

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.