

Editor's Note

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What does it mean to share space or build community with our writers, tutors, and colleagues? How do we create, extend, and adapt our centers and sessions to meet varying and changing needs? The authors of this quarter's issue of *WLN* invite us to consider these questions as we fully settle into the new year.

Focusing on the possibilities of community support for new writing center professionals, Dagmar Scharold and Julia Bleakney examine the benefits of IWCA's Mentor Match Program. Most notably, the authors locate an area of fruitful discord between the expectations/approaches of mentors and mentees: while mentees expect "a more traditional, 'mentor-as-expert' orientation," mentors see their role as "congruent with the approach to writing center tutoring that uses a non-hierarchical, peer-to-peer model" (p.8). Their findings help us think about the vital importance of collaborative goal-setting in all mentoring work.

Turning to the crucial and ever-growing space of online writing support, Christina Trujillo, Kelly Bowker, and Lauren Hammond detail their writing center's practice of offering asynchronous consultations to busy medical school students. They report that these consultations, consisting of text-based comments paired with screen-captured video feedback, allow students to connect their written work with the offered feedback in real-time, much as they would in a synchronous consultation.

In "Taking Up Space and Time," Paula Rawlins and Amanda Arp consider the difficult circumstances of finding one's personal identity targeted within students' writing. Zooming in on the specific identities of fat tutors and administrators, their narratives remind us that writing center work regularly requires us to confront painful or potentially anxiety-provoking moments; nonetheless, we can still help students recognize the limitations of their arguments while



also building in policies (e.g. in-session breaks) that honor/protect our boundaries.

Finally, Andrew Sweeso's Tutors' Column examines the role of hand gestures in tutoring sessions. Having returned to in-person consulting following the quarantine phase of the pandemic, Sweeso considers "the value of body language as a source for productive tutoring rather than a burden on it" (p.28). Gestures communicate intent, understanding, and validation, all of which form a critical part of any successful session.

We encourage you to consider this issue, as well as the *Connecting Writing Centers Across Borders* blog and *Slow Agency* podcast, as your space for collaboration, connection, and community.