

Call for Proposals
CWPA 2018 Annual Conference, Sacramento, CA

What if We Tried This? Innovating Writing Programs

Last year's CWPA Conference featured rich discussions about the challenges we face as WPAs in an age of austerity. As "wily, can-do WPAs," we responded to those conditions with concern, thoughtfulness, and ways that we might respond to the conditions that we face. Our members also responded with unique new approaches to how we could make our annual conference interactive, productive, and conversational. For that, we are deeply grateful.

This year, we invite conversations that will continue those responses so that we might learn from one another about successful new approaches to our work. As we gather in the city of Sacramento, California—former home of pioneers and the current home of an innovation culture—we encourage blue-sky thinking about the ways that writing programs might adapt and change to meet the needs of our students and institutions, and ways that we can connect with important trends in both higher education and our discipline. Simply stated, we seek to catalyze new and innovative approaches to the work of writing program administration.

The conference theme, "What if We Tried This?" is meant to invite broader thinking, to consider true innovation rather than incremental change, and to provide us all with food for thought about our shared work. One way to consider this is in the form of problem statements: We face X, which interferes with a core element of teaching writing in current times. So what if we tried Y instead? No idea is too far-fetched. We can use our time together to talk about new ideas that you have tried, detailing the successes and challenges you faced; or we can hear ideas about what you *might* try, what you'd *like to try*, and invite your WPA colleagues to help you think those ideas through for possible implementation.

We also invite you all to keep pushing the envelope on how we present our work. While we welcome traditional presentations of scholarly work—and will continue to do so—we would like to challenge you to consider formats for presentation that continue to be as interactive and discussion-based as possible. ***We're especially interested in some poster sessions, which allow others to visit you at designated times and help you to think through your ideas, as well as brief "Ignite" or "Pecha Kucha" sessions that feature a brief iteration of your ideas, followed by discussion-based activities.*** We'll do similar things at our shared meals.

So, the CWPA is happy to issue three related invitations:

- **Invitation 1: Please join us at CWPA 2018 to add your voice to this conversation about innovation and exploration.**

CWPA welcomes those who participate in "writing program administration" writ large. This includes work at 2- and 4 year institutions as well as at other locations that support literacy education. It also includes work at multiple sites within those institutions: writing centers; first-year writing programs; professional and technical writing programs; community writing programs and collaborations with secondary schools; ESL writing programs; WAC and WID programs; institutional assessment programs; multi-modal programs; and any other place where writing instruction happens.

- **Invitation 2: Propose a presentation or session that helps us to see the new approaches to "teaching writing" that you have attempted, are planning, or envision—and that imagine how the CWPA as an organization might think differently about the work we do.**

As you consider possible topics and write proposals, here are some questions that might guide you:

- What does (or should) it mean to “teach writing” in an age of multi-modal composing?
- What successes have you achieved in gathering resources for the work of our programs and the administration of those programs? How were those successes achieved by innovative thinking?
- What trends in higher education innovation seem particularly applicable or useful to the work of writing program administration? To what new pressures (completion and retention initiatives, budget issues, etc.) might our innovations respond? What new opportunities exist?
- How can community-based learning help us to develop new ways to approach the teaching of writing—and sites where it can or should be taught? In what new and innovative ways can we think about literacy education beyond our campus boundaries?
- What innovation funding sources exist both within and outside of our institutions? How have you, or might we, work to access those funds? What opportunities might you share, or what granting agencies might be open to cross-institutional efforts?
- How might we innovate what we mean by WAC/WID and other non-FYC initiatives?
- How has the role of the Writing Center changed in response to the changing demographics of our students? What innovations, in your estimation, are necessary and prudent to serve the students who come to us?
- Where are the lines of ethical decision making? How does addressing day-to-day utilitarian needs, or the needs of students, support or conflict with the decisions we face?
- What labor issues stand in the way of true innovation? How can we make good arguments for fair and ethical labor practices as both good in and of themselves, and good for the health of our institutions? What innovative models have you found for addressing those issues ethically? For resisting further abuses of labor?
- In what ways can program assessment support arguments for innovation? What kinds of assessment structures have you, or might you, include in a proposal for innovation? How can we avoid allowing assessment structures to block the willingness to try new things?
- What kinds of data do we have, and what kinds of data do we lack, that supports the need for innovation?
- How can we support the new ideas that can be brought to bear by graduate students, new, and non-tenured/non-tenure track, and contingent WPAs?
- How might the CWPA as an organization support the work of innovation?
- What frames can help us to innovate? For example, would the frames of intersectionality, assemblage, belonging, inclusion, and/or diversity help us rethink assumptions about WPA work?
- What classroom innovations can be supported by WPAs and other administrators that align our pedagogical practices with changing institutional missions?
- What innovations can help our writing programs to become more consciously transnational? How can the teaching of writing avoid instantiating dominant literacy practices? What resources and new approaches are necessary to move programs beyond mono-linguist orientations?
- How can innovation schemes be framed in ways that interest the higher administrations at our institutions? Grant sources? Philanthropists and our College advancement/fundraising teams?
- How can we learn more about innovations in writing instruction that are outside the mainstream of our professional organizations? What work is being done in other disciplines that can help us innovate our own work?

- **Invitation 3: Help us build *interactive and goal-oriented sessions*, sessions that will equip participants for action at their home institutions.**

We ask your help in developing sessions that re-envision our annual conference as a grand conversation about innovation. We want our formal sessions to be as rich as the conversations we all have over dinner or in the lobby. Since we convene to spend time with those from whom we can learn, let's all work toward sessions where listening and discussion are more central than "presenting."

We call upon you to combine our rich scholarship (what we know) with visionary thinking and open conversations about even the wildest of ideas. Consider this to be a safe zone to try out ideas-in-process.

So, we ask that you develop formats for sessions *which will make the audience's knowledge and experience as important as that of the presenters.*

Can you help us make that kind of experience? Here's how:

PROPOSING A CONFERENCE PRESENTATION OR INSTITUTE

You can propose up to **two** speaking roles, whether solo or as part of a panel.

A. Conference Proposals

We are happy to accept both individual and full-session proposals as follows:

1. 15-minute individual presentations

Presenters may submit individual paper or presentation proposals; these will be combined into panels/sessions with about three presenters. We'll once again try to put you in touch with one another in advance of the conference so that you can develop a coherent panel which will breed a conversation on a shared topic.

2. Full session Proposals

You may submit a proposal for a session with groups of 3 or more presenters/facilitators. We encourage you to consider innovative, interactive delivery methods.

Delivery

Below are some heuristics to help you to think differently about the way we might spend time together. But we are certain that this creative group will come up with others as well. For example, you could:

- ***A priority for this year:*** Develop a **poster presentation** designed for a gallery walk rather than for oral presentations. You could either work with a group to develop a full session with 4 – 6 posters, or propose an individual poster presentation, and we will form sessions on related topics. ***We will provide a regular conference slot for these sessions to allow for conversation.***
- Develop a session that briefly describes an innovative approach that you have tried, plan to try, or might try. Invite discussion, critique, and creative, collaborative problem-solving so that participants leave with new approaches for work on their campus.

- Develop **interactive debates** on key issues facing the profession that can then be widened to include audience participation. Perhaps begin with *short position statements* and then open to audience questions and comments that invite innovative solutions. Or name a common problem we face, and then invite the audience to innovate with you.
- Present a **scenario** that surfaces a challenge that you are currently facing, provides background information and your initial impulses for addressing the challenge, and then calls for innovative approaches to solving it. ***Feel free to create full session proposals from a set of similar issues faced on different campuses.***
- Choose a key topic, and develop a series of short, **rapid-fire presentations** (20 slides, 20 seconds per slide, [PechaKucha-style](#)) with 4 - 6 presenters, leaving plenty of time for audience discussion.
- Briefly describe **research-in-process** with the goal of audience suggestions, feedback, or to find research partners. This will give scholars the chance to share ideas, provide suggestions, *and/or even propose collaborative research teams for cross-institutional research, inviting potential partners to attend.*
- Develop an **interactive seminar on an innovative WPA technique or skill** that you have learned. These seminars are meant *share effective WPA practices that go beyond the things we learn as scholars of our discipline.* You might help participants learn more topics such as: collecting data that can help to advocate for resources; innovative graphics to display assessment findings; using pertinent tools and technologies for budget development; new technologies for empirical research; methods for focus groups or interviews; developing IRB applications and ethical practices for human subjects research; creating interactive curriculum development or assessment sessions; garnering publicity for your programs' work; doing advocacy work in the community; developing outreach centers or initiatives.

SHOULD YOUR SESSION BE LISTED IN A STRAND?

At the 2018 CWPA conference, we will feature three strands of sessions, and you can indicate your desire to be featured in one of the strands in your proposal. ***This applies only to PANEL proposals:***

A. Mentoring Strand Sessions: A strand of sessions at the 2018 conference in Sacramento will again be devoted to professional development and mentoring issues. If you are submitting a proposal in any format to talk about mentoring (broadly defined), please indicate so in the proposal; it will be directed to the chair of the CWPA Mentoring Project, for review. Also feel encouraged to email jjanang@luc.edu to let him know that you have submitted a proposal intended for the mentoring strand. For more details, please visit the CWPA Mentoring Project on the CWPA website.

B. People of Color Caucus Sessions: CWPA's People of Color Caucus will offer a strand of sessions at the 2018 conference devoted to issues of racial and ethnic diversity in writing program administration related to scholars, teachers, students, and administrators of color. If you are submitting a proposal in any format that relates to issues appropriate for this strand, please indicate so in the proposal; it will be directed to the chair of the CWPA POC Caucus, for review. Also feel encouraged to email genevieve.garcademeller@utrgv.edu to let her know that you have submitted a proposal intended for the POC Caucus strand.

C. Two-Year College Caucus Sessions: CWPA's Two-Year College Caucus will offer a strand of sessions at the 2018 conference devoted to topics related to, involving, and discussing the contexts of two-year colleges. If you

are submitting a proposal in any format that relates to issues appropriate for this strand, please indicate so in the proposal; it will be directed to Daniel Cleary, chair of the CWPA Two-Year College Caucus, for review. Also feel encouraged to email dcleary@lorainccc.edu to let him know that you have submitted a proposal intended for the Two-Year College Caucus strand.

D. Tenure-Free Caucus: New to this year's conference, we invite full panel proposals in a strand that addresses the impact and influence of untenured and non-tenure track WPAs and faculty in writing programs.

SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL

The site is now available to receive submissions for conference sessions (individual or group) for the 2018.

The [instructions for submitting a proposal](#) and the submission link are available at: <http://wpacouncil.org/cwpa-2018-proposal-instructions>

Deadlines:

- **Expedited** review deadline for *Conference* Proposals: **January 1, 2018**. This deadline can be useful so that you can receive word of acceptance early enough to apply for travel funds.
- **Final** deadline for *Conference* Proposals: **March 1, 2018**:

Attending WPA 2018 in Sacramento: More information about WPA 2018 will be available soon, but for advance planning, below are some dates, descriptions, and ways to get more information:

OPPORTUNITIES AT THE 2018 CONFERENCE

There are three parts to the annual conference that you might participate in:

- The pre-conference Workshop for writing program administrators (July 22- 25). This intensive workshop is designed for both new and continuing WPAs, providing the opportunity to learn from experienced WPAs about both the theoretical/intellectual underpinnings of our work and the practical, day-to-day knowledge needed to succeed as a WPA.
- The pre-conference Institutes (July 26). **Institute topics will be announced soon.**
- The Conference (July 26 - 29): we invite proposals for full panels, individual presentations, and interactive workshops as part of the conference schedule. See proposal information above. The conference commences with an early evening reception and plenary on Thursday, July 26, and concludes with our annual town hall breakfast which ends at about 11 a.m. on Sunday, July 29.

For local Sacramento, CA questions email Local Arrangements Chairs, Angela Clark-Oates & Cathy Gabor at cwpaconference18@gmail.com

For CWPA proposal questions email: Dominic DelliCarpini at cwpa2018@ycp.edu

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