive towards Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). This scenario was extended to ask PRAs and consultants how they might intervene if that same person was working with a BIPOC tutor. While some people came to the conclusion that the student should be reassigned to a tutor who would not be subjected to their harm, others noted that due to their own values, identities, and embodied experiences, they would have to either walk away from the student or completely refuse their services. How do we take into consideration that there are people whose values push directly against ideas of welcomeness and put the students and people in our spaces who have marginalized identities at risk? Do we find ways to extend welcomeness to those people or do we rethink our commitments to them? How exactly do we begin to navigate the writing center not only as a place of welcomeness, but also as a place where some bodies and identities do not, and will not, ever align?

THE PRESENT MOMENT AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Inspired by conversations with consultants about their experiences in the library, we're developing shared training for Writing Center and library employees, including students, faculty, and staff, on working across identities and differences, particularly considering the dynamics of power and privilege. This has become a new point of further collaboration for library and Writing Center administrators, and we hope to conduct this conversation with staff from both units to discuss first our own intersectionality identities and then how we work with others considering their different identities within the context of a PWI.

We all bring multiple complex ways of being, knowing, and working in community to the table, and though literature from both fields has questioned the neutrality of our spaces and has engaged in social justice research and work, we know there is more to do. Considering the present moment, the "twin pandemics" of COVID-19 and racism (Crenshaw), the need to move beyond "neutrality," beyond the "cozy white home," becomes clear, and

we have "an ethical responsibility to intervene purposefully" (Greenfield 6). While we do not propose to offer simple solutions to complex, systemic problems, we have learned the importance of—as well as the vulnerabilities and discomforts in—collaboration, and in working together, we continue developing more critical understandings of intersectionality and embodied experiences as we welcome each other within the spaces we share.

We have not arrived. But as we look forward and consider our library-writing center collaboration, we center Robin DiAngelo's call to "interrupt privilege-protecting comfort" (143), opening ourselves to engaging in conversations about intersectionality, embodiment, and welcoming sustainable and reciprocal partnerships that hold us accountable.

NOTES

1. Based on the planning concept of the "urban village," the Neighborhood Student Success Collaborative (NSSC) began in 2010 and divides campus into five neighborhoods. Engagement Centers within each neighborhood provide resources for students ranging from advising and health/wellness programming to research and writing support. One explicit goal of the neighborhoods is to close opportunity gaps between white students and racially minoritized students.

2. The scenarios are adapted annually and are available at https://writing.msu.edu/training-resources/.

3. The Language Statement for MSU's Writing Center is on our website at writing.msu.edu/language-statement.

4. We acknowledge the work of language diversity advocates including Geneva Smitherman, Vershawn Ashanti Young, and Staci Perryman-Clark.

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Good to Know? Confidentiality and Privacy in Writing Centers and Libraries

Molly Parsons, Elizabeth Dolinger, and Katherine E. Tirabassi
Keene State College

MOLLY PARSONS

ELIZABETH DOLINGER

KATHERINE E. TIRABASSI

After an appointment with an aspiring memoirist, our tutor Ann (pseudonym) announced to another tutor: "The writer is so talented, not even writing for a class, and homeless!" Ann clearly admired the writer's talent in the face of adversity. Yet, as Molly, the Center's assistant director, overheard Ann's exclamation, she thought, *Oh no. We can't disclose writers' living situations. That's private!* Tutors routinely reveal information about writers' courses, assignments, and demeanor as we debrief sessions. So, at this moment, Molly said nothing, but later she talked with Elizabeth, information literacy librarian and Center co-administrator, wondering, "We can't casually share a writer's personal information, right?" Elizabeth smiled knowingly: privacy and confidentiality weren't nascent constructs to her. Librarians have thought a lot about patron information—drawing lines through personal information in thick, black ink.

Our Center for Research & Writing, administered by Kate, Elizabeth, and Molly, provides both research and writing support to students. Our data is stored within a library-based data management system and is used in annual library reports. This includes our records of writing tutoring sessions and the personal information that we gather when working with students. Our integration of a research fellows program and a writing center began in 2017, and since then, we've been examining the prevailing discourses and practices in writing center and library scholarship and grappling with *how* to integrate our work despite important differences. One way we've tackled these challenges is by developing a heuristic, shared below, that pushes us to take an interdisciplinary approach to quandaries like the one that opens this piece.

In this article, we consider differences we've encountered regarding

privacy and confidentiality, when our library side cautions us against collecting or sharing students' personal information and our writing center side encourages us to learn more about the students we work with. Integration has helped us view privacy and confidentiality as everyday issues in our center. When our tutors open sessions asking, "What course is this for?" for example, Elizabeth cringes. What if the student isn't writing or researching for a course? Will the student feel surveilled or discouraged from seeking specific kinds of information? Asking about a *course* is intrusive from a librarian's perspective: what about other ways data is managed in writing centers, like collecting students' names, contact information, majors, or graduation years? While the homelessness revelation is a more extreme example, tutors regularly learn about intimate details of writers' lives. By contrast, librarians provide services without asking for any personal information, not even the patron's name.

Privacy and confidentiality have been central issues for libraries since at least 1939, when the American Library Association (ALA) published the "Library Bill of Rights." The ALA defines privacy as "the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one's interest [...] scrutinized by others," and explains that confidentiality "exists when a library is in possession [...] of information about its users and keeps that information private on their behalf," including "library-created records [such] as [...] circulation records, Web sites visited, reserve notices, or research notes" (American Library Association).

The ALA Council's statement explains the need to closely guard patrons' information: "Consider patrons looking for a new job or information about rock climbing or skydiving; this is information that the current employer or insurance company would like to have." Open records might also lead to unfounded and "sinister" assumptions about patrons: Will those who borrow murder mysteries be suspected of murderous intent? Will those seeking information about terrorism be suspected of plotting an attack? The ALA argues that without adequate safeguards for information, patrons' records could be weaponized, compromising our intellectual freedom and even our democracy.

In writing center literature, confidentiality and privacy are discussed in response to concerns about censorship and first amendment rights (Sherwood), the dilemmas around collecting and sharing data, especially with instructors (Pemberton; Lerner; Conway), and, less directly, in texts foregrounding the role of identity in the center (Denny; Villanueva). Yet, when scholars envision writing center work as activism in the name of social justice, identifying factors

essential to this work seem at odds with library-based definitions of confidentiality and privacy. Libraries' attempts to protect individuals' intellectual freedom and writing centers' intentions to support individuals and groups signal differing approaches to larger activist agendas.

Many writing center practitioners have embraced the idea that *de*anonymizing, or "facing" the center (Denny), and building authentic relationships among center users and staff, is ethical and pedagogically sound (Greenfield and Rowan; Bruce and Rafoth). In his recent article, Mark Latta articulates this philosophy, writing that the "main objective" of peer tutoring is "relational and collaborative. We [tutors] attempt to discover writers' various cultural, family, and community forms of knowledge [...] so we may connect these funds to the task at hand [...] and help to develop the writer's critical consciousness." While embraced by many writing centers, Latta's conviction about the importance of information gathering isn't shared by our library colleagues. Our Center's integration prompted us to rethink the ethics of "discovering" (Latta's term) and recording students' personal information, defined here as any information about a writer—from demographics to details of experience—which, when shared in conversation or stored (in post-session notes, for example), remain "attached" to the writer.

In *Ethics and the Reference Librarian,* Charles A. Bunge highlights *confidentiality* as one of the librarian's core ethical responsibilities in one-to-one interactions with patrons, but also as a site of difficulty: "Most dilemmas in this area of ethics involve the possibility of inadvertently revealing information that should be confidential and deciding when revealing confidential information might be permissible because it is in the client's best interest or in the best interest of society at large" (51). Bunge underscores the field's serious treatment of privacy issues while acknowledging that principles such as not discussing patrons with others are easier stated than enacted. Bunge's attention to how patron information is shared, even between colleagues, and ethical tensions embedded within one-to-one interactions, highlights a gap in writing center discussions, which have yet to articulate a cohesive philosophy regarding writers' personal information.

To help writing center staff develop approaches for managing personal information discovered during tutoring interactions, we offer guidance through a heuristic primarily informed by well-established library and information science (LIS) conversations. To develop this heuristic, we combined concepts from two existing LIS heuristics that address institutional and individual priorities when dealing with issues of privacy and confidentiality. The first

LIS heuristic, proposed initially by Richard Rubin and Thomas Froehlich, is a set of questions foregrounding institutional (or an organization's) best interests in questions of privacy and confidentiality. For example, they ask: "To what extent is the survival of the organization threatened?" and "To what extent will the purpose of the organization be harmed?" (Rubin 548). The organizational/institutional focus in these questions invites us to extend our focus beyond the one-to-one, to imagine the implications of decisions on the larger contexts of our practice. Librarians, for example, routinely consider the consequences of decisions in terms of the ideals of democracy and freedom. The second heuristic, also developed by Rubin, identifies "factors" influencing ethical deliberation in libraries: social utility, survival, social responsibility, and respect for the individual. Social utility and responsibility seem combinable, calling practitioners to consider the social goods affected through the library's work (e.g, defending democracy, educating students). Survival, the second factor, seems tied to institutional welfare. Rubin's final factor, respect for the individual, names the value that writing centers attend to most instinctively.

Respect for the individual begins with the idea that "People have a right to act as they choose, insofar as they do not violate the dignity and respect of others" (Rubin 548). Librarians respect individuals by building representative collections, offering access to technologies, and limiting access to patrons' information. Writing centers prioritize the individual—from our concerns about ownership, to our emphasis on writer agency and discussions of linguistic and racial hegemony. But writing centers may also demonstrate respect in ways that could, by LIS standards, compromise privacy, as we "face" personal information like identifications and experience, sometimes collecting and even recording this information.

In our heuristic, we distinguish between information that is solicited (requested), shared (between people outside the tutorial), and stored (in record management systems). In considering shared and stored information, we acknowledge the challenge of deciding *who* should have access to a writer's personal information outside the tutorial: should tutors share information exclusively with center administrators? Other tutors? Within systems accessible to instructors or administrators? Our customized heuristic offers a guide to structure deliberation when issues of privacy and confidentiality arise in the writing center. It builds on Rubin's influencing factors (reimagined as "values" on the left) and Rubin and Froehlich's question-based heuristic (reflected in the questions on the right-hand side of the chart).

VALUE	RELATED QUESTIONS / DEFINITION
Respect for individual (writer) *Prioritizing individual wellbeing, safety, agency, and sense of belonging*	● How might the writer benefit from (or be harmed by) requests for personal information? ● How could the writer benefit from (or be harmed by) the storage/sharing of personal information outside the tutorial?
Respect for individual (tutor) *Prioritizing individual wellbeing, safety, agency, and sense of belonging*	● How might the tutor benefit from (or be harmed by) asking the writer for personal information? ● How might the tutor benefit from (or be harmed by) sharing a writer's personal information with someone outside the tutorial?
Socially-constructed learning *Prioritizing the interpersonal relationship and its potential to drive learning (including critical thinking and inquiry, risk-taking, rhetorical awareness)*	● How might soliciting a writer's personal information advance (or undermine) learning goals? ● How might sharing personal information outside the tutoring interaction advance (or undermine) learning goals (for tutor or writer)?
Social responsibility *Prioritizing broader goods (including social justice aims, democratic values, intellectual freedom, larger educational missions and priorities)*	● How might soliciting, sharing, or storing a writer's personal information benefit (or harm) the wider institution, community, or world?
Institutional welfare and advancement *Prioritizing the survival and mission of the writing center and/or the institution itself*	● How might soliciting a writer's personal information serve (or undermine) institutional priorities? ● How might sharing and/or storing personal information serve (or undermine) institutional priorities? ● How might not soliciting, sharing, or storing personal information serve (or undermine) institutional priorities?

This heuristic can be introduced during training to help tutors develop habits of mind for encounters with writers' personal information. These encounters abound in our center—writers share personal experiences in conversation or writing, faculty request session reports, we write post-session notes and make decisions about data management systems (like WCOnline). Undoubtedly, readers can recollect ethically-charged experiences with personal information in their centers. When these scenarios

arise, we talk them through before turning to the heuristic. Then, we use the heuristic to help us expand our view beyond our disciplinary-inspired reflexive responses to ethical challenges. The scenario that opened this piece, wherein a writer shared their living situation with our tutor, is a useful test case for our heuristic. Because the writer's disclosure was unsolicited, the most pressing ethical questions raised by this scenario involve how we, as a staff, share or store the disclosed information. The heuristic prompts us to consider who (beyond Ann and the writer) should have access to the information? How should it be shared or stored if at all? And, importantly, what are the consequences to the writer, tutor, center, or our larger community or institution, of our approach to the information? Although Ann has since graduated, sharing the writer's information with the administrative team might have helped her grow as a tutor. Together, we could have reflected on how the writer's revelation affected her choices in the session or her view of the writer. We might have discussed how sympathy for or even exoticization of the writer affects practice and asked whether a writer's personal details are relevant to how we support them.

We can also imagine discussing the storage of the writers' information in post-session notes. At the time of Ann's session, our tutors wrote post-session notes to summarize and reflect on their work with each writer. These notes were stored in WCOnline and accessible to our full staff. While writing post-session notes that included the writer's personal information might have been useful for Ann's development as a tutor, the heuristic challenges us to think about how the writer, our Center, the institution (etc.) stands to benefit from such storage or sharing. If the writer learned that other tutors knew their personal information, would they feel their privacy had been violated? Would sharing or storing the writer's personal information have the sort of chilling effect that librarians fear on the writer's intellectual pursuits? What if the writer's personal information became known outside the center? What consequences might the writer face, personally, socially, or academically?

Beyond questions of writer and tutor, we've considered how this scenario is implicated in the center's welfare and advancement. Our Center *has* gained from the tutor's casual disclosure to her colleagues, which opened conversations about privacy and confidentiality, presented a welcome training challenge, and helped Kate, Elizabeth, and Molly develop as ethical practitioners. However, we wonder how casual disclosures may undermine a center's reputation or standing on campus. After careful consideration of

all the values within the heuristic, there's a decision to make. Lane Wilkinson proposes that librarians might move from deliberation to ethical action by "determin[ing] the action that maximizes each principle" (7). Rather than weighting the values or principles in our heuristic and prioritizing one over another, we should choose courses of action (say, sharing information with the full staff or revising the types of information we collect/store) that realize all five values to the greatest extent possible.

We ultimately determined that there was ethical justification for limited sharing of the writer's personal information, beyond Ann's tutorial. Specifically, it would be acceptable for Ann to tell the administrative team what she learned about the writer because that act would open opportunities for learning in our Center. That said, we recognize, with some discomfort, that authorizing any sharing of this writer's personal details beyond the tutorial prioritizes the "good" of the center over the "good" of the writer. And, given the chance, we would discourage Ann from including the writer's personal information in her session notes or discussing it with colleagues. We'd also caution that our conclusion is *not* a generalizable ethical principle—such principles aren't the goal of this heuristic. Instead, we've found that developing and using the rubric with our staff has heightened our awareness of the issues around privacy and confidentiality, helping us to think and act more deliberatively when it comes to personal information in our Center. In other words, Molly and Kate learned to think a bit more like librarians.

To wit: recently, our institution encouraged our Center to adopt a university-wide data management system, but all three of us balked at the system's data storing and sharing capabilities. Using that system would mean opening our records, and those of our writers, to examination by individuals outside our Center (including faculty, administrators, and staff at our institution). Although the system would have been free (a difficult advantage to ignore), we opted to purchase a subscription to an external system to retain control of our records and data. Decisions regarding privacy and confidentiality aren't comfortable or easy, but they are unavoidable. Tutors will occasionally find themselves entrusted with intimate details of writers' lives. When it happens, we must be ready to account for the distinctness of the writer, tutor, center, institution, and world in our ethical deliberations. Our discomfort in these deliberations is a fair price for the privilege of knowing and learning with others.

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Bridging Boundaries: Perceived Roles of Librarians and Writing Center Tutors in Supporting Student Research Writing

Jennifer Albanese and Christine Fena
Stony Brook University

JENNIFER ALBANESE

CHRISTINE FENA

In both library and writing instruction the phrases "research skills" and "research process" are often used as stand-ins for "information literacy." These skills are often taught or understood as separate from skills associated with the "writing process," which has long been supported by a peer-to-peer tutoring model through writing centers. Unfortunately, in the workflow of student support systems, this often results in a compartmentalized structure in which it seems that libraries are keepers of the "research process," and writing centers are keepers of the "writing process."

However, librarians, writing faculty, and tutors have often sought to break down these perceptions and have asserted that the best way to support students working on research paper assignments is to consider research and writing as co-mingled processes, rather than self-contained skill sets (e.g., see Brady et al.; Cooke and Bledsoe; Ferer). As such, writing centers and libraries have emerged as natural partners, and there have been multiple collaborative successes, but there is still much to consider. For example, in a study from one university, librarians found that information literacy was discussed in only 13% of writing center consultations, with less than 1% of transactions resulting in a referral to librarians (Graves et al.). When taken as a whole, the research on writing center and library collaboration reveals that breaking down barriers and providing easily traversable bridges between research and writing support is paramount in helping students engage in effective and meaningful research and writing processes (e.g., see Jackson; Napier; Richardson). The interconnected nature of research and writing calls for continued attempts to join forces, demonstrating an ongoing need for fresh ideas and perspectives on this hallowed partnership.

But what happens when collaboration takes a tutor or librarian out

of bounds of their own professional purview? At our institution, when librarians and tutors come together at collaborative events to help students with research and writing, awareness over content boundaries builds: students do not always know whether their questions are better suited to a librarian or a tutor, and tutors and librarians identify areas of overlap and difference in instruction content and methods. In what follows, we describe and analyze one collaborative event in order to share how students, librarians, and undergraduate peer tutors worked together to create a flexible environment in which to support the recursive nature of research and writing.

"AFTER HOURS RESEARCH AND WRITING HELP": OUR COLLABORATIVE EVENT

For our own version of a writing center and library collaboration, we—Jennifer, a Writing Center Director, and Christine, an Undergraduate Success Librarian—developed an evening "extra help" workshop, where both librarians and peer writing tutors provided one-to-one drop-in consultations with undergraduate students working on research papers. This workshop, which we hosted twice in the same week in mid-November 2019, became a way to understand how students, tutors, and librarians perceive boundaries and continuities between research and writing support. Before, during, and after the workshop, we gathered feedback from students, tutors, and librarians about their expectations and experiences through a pre-assessment questionnaire, post-event surveys, and less formal email and interpersonal communications, which yielded anecdotal data. The dialogues and analysis that resulted from our inquiries encouraged openness and flexibility in understanding boundaries between different types of research and writing support.

Because our Writing Center is housed in a separate building from the library, the "after hours" event offered a rare opportunity for librarians and writing tutors to support students in the same place at the same time. We held the event in an active learning space in the library designed to accommodate up to fifty people. Because the tables and chairs were on wheels, we could arrange the space to accommodate six writing tutors on one side of the room and three librarians on the other side of the room. This arrangement created a visual representation of our separate roles in supporting research and writing processes; participants could then easily move back and forth between different types of support throughout the course of the evening.

Students went through an intake process: the Writing Center Director or Assistant Director helped them determine whether to

begin their consultations with a librarian or with a writing tutor, depending on their responses to a short questionnaire. We designed this process not only to facilitate directing students to librarians or tutors, but also to help students think critically about what they needed help with and how they might go about continuing to use the research and writing support available to them in the future.

BOUNDARIES: STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

The primary way of collecting student perceptions was through the short questionnaire students filled out as they entered the event space. The first question asked, "What about the research and writing process do you need help with today?" In response to this question, students had an easier time articulating the type of help they needed with their writing, as opposed to their research. Examples of how students described what they needed help with included "need help with thesis" and "developing structure." In articulating the help they needed with research, however, students rarely responded with anything more detailed than "finding resources." To librarians, finding resources might involve such processes as choosing a database, differentiating information formats, brainstorming search terms, and evaluating search results. This nuance, however, was not apparent in students' responses.

The second question asked students to select whom they came to the event to get help from: writing tutor (64%), librarian (3%), both (14%), or not sure (5%). The remaining 14% of students chose not to circle anything, or circled one response and then crossed it off, demonstrating general confusion about how to answer the question. Our analysis of whom students sought for different types of help revealed that boundaries perceived by librarians and writing tutors were sometimes unclear or nonexistent in the minds of students grappling with their research papers. Students often didn't seem to know (or care) whom to get help from—they just wanted help! For example, out of the thirteen students who needed help with citations, eleven circled "writing tutor" on their questionnaire, indicating that a librarian was not their first choice for support. Undoubtedly, students defaulted to requesting to speak with a writing tutor as opposed to a librarian; out of the fifty-eight students who attended the events, only two circled "librarian" on the questionnaire.

Despite the initial hesitancy to seek help from a librarian, the evening ended with many students talking with both a librarian and a writing tutor, and sometimes students moved back and forth across the room as their needs evolved throughout the session. For example, when working with a writing tutor, sometimes initial concerns about the organization of an argument revealed a fundamental absence

of supporting research; to address this, students would physically move across the room to sit with a librarian instead. Emboldened by new (or more appropriate) sources, some students opted to return to their initial writing tutors, hoping to brainstorm ways to incorporate this new material. Typically, writing tutors encouraged this "transfer of support" whenever they noticed significant gaps in content or heavy reliance on individual sources, often signaling the need to revisit and revise students' research process.

In our anonymous follow-up feedback survey, we asked students to briefly explain when they would seek help from a librarian and when they would seek help from a writing tutor. These responses reinforced our assumption that students are often guided by a presumed chronology of the "research process" and "writing process"–they assumed that one necessarily precedes the other. One student, for example, said they would seek help from a librarian "early on," and from a writing tutor "after my paper was written." This imagined progression is often different from the reality of how students write their research papers and points to how much student frustration may lie in the difficulty of lining up their actual research and writing processes with an imagined or idealized process.

BOUNDARIES: LIBRARIAN PERCEPTIONS
All five librarians who participated in the workshops felt the evenings were a success and, in follow-up emails and conversations, expressed that they enjoyed participating. Some librarians pointed to the novelty of experiencing the library at night; feeling the "buzz" of students in the library in the evening hours made the space less familiar and provided an opportunity to develop new perspectives on reference interactions.

The presence of the writing tutors also provided a new experience for librarians. One librarian noted in an email how impressed she was with the tutors and how beneficial it was for librarians and tutors to see each other at work, fostering a climate of mutual respect for each other's consultation work, which usually takes place in different buildings on our campus. She explained that the writing tutors "seemed very confident, competent and knowledgeable. I was impressed with them and wouldn't hesitate to refer a student to them."

Another librarian commented that his work with students ended up being in what he called a "gray area between composition and research" because he was often helping students find resources that supported their theses but then, in the process, saw the need to help the students revise their thesis statements. In this

way, the event provided librarians with a unique opportunity to bridge the research and writing processes. A third librarian also commented on how she helped students better support their theses but described it as students having to "work backwards to find sources." The librarians, then, naturally became more flexible in extending support to student writing by supporting the students within the context of where the students actually were in the research process, as opposed to an idealized vision of where they were "supposed" to be.

In an informal survey we sent to a small group of librarians before the event, on which librarians were asked to check off which of twenty-one different types of research paper help they felt comfortable supporting students on, eight out of eight librarians checked off types of help having to do with database use and source evaluation. Only three librarians, however, checked off "developing a clear and effective thesis statement," and four librarians checked off "synthesizing information from sources to support a thesis." However, at our event, all the librarians involved not only helped students find sources, but also remained flexible in guiding students on how sources were integrated into other aspects of writing their papers. The librarians experienced firsthand the nervousness, energy, and even desperation that tutors and writing faculty see on a regular basis as paper deadlines approach, writing center appointments are booked solid, and lines of students form outside of faculty offices. This energy is not always as palpable in a chat, reference interaction, or one-off library instruction session. Being placed within the excitement of the event offered a chance for librarians to both meet students wherever they were in their process and also reinforce research and writing as evolving processes that must inform each other.

BOUNDARIES: TUTOR PERCEPTIONS

In our Center, peer tutors are trained to consider best practices in writing pedagogy, encouraged to remain mindful of their own writing challenges, and taught to define themselves through playful improvisation, not expertise. As Paula Gillespie and Neal Lerner argue, tutoring expertise is grounded in the ability of tutors to engage with students, set a tone for the session, negotiate priorities, and manage expectations; as peers, tutors are discouraged from leveraging their own expertise, instead focusing on "respecting writers' need to discover" by attending to social cues throughout the session (27). Our best tutors are often students who feel energized by the unpredictability of the tutoring appointment. The goal of training is not to build expertise in writing but to construct a methodology for tutoring that requires tutors to address best

practices while keeping their own abilities and experiences and our local student population in mind.

The undergraduate peer tutors who volunteered to work our library event brought this improvisational style to the evening consultations. In conventional writing center tutorials, it's common practice for tutors to recommend alternative support services whenever students request help beyond tutors' sphere of practice. In this close collaboration, however, tutors were able to literally walk students over to available librarians *if* and *when* the conversation became more focused on seeking research support, providing an easily traversable bridge between the two support systems. Having writing tutors and librarians in the same space opened up differing ways to look at the same types of questions, and most practically, made it physically possible for tutors to know that their suggestion to solicit more help from a librarian was truly heeded by students.

In advance of the event, tutors were surveyed anonymously to find out whether they felt research support should be provided by the writing tutor or delegated to another campus resource, such as the library. Although some tutors were reluctant to offer support conducting database searches or assessing search results, most tutors felt quite comfortable working with students on these information literacy concerns. While both tutors and librarians play similar roles in supporting work assigned and evaluated by the professor, it's clear the tutors' perceptions of themselves and their relationship to the university as students and peers impacts the way they approach this support. The tutors' hybrid identities as both peers and tutors may grant them more freedom to improvise than the librarians' singular identity as a faculty member trained in a particular field.

Working consistently with students who frequent the Writing Center for certain kinds of support, peer tutors do express greater comfort helping students with "writing" tasks than with "research" methods. In fact, when surveyed to find out which types of support tutors felt most confident providing (from brainstorming topics to avoiding plagiarism), our current cohort agreed on only two items: (1) reorganizing content from an existing draft and (2) writing effective introductions and conclusions, both associated with the revision stage of the writing process. Since so much of their training encourages flexibility, and since students often seek help beyond traditional drafting and revision support, however, experienced tutors are often quite willing to use their peer status to help wherever they can.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: TWO PERSPECTIVES

From Christine's librarian perspective:

It is important to show students struggling to write research papers that research and writing processes are intertwined, often in chaotic and unpredictable ways. Students might need to go through various writing process stages before they realize the value of thinking critically about searching for and evaluating authoritative sources. Crossing the room from writing tutor to librarian to re-engage with the databases and refine search terms became a physical enactment not only of the close connection between research and writing, but also of the students' developing awareness of this connection. Collaborative events like these are simple and fun ways to demonstrate the recursive nature of research and writing. The events can help librarians and tutors reaffirm their own roles, develop respect for each other's roles, and begin to question when and whether to blur the boundaries between the two.

From Jennifer's writing center perspective:

Collaborations like our "Research and Writing" event also challenge tutor perceptions of their own "expertise" and their role at the university. In many ways, these events invite questions and challenges from students who might not otherwise visit the campus writing center, forcing tutors to navigate less familiar concerns. As Stephen North says, "What we want to do in a writing center is fit into—observe and participate in—this ordinarily solo ritual of writing" (439). Once inside, however, the tutor's impact may be subtle (encouraging writers to challenge their own methodology) or more pronounced (redirecting student efforts). Inserting oneself is fundamentally risky and uncertain, and since each session is a spontaneous interpersonal communication, there is no script to rely on. The flexibility offered by collaborative events not only supports student writing, then, but also helps tutors remain open and improvisatory in their interactions with students seeking support.

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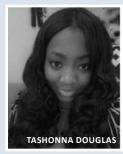
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WLN

Tutors' Column: "The Language We Occupy"

Tashonna Douglas
St. Olaf College

TASHONNA DOUGLAS

As a writing fellow for a developmental writing course, I have learned the importance of creating holistic bonds with each of my students. The importance of my relationships with them stems from a long, drawn out history of the silencing of their voices. My college, St. Olaf, is a unique space. Throughout campus are places, like the Writing Center, that excel in including marginalized students. However, there are far more places on campus that exclude many marginalized students.

I am lucky enough to work at the Writing Center, a place considered one of my campus' more progressive spaces. The benefit of working at the Writing Center is our access to the student body. I tutor in a developmental course titled Writing 110: Skills in Composition, where a majority of the students are people of color. Though this course is taught by faculty in the Writing Program, embedded Writing 110 Writing and Research tutors connect the course to both the library and the Writing Center. All writers have the option of going to the Research Desk or Writing Center on their own, but the embedded support of the Writing and Research tutors is tailored to this course.

Not only was I able to connect with these writers because we shared the same skin color, but I was also able to connect with them because most of us are from inner cities. The writers and I are single-handedly bonded from just that. Even the way we show up to the space is distinctly different from what surrounds us. Our Air Jordans and ripped jeans contrast the sweater vests and khakis that fill the space. Not only does our appearance disrupt the space, but we are different in other aspects. However, during our tutoring sessions the writers show up as their true selves, not as what is expected of them. They are able to remove the mask they wear in front of their white peers and just exist with someone like them. My writers and I understand one another, we speak the same language, we share the same struggle in formally transitioning to Standard Written English (SWE).

Upon entering college, we were told that the education we would receive would be life altering, forever reflecting the high rigor of our liberal arts institution. Our learning in the classroom—and many other places on campus including the Writing Center—was meant to be an outlet for us to grow as students, to flourish academically, and to thrive within the realms St. Olaf had given us. Writing in particular was offered as a space that would expose writers to possibilities they never thought they could obtain, but it had actually become a tool to use to properly mold St. Olaf students into a bubble. For my college, teaching marginalized students the "proper" way to write was another way to offer assimilation into a world they would never fully be accepted in regardless of mastery.

Let me make clear that St. Olaf College is not to blame for the creation of SWE; many faculty simply choose to continue to teach this outdated and limited standard. As a predominantly white institution, many spaces on my campus participate in perpetuating the harm SWE does to students of color. Though many of the professors do a superb job in teaching the basic skills of writing in Writing 110, while also affirming students' voices outside SWE, many of the students still struggle with writing after leaving the class. Many professors want to help their students succeed in learning SWE but don't recognize what that costs students in their freedom as writers. Many students never find their place in the writing realm because they struggle finding the balance between their voice and their writing.

This is why it is so important to uplift my writers' voices as they undergo their transition of learning a new standard. This is also where the essentialness of my bond with my writers is most evident. Who am I to tell them that the way they write is not good enough to be considered academic? Who benefits most by changing a student's writing? Most students easily—and without question—adjusted to SWE. For years, having access to a proper education had trained them to never question the agenda behind the skills they were learning. White students, especially, had the privilege of moving in academic spaces that were tailored to their learning. Inner-city students of color could not afford the same luxury.

I know it's important for writers to always feel validated as they learn the norms of operating SWE. But, I also know the rejection someone would feel after hearing their writing isn't adequate for submission. As an English major, I have feared whether my writing would sound the way I spoke. I've been conditioned by educators to believe slang is not acceptable in SWE, and my biggest regret is that I've never questioned the conditioning. I see why SWE is widely accepted and used; it perpetuates a formality that anyone who speaks/writes English should write using the guidelines provided by SWE. Anything else is deemed unacceptable. Even so, teaching SWE often makes me feel uneasy. My uneasiness comes from recognizing how my institution functions: the reality is I

know I take up too much space with my Black skin, meaning the language I occupy has to be the same as the students around me to be perceived as unthreatening. This is why there is such a push for students to transition to SWE as they enter college. Students like myself and students like my writers cannot afford to be any different than our counterparts because our skin is different enough.

I know that I want to connect with my writers on a personal level. I find that by connecting with them through language I can understand how they want to learn. The work we're doing at the Writing Center is identity work. It's more than teaching how to write; it is about teaching them to experience and express their identity on a campus that was never meant for them. Every marginalized student must learn what it is to be deemed worthy of an academic career in an institution that was never created for them. Given the tools to speak, write, and advocate for themselves, they will create spaces that they feel most welcome in. This identity work applies to research, too. I am cross-trained as not only a Writing Tutor but also a Research Tutor, meaning I face similar challenges of assimilating students into existing systems with racist histories when teaching them to find and evaluate sources. At the same time, I work to challenge these norms as well, asking students to find research that reflects their experience and researchers who reflect their identity. It's both inviting them into a space not built for them and inviting them to create their own space.

The harsh reality we have to face is that those of us who recognize the power dynamics of language recognize that naming the power is important to confronting and changing the dynamic for the betterment of future writers. Together we can recognize the power that SWE has in their academic careers while also combating the limiting standards it has placed upon their writing.

I think about the spaces my writers occupy whenever they write. I think about what makes their voices special, how not to water down their version of the truth, and how to give them the space to properly flourish. I think about how they are perceived in the spaces they disrupt. I think about why they matter and why their voices and experiences matter. I believe this is what is most important in academia, not only for the students but for the institution as well.

As a tutor, my journey with language will continue, and by checking the privilege I have in understanding SWE, I can continue to educate my writers. The systems that perplex me will not hinder my growth; instead I will investigate the depths in which they affect my everyday life. My hope is for writers to continue to challenge the spaces around them because they may break the walls that hinder them. As I know, writing is the most integral part of a student's academic career, but that does not mean students should not be allowed to challenge a system they do not fit within.

Announcements

Middle Eastern-North Africa Writing Center Association

May 27-28, 2021: 3 to 8 p.m.(GMT+3)
Virtual Conference
"Imagine and Innovate: Navigating Uncertainty in Writing Centers"

Attendance is free! The sessions will be scheduled between 3–8 p.m. (GMT+3) and of course international presenters will be assigned the later slots. For further information, contact Sahar Mari: sahar.mari@qatar.tamu.edu and Inas Mahfouz: imahfouz@auk.edu.kw. Conference website: menawca.org.

National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing

November 11-14, 2021
Virtual Conference
"Subversion and Subterfuge"

Conference contact: NCPTW21@gmail.com; conference website: thencptw.org/pittsburgh2021/?p=356

Online Writing Centers Association

October 4-9, 2021
Virtual Conference
"Interdependence in the Online Writing Center"

This conference will take place synchronously and asynchronously. Proposals due: May 1, 2021. Accepted presenters notified: June 21, 2021. Presentation materials due: September 20, 2021. Asynchronous sessions posted: October 4, 2021. Synchronous sessions: October 4-9; exact times/days to be determined. For further information, contact: conference@onlinewritingcenters. org; conference website: www.onlinewritingcenters.org/events/conference

Conference Calendar

May 27-28, 2021: Middle Eastern-North Africa Writing Center Association, virtual conference

Contact: Sahar Mari: sahar.mari@qatar.tamu.edu and Inas Mahfouz: imahfouz@auk.edu.kw; conference website: menawca.org.

October 4-9, 2021: Online Writing Centers Association, virtual conference

Contact: conference@onlinewritingcenters.org; conference website: www.onlinewritingcenters.org/events/conference.

November 11-14, 2021: National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing

Contact: NCPTW21@gmail.com; conference website: thencptw. org/pittsburgh2021/.

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Interested in serving as a reviewer? Contact Karen Gabrielle Johnson (KGJohnson@ship.edu), Ted Roggenbuck (troggenb@bloomu.edu), Lee Ann Glowzenski (laglowzenski@gmail.com), and Julia Bleakney (jbleakney@elon.edu).

Interested in contributing news, announcements, or accounts of work in your writing center to the Blog (photos welcomed)? Contact Anna Sophia Habib (ahabib@gmu.edu).

Interested in guest editing a special issue on a topic of your choice? Contact Muriel Harris (harrism@purdue.edu).

Interested in writing an article or Tutors' Column to submit to *WLN*? Check the guidelines on the website: (wlnjournal.org/submit.php).

NCPTW UPDATE

Due to ongoing complications around travel funding and COVID-19, the board and the committee have decided to move the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing to a **purely online format**. We think this creates the most equity among potential participants, especially for peer tutors. For additional information and updates about the NCPTW, please see the announcement on the home page of the WLN Blog: wlnjournal.org/blog.

WEBINAR ON MENTORING

Mentorship & Publication: Mentoring Relationships and Strategies

Friday, May 7, 2021, 1:00pm-2:00pm PDT
Zoom Registration Link: tinyurl.com/wlnweb5-reg

Hosted by Elizabeth Kleinfeld, Sohui Lee, and Julie Prebel, this webinar explores the importance of mentorship in writing center work. We will provide an overview of theories and practices in mentoring, strategies for building intentional and effective mentorship in writing center work, and the role of mentorship in professional development and scholarly publications.

CFP FOR A SPECIAL ISSUE OF *WLN*: WRITING CENTERS AND DISABILITY JUSTICE

We invite you to submit a proposal to a special issue of *WLN* on the topic of writing centers and disability justice. This issue will include articles considering the embodied experience of disability in writing center work—ranging from physical disabilities to invisible disabilities, neurodivergence, and thinking through access needs. Proposals are due by May 31.

For complete details, please see the full CFP on the *WLN* blog by clicking on the "further announcements" section at the right-hand side of the home page: wlnjournal.org/blog.

WHAT'S ON THE *WLN* BLOG?

The *WLN* blog (wlnjournal.org/blog) offers conversations with scholars in the field of writing;   announcements of conferences, jobs, and CFPs; collections of tutors' voices; articles about writing centers around the globe; stories about international pen pal programs; and so much more. What it needs are contributions from you. Check the pull-down window at the top of the home page to read about what and how to submit your post.

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