

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION: ATTENTION AND AWARENESS IN THE WRITING CENTER

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We here at *Praxis* are pleased to bring you our Summer 2021 issue, “Attention and Awareness in the Writing Center.” This issue brings together research that emphasizes how writing center practitioners and consultees are attuned to the work that occurs within writing centers and the influence of this work beyond writing centers. In our writing centers, attention and awareness are crucial practices. This is evident when consultants attentively engage with consultee’s work; when we use consultant feedback to become more aware of their skills and needs; when we develop programs to better serve and reach consultees; and, finally, when we engage in self-reflective practices to understand our own approaches to writing center work. The pieces collected in this issue ask us to consider the ways we can cultivate our awareness toward actions that can influence the practices within our writing centers and influence how our centers engage with our institutions of higher education.

In our opening focus article, “The ‘Ghost’ in the Tutorial: How Do Tutors and Students Engage with Faculty Feedback?,” Bruce Bowles Jr. examines how the presence of faculty feedback influences writing center sessions. In response to a dearth of research on these types of sessions, Bowles offers a study of sessions involving faculty feedback and finds insights about the significance of external documents to sessions, the consultants’ approach to reading and addressing faculty feedback, and the emotional response of students in these sessions. Arguing that sessions with faculty feedback present “are different in kind rather than degree” (10), the author recommends pedagogical, collaborative, and empirical research responsive to said differences.

Next, Tyler Thier, Aisha Wilson-Carter, Marilyn Buono-Magri, Jennifer Marx, Joseph Chilman, and Andrea Rooso Efthymiou conjure Romeo Garcia’s theory of transformative listening in their article entitled “Productive Disruptions: The Struggle Towards Equity in Writing Center Work.” In the context of Hofstra University’s writing center, the authors ask how enacting transformative listening can reveal institutional structures that privilege some and marginalize others. Responding to Laura Greenfield’s theorizing of power and privilege and harnessing Audre Lorde’s productive uses of anger, the article’s authors confront the language

of identity markers, asking how empathy itself denotes privilege. Finally, this piece “considers how privilege around such categories operationalizes oppression,” signaling to “how mindful, individual reflections about privilege are part of the messy process towards collective action and greater equity” (14).

In “Developing Generative Dispositions Towards Writing Through Micro-Coaching: Results from a Disposition Awareness Study,” Kelsey Hixson-Bowles, Hayden Berg, Jessica Wallace, and Konnor McIntire shift our focus to student perceptions of their own writing experiences and processes. Building on writing center scholarship about students’ ability to transfer writing from one context to another, the authors study the efficacy of one strategy for “raising students’ metacognitive awareness of their dispositions toward writing”—micro-coaching (23). Hixson-Bowles et al.’s study approaches micro-coaching as a possible intervention to address students’ self-efficacy and self-regulation, ultimately concluding that the possible benefit of this strategy warrants further research into and practice with micro-coaching.

Joseph Cheadle and Cristian Lambaren Sanchez’s “Writing Center Ambassadors: Engaging Campus Organizations through Embedded Consultants” presents results from their pilot writing center Ambassador Program. To improve the outreach of their center, Cheadle and Sanchez decided to embed a consultant within a campus organization. Based on their mixed-methods assessment of their program, the authors argue that embedding tutors in campus organizations is one approach that can foster connections and understanding between centers and students, especially between centers and diverse and underrepresented students.

Following this is the cross-institutional study entitled “Session Notes: Preliminary Results from a Cross-Institutional Survey. Authors Christine Modey, Genie Giamo, and Joseph Cheadle explore the use of session notes across sixty-one distinct writing centers. They painstakingly outline how session notes are employed across the writing center discipline, focusing on form, content, records, and assessment of these notes. A rich discussion results, wherein this study’s authors denote implications of session notes’ historical uses, along with resources for putting their study’s

findings into practice. Finally, this article argues “for the importance of developing an open-access, evolving repository for this type of data in writing center studies” (52). These authors’ work values transparency across session notes’ usefulness across writing center work, volleying for resources which can help us build upon each others’ experiences in this area.

We close this issue with Jared Featherstone’s “Metacognition and Transfer: A Cross-Institutional Study of Writing Center Clients and Non-Clients.” Featherstone examines students’ awareness of metacognition and transfer across two contexts—the writing center and classrooms. Following from Gorzelsky et al.’s taxonomy for metacognition, Featherstone performs a cross-institutional study keyed into three areas of student metacognition: monitoring, control, and constructive metacognition. From his research, Featherstone finds how different aspects of metacognition are facilitated in the two different contexts of the center and the classroom. Notably, Featherstone argues that there exists a difference in perception of metacognition and transfer for students who visit the writing center, as these students “gain awareness of genre, rhetorical situation, and process, which allows them to see opportunities for transfer in their classroom experiences” (82).

Finally, we here at *Praxis* want to take a moment to formally welcome our new Assistant Editor, Kaitlin Passafiume. She is a fifth-year PhD Candidate of UT Austin’s Department of Spanish and Portuguese, specializing in performance and decolonizing studies in Mexico, Chile, and Brazil. Kaitlin strives to produce scholarship which improves practices around multilingual and multidialectal writing consulting across writing center methodology. Furthermore, she aims to contribute to the decolonial writing center through her work as Assistant Editor at *Praxis*.