Announcing CWCA/ACCR's 2018 Conference:

Politics and the Writing Centre: Inquiry, Knowledge, Dialogue and Action

Where: University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon
When: May 24-25, 2018
Keynote: Dr. Sheelah McLean
Plenary: Jack Saddleback

In Canada, a recent focus on reconciliation and Indigenization are revitalizing conversations around anti-oppression pedagogy (Kumashiro, 2000), a series of approaches which focus on how traditional educational systems and practices reinforce existing hierarchies and contribute to the disenfranchisement of marginalized students. Nationally and internationally, post-secondary institutions are seeing students affected by the rising tide of extremist right-wing politics and dubious news sources, calling for renewed attention to social justice and literacy-building.

An International Writing Centres Association (IWCA) 2014 position statement states that writing centres are particularly well positioned to "uphold students' rights, as we work in the everyday-ness of literacy." [1] As Nancy Grimm said in her 2009 IWCA keynote, "Although some might claim that the work of a writing center is 'just' to teach writing, the teaching of writing is never a neutral endeavor; it is never devoid of political motivations or outcomes."[2]

At the 2018 CWCA conference, we invite you to join us to exchange knowledge, share challenges, and ask questions about the ways our teaching and tutoring can and should engage in anti-oppressive educational practices.

Keynote speaker Dr. Sheelah McLean -- a founder of the Idle No More movement and recipient of the Carol Gellar Human Rights Award (2013) -- will discuss anti-racist, anti-oppressive educational practices. Closing plenary speaker Jack Saddleback will discuss the topic of resilience, drawing on his personal experiences with mental health activism, student politics, and gender and sexual diversity.

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[1] Godbee, Beth, and Bobbi Olson. "Readings for Racial Justice: A Project of the IWCA SIG on Antiracism Activism." *Antiracism and LGBTQ SIG Resources* (2014).

[2] Grimm, Nancy M. "New conceptual frameworks for writing center work." The Writing Center Journal 29, no. 2 (2009): 11-27.

Presentation Options:
Whether or not your idea, pedagogy or research addresses the conference theme directly, consider the following options:

1. **Pedagogical practice for roundtable discussion.** 30 minutes. Roundtable session on a writing centre pedagogy or practice. Round table facilitators lead 30 minutes of engaged discussion. Describe your pedagogical practice and at least three questions to stimulate discussion.

2. **Research presentation.** 20-minutes. Report on a study—quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, action research, reflective—or a pedagogical innovation. Reports will be grouped into panels of 2 or 3.

3. **Interactive workshop.** 45 minutes. Do you have a pedagogical practice or innovation that you want participants to experience? Describe your practice or innovation, the overall structure of the session, and how you will actively engage the audience.

4. **Panel discussion.** 45 minutes. Are you having an interesting—and maybe controversial—discussion with colleagues around an issue? Share your conversation and engage others by putting together a panel or debate. Plan at least 15 minutes for Q&A.

5. **Poster Presentation.** Posters are ideally suited for sharing results of a study where a picture (table, chart, graph, photographs, infographic, or word cloud) is worth a thousand words. They allow for individual conversations, and can be repurposed after the conference. This year, the plan is to combine them with cocktails and snacks.

Note: When submitting your proposal, you will be asked to indicate which of the following streams your proposal fits (you may choose more than one):

- Tutor Training
- Peer Tutor Presentation
- General Tutoring Practices and Approaches
- Working with Multilingual Writers
- Working with Graduate Student Writers
- Creative Responses to Administrative Challenges
- RAD or Data-Driven Research
- Writing Centre Programming
- Online Tutoring or Support
- Institutional and Cross-institutional Partnerships and Collaborations
- Decolonizing and Indigenizing the Writing Centre

Questions to get you thinking:
- **Responding to the times:** How do national and international politics affect writing centre staff, faculty, and student learners? How can writing centres respond? How do we help students work through and resist harmful rhetorics and discourses?
- **Safe and accessible spaces:** How are writing centres improving access and creating safe spaces for all students, including older, international, multilingual, first-generation, Indigenous, LGBTQ, and students with disabilities? How does decolonization support all students? Is the writing centre as "neutral" space a myth? How are we improving access to distance or commuter students, in person or online?
- **Partnerships for change:** What do successful partnerships with other units—on or off campus—look like, and how can they extend or support writing centre work?
- **Experiential learning, community outreach and community-based research:** What initiatives connect the writing centre and the larger community, and what effects have they had?
- **Changing educational inequities:** How are writing centres, with our front-line, one-to-one contact with students, in a privileged position to effect change? What are the risks, to ourselves and our centres, of leading or supporting change? How can our hiring and training practices effect change?
- **Allying and learning:** How are writing centres allying and learning from colleagues in other disciplines as we face continuing and emerging inequities? How can we support and learn specifically from Indigenous faculty, TAs, tutors, students?
- **Care for ourselves and our students:** How do our current practices foster resilience and a growth mindset? What are writing centres doing that contributes to a healthy campus?

Deadline: Submit your proposals by **11:59pm (EST) Monday January 15, 2018**.
Please note that this is a FIRM deadline, and will NOT be extended.

Proposals must be submitted through our online form: FORM URL.
Email submissions will not be accepted.

Any individual presenter may be included on up to **two (2)** proposals, but at least one of the proposals must be for a group presentation (3-5 presenters) or a round-table.

Questions about conference proposals can be directed to CWCA Vice-President, Sarah King: sking@utsc.utoronto.ca

Presenters will be notified by email concerning the status of their proposal(s) by February 23, 2018.