

From the Editors

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This issue of *SDC* features a timely collection of two peer-reviewed articles and three other pieces, all of which focus on issues and questions that are critical not only in writing centers but in the larger educational institutions we work in and indeed in the world at large.

As digital, online, and audio-visual media become increasingly vital in academic settings and in the global workplace, students are often asked to write for non-traditional/multimodal formats. Joseph Cheatle investigates writing centers professionals' experiences in assisting students with these types of projects and finds that "they are occurring at writing centers in significant enough numbers to warrant our attention as a field." His results provide support increased emphasis on training in this area for tutors who may be asked to work with students on multimodal assignments such as slide presentations or websites.

One of the most talked-about book in writing center studies over the last ten years has been Greenfield and Rowan's collection, *Writing Centers and the New Racism* (Utah State UP, 2011). Michael Dimmick and Dagmar Scharold contribute to the ongoing dialogue in that book about the role writing centers can and should play in responding to and combatting systemic racism and negative language-based stereotypes. Dimmick and Scharold argue that community writing centers are in a better position than academic writing centers in terms of working toward progress in this area because "a community writing center has more latitude by its very nature of working with members of the community on non-academic projects."

In this issue's *Consultant Insight* piece, tutors from Transylvania University's writing center present results from a survey of former tutors who have graduated and moved on to their careers or graduate school.

Overall, their surveys demonstrate the positive effects writing center experiences can have on the lives not only of the students we work with but the student tutors we employ. One of the former tutors in the survey remarks, for example, that “no one teaches you how to give feedback on writing in graduate school. I ... had a distinct edge on my cohort since I had some instruction in writing feedback as a writing tutor.” This kind of survey can provide valuable talking points for those of us who hire and train tutors as we make our case for resources and support in an era of widespread budget crises.

James Hamby’s *Back to the Center* profile of the Middle Tennessee State University Writing Center provides yet another example of a busy writing center that is essential to a number of missions on the campus it supports. Echoing the same concerns Joseph Cheatle addresses in the article that opens this issue, Hamby reports that the writing center at MTSU is working toward offering more services and support for multimodal composition.

Nicole K. Turner’s enthusiastic review of *Writing Centers and Disability* (Babcock and Daniels, Fountainhead Press, 2017) shows that the book is an important resource for writing center professionals who are looking for ways to make their centers more accessible and beneficial for students with disabilities. As universities are increasing their efforts to connect with and serve diverse populations, including students with various kinds of disabilities, this kind of book can play an important role in keeping writing centers at the forefront.

Taken together, the five pieces in this issue represent an important contribution to some of the most significant issues and debates of 2020 and beyond. The ongoing coronavirus crisis has forced many of us to work remotely and look for multimodal methods to connect with students. The Black Lives Matter movement and recent protests against police brutality are strong evidence that systemic racism and other race issues are never far from the surface. And as we move into a future with fewer available resources and smaller budgets across most campuses, we will all likely be asked to demonstrate that our services represent a “value-added” benefit to the institutions where we work.

We hope this issue provides some valuable insights into these and other ongoing issues. We also feel that this issue shows once again that writing centers are key sites for understanding and playing a vital role in campus-wide and society-wide debates and dialogues.

The *SDC* journal exists precisely for the purpose of giving writing center professionals an opportunity to enter these conversations, and we are proud to play our role in facilitating that process. We would strongly encourage interested readers to become involved in the journal by joining the list of reviewers or submitting a manuscript for publication. On the final page of this issue, you will find a call for submissions for the next two issues, and we hope to receive submissions from many of you.

If you have any questions about the journal, please feel free to contact either of us at any time. As always, we would like to thank you for supporting the work of the SWCA organization in general and this journal specifically.

--*Scott and Devon*

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