2023 Tutor Conference

SoCal WCA 2023 Tutor Conference Call for Proposals: Creative Resilience

(Updated on January 12, 2023)

The Southern California Writing Centers Association invites proposals for our 2023 Tutor Conference. This year's theme is "Creative Resilience." The conference will be co-hosted with Bakersfield College via Zoom webinar on **Saturday, March 25**. Activities will commence at **10am (PST)**.

Writing center tutors and professionals are often at the forefront of responding to institutional obstacles that affect access to writing support and overall student success. For example, in recent years, writing tutors and professionals have had to transition to remote tutoring, learn how to tutor asynchronously; and for some institutions, navigate in-person tutoring and programing during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. While showing resilience to these challenges, we have also had to grapple with the weight of ongoing global challenges and social injustices. As Writing Center administrators and tutors can attest, we have a rich history of creatively overcoming challenges and changing the course of the tide. As we attempt a "new normal," what matters is "furthering the mission of writing centers as models for educational reform" (Grimm, 1999, p. 197) that are equitable and socially just; this is the creative resilience we seek.

For the 2023 Tutor Conference, we ask you to consider what creative resilience looks like at your writing center—in your tutoring practices, in cross-campus relationships, and within your staff culture. However, we also want to consider Neal Lerner's (2019) warning that resilience can connote change that reinforces the status quo, or it can be a radical change—one that thwarts the status quo and addresses these issues fundamentally. Building on our conference theme of creative resilience, we call for proposals that respond to the following questions for consideration. These questions are not all inclusive; rather, they serve as a starting point to garner ideas for topics related to creative resilience that you may want to consider:

- How does your writing center define "creative resilience"? What does "creative resilience" mean to your writing center?
- How do tutors support each other?
- What creative pedagogical practices are you employing to address global and/ local issues that may impact writers and tutors?
- How has your writing center responded to or advanced issues of equity and inclusion in your writing center?
- How have tutors creatively re-envisioned WC programming (e.g. workshops, social media presence, class-visits, marketing, eco-friendly practices in the WC, DEI in the WC, mission statement committee) during and in response to global and/ local issues?

- How have you modified face-to-face vis-a-vis online offerings since the pandemic? What tutoring strategies have you developed in response to the pandemic and/or other current issues impacting your writing center?
- How do you creatively envision your tutoring space? What are the affordances of these creative revisions?
- How can creative resilience at the writing center enhance working relationships with cross-campus partners—faculty, libraries, counseling and academic services, and other resources?
- How do we design writing center spaces to best support our students? What are the complications? How do we decide our design? What is our process in designing WC spaces that support undergrad and graduate students?
- What tensions emerge when developing tutoring practices or WC programming that challenge or go against the status quo?
- What are WC center theories or tutoring strategies that you have redefined or reimagined in your center? Why? (e.g. active listening, reading aloud, not writing on a students' paper).
- How do we ensure that tutors benefit from our commitment to creative resilience at the center?
- In what creative ways are writing centers implementing self-care as a form of resilience?

We invite proposals for individual or group presentations, roundtable discussions, or workshops. Please submit your proposal to the conference submission form by the new deadline, **5pm (PST) on January 22nd**. The proposal review committee will be in touch about the status of your proposal by mid February.

Proposal format: A 50-word abstract and a 250-word description of the session.

In light of the SoCal WCA's decision to host this year's conference on Zoom, we have decided to remove the poster presentation format. The Proposal Review Committee (PRC) will reach out to those who have already submitted a poster presentation proposal. Please review the updated descriptions below:

1. *10-12 minute individual presentations:* You may submit individual paper or presentation proposals; these will be combined into panels with approximately three presenters. We will put you in touch with one another in advance of the conference so that you can develop a coherent panel. For this format, each panelist presents their findings. For example, findings can be in the form of original research findings; claims or questions developed from an analysis and synthesis of Writing Center literature; answers or preliminary claims to a focused inquiry/research question. In contrast to a roundtable discussion, a panel presentation is where the presenters have predetermined assertions or "answers" to share and discuss while leaving room for a Q&A after all panelists have presented. We encourage you to consider innovative, interactive delivery methods. (Total: 50 minutes)
2. *Group presentations:* You may submit a proposal for a session with groups of 2-4 presenters. For smaller groups, the PRC may combine your group with panelists

presenting on similar themes. For this format, each panelist presents their findings. For example, findings can be in the form of original research findings; claims or questions developed from an analysis and synthesis of Writing Center literature; answers or preliminary claims to a focused inquiry/research question. In contrast to a roundtable discussion, a panel presentation is where the presenters have predetermined assertions or "answers" to share and discuss while leaving room for Q&A. We encourage you to consider innovative, interactive delivery methods. (Total: 50 minutes)

3. *Roundtable discussions:* You may submit a proposal for a roundtable discussion in groups of 3 or more presenters. The format means presenters introduce the topic and take turns facilitating an interactive discussion on a question, topic, or issue relevant to the conference theme. The goal of a roundtable discussion is to collectively generate and exchange ideas that audience members can consider in their individual tutoring practice or share with their writing center. Typically, tutors who choose this format aim to explore a current issue or question that they are in the preliminary stages of trying to answer or address. The nature of this format allows for a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas amongst tutors across different writing centers. (Total: 50 minutes)

4. **Workshops**: Facilitators lead participants in a hands-on activity (rather than presenting a paper) to teach tangible skills related to writing center work and the conference theme of resilience. Workshops are typically more interactive, where the audience has an opportunity to practice an activity. (Total: 50 minutes)