

Editor's Note

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By now, we are all likely familiar with the *This is Fine* meme, where we identify with the smiling, wide-eyed dog who sips his coffee as the walls around him burn. We close spring 2024 amid ongoing campus consolidations and closures, all while the enrollment cliff of 2025 looms darkly ahead. And yet, if there's one thing writing center people know how to do, it's dampen the fires that threaten to upend our days. Unsurprisingly, the authors of this quarter's issue of *WLN* meet ongoing uncertainty with honesty, creativity, and grit.

Responding to the challenges posed by for-profit educational technology providers, Michael Albright and Lori B. Baker outline their insourcing model for tutoring services in "Insourcing and Identity: A Writing Center's Claim to Relevance." While external vendors may tout a 24/7/365 service staffed by professional tutors, they will never be able to replace "the practical experiences and networking structures inherent to campus writing centers" that benefit students and tutors alike (7). Albright and Baker thus offer writing centers a helpful standpoint from which to argue against those who would see on-campus and external writing support as essentially the same.

In "Deschooling (and) the Writing Center," Russell Mayo introduces readers to philosopher Ivan Illich's concept of conviviality, "a positive alternative for inverting the problems of institutions that adhere to capitalist logics" (12). Mayo's study of the Great Lakes State University Writing Center as an example of deschooling highlights the strengths of a locally-based, student-staffed writing center. If outsourced tutoring is the pinnacle of industrialized schooling, then the convivial writing center holds space for deschooling: transformative learning experiences based in a meaningful peerness.

Tina Matuchniak's "Re-making the Writing Center: A Years-Long Process of Committing to an Antiracist Agenda" embodies what it means to look deep within the heart of the center and work to change that which is found wanting. Matuchniak chronicles the consciousness-raising, tutor education, and recruitment undertaken by her staff and herself as part of a larger project of "preparing a staff of diverse peer tutors who, themselves, are ready and willing to challenge racist, specifically anti-Black racist, practices" (17). This article offers administrators a powerful model on which to base their own anti-racist work.

Finally, in "Flexibility in the Writing Center: One Tutor's Suggestions for Synchronous Online Sessions," Romaisha Rahman reminds practitioners that our in-person, on-campus tools can be adapted to meet the changing nature of student needs. Rahman writes, "Our motto as writing center staff should be 'service-first,' and the best way of service is through flexibility in our sessions" (24). Remaining open to new technology is a key part of that flexibility.

At the root of all the articles in this issue is a candid examination of the writing center within the higher education landscape. Matuchniak writes, "The work of remaking the writing center is a process, a project, a commitment" (20). As we "go to print," we are mindful that it is nearly July, and next year is about to start. We hope this issue helps you rest and ready yourself for the work ahead.