

# The Writing Centre Multiverse: Vancouver 2019

Location: Emily Carr University of Art + Design  
Vancouver, BC  
May 30-31, 2019

Plenary Speaker: Dr. Steve Marshall, Simon Fraser University

For our 2019 conference, the Canadian Writing Centres Association/L'Association canadienne des centres de rédaction welcomes proposals on any writing-centre-related subject, but particularly invites proposals that explore how Writing Centres navigate, respond to, and negotiate the “multiverse” we all inhabit—in our spaces, our practices, and our research.

In their 2012 article, “Negotiating the Multi in Multilingualism and Multiliteracies,” authors Marshall, Hayashi, and Yeung (2012) explore the multilingual and multiliterate practices of undergraduate students in both formal and informal writing situations. Their findings demonstrate how languages, literacies, modalities, disciplines, and genres inform and shape student writing practices in multiple and overlapping ways, particularly in the context of the neoliberal “multiversity.” Writing centres are working in a terrestrial “multiverse” with parallel, sometimes overlapping, spaces of possibility.

How, for example, do any of the following multis inform, enrich, and/or limit our work in the context of our own institutions? How do they intersect or overlap with practical, political, and/or personal concerns around wellness, training, pedagogy, administration, or decolonization? How do we as writing centre practitioners respond to, negotiate, or avoid, any or all of these?

**Multiliteracy** Drawing on the work of the New London Group (1996), multiliteracies “involve a recognition that there are many forms of literacy that vary across time and communities—that literacy is a social practice, rather than a set of reading and writing skills to be acquired” (Cervetti, Damico, & Pearson, 2006, p. 380).

**Multilingualism** Drawing on work in translanguaging and second-language writing, multilingualism acknowledges the increasing salience of cultural and linguistic diversity in our institutions, but also the many linguistic repertoires that students draw on throughout and within their composition processes.

**Multimodality** Technological advancements create opportunities for new forms of expression that sometimes challenge our conventional understandings of academic writing. Writing centres need to keep pace with these technological innovations if we are to support students working in these new forms.

**Multidisciplinarity** Whether as generalists or specialists, Writing Centre tutors have always worked with writers (student and faculty) across a range of disciplines in a range of genres.

**Multiversity** A term coined in the mid-twentieth century to describe large and complex educational institutions, with often competing faculties, campuses, and interests. Writing centres always operate in the context of larger institutions, and both navigating competing demands, and helping students navigate them, is an important part of our work.

This year's conference will take place at Emily Carr University of Art & Design, located in Vancouver, British Columbia, a location that embodies the "multi" of modern urban life. Almost half (45%) of Vancouver's population reports a language other than English or French as their mother tongue, compared to a national average of 23% (Statistics Canada, 2017). The province of British Columbia is also home to "more than 198 distinct First Nations, each with their own unique traditions and history" (Welcome BC, n. d.). Finally, Emily Carr as a specialized art, media, and design institution, situated on unceded Coast Salish territory, is also a site of multiple literacies, where students experiment and develop expertise in expression through many modes: visual, auditory, time-based, sensory, gestural, digital, among others.

Join us in Vancouver for knowledge-sharing and community, as we debate, interrogate, explore, and celebrate our Writing Centre multiverse!

## Session Types

### Research Panel Presentations

Report on a study—quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, action research, reflective—or an evidence-based pedagogical practice. Presentations will be grouped into panels of 2 or 3 presenters. Presenters are also welcome to propose their own panel of grouped presentations.

### Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable sessions are ideal for works-in-progress, pedagogical innovations, or taking up an issue of current debate in our field. Roundtable facilitators lead a 30-minute discussion that encourages active participation and contribution from attendees. Proposals should indicate the topic of your discussion, why it would be of interest to writing centre colleagues, and how you plan to engage and facilitate an active and dynamic discussion.

### Interactive Workshops

Workshops are an opportunity to model an innovative practice, strategy or innovation for your colleagues through collaborative hands-on activities. Proposals should clearly

describe the practice you intend to feature, the overall structure of the session, and how you will actively engage the audience.

#### Writing, Research and Pedagogy Fair Display

New this year, the Writing, Research and Pedagogy Fair will offer opportunities to showcase Writing Centre practices that do not fit into traditional presentation formats. Have an exciting new program you are proud of? Clever new handouts or resources? A poster detailing a research project? Proposals should clearly describe what you intend to showcase, the materials you will bring to showcase it, and the display resources you will require (table, wall space, video monitor, etc.).

#### Submission Details

CWCA is a national affiliate of the International Writing Centers Association (IWCA), and this year we are using their submission and review portal.

***You do not need to be a member of IWCA to submit a proposal, and there is no cost associated.*** However, it's a two-stage process: First, you create an account by providing your name, address, and institutional affiliation. Then you enter the details of your proposal to CWCA 2019.

To create an account and submit your proposal, start at <https://www.iwcamembers.org/join.php>

**Deadline for submissions is January 10, 2019.  
This deadline is final and will not be extended!**

---

#### References

- Cervetti, G., Damico, J., & Pearson, P. D. (2006). Multiple literacies, new literacies, and teacher education. *Theory Into Practice*, (45)4, 378-386.
- Marshall, S., Hayashi, H., & Yeung, P. (February 2012). Negotiating the multi in multilingualism and multiliteracies: Undergraduate students in Vancouver, Canada. *The Canadian Modern Language Review / La revue canadienne des langues vivantes*, (68)1, 28-53.
- Statistics Canada. (2017, November 29). Data products, 2016 Census. *Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census. The Daily* [data file], (no. 98-404-X2016001). Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/fogs-spg/Index-eng.cfm?Lang=Eng>

Welcome BC. (n.d.). *Province of British Columbia*. Retrieved from <https://www.welcomebc.ca/Choose-B-C/Explore-British-Columbia/B-C-First-Nations-Indigenous-People>