

Special Issue of *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal* Access and Equity in Graduate Writing Support

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Call for Submissions

For this special issue of *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal*, we call for submissions that address “Access and Equity in Graduate Writing Support.” For graduate students, the successful writing of a dissertation or thesis is crucial to degree completion. However, writers at the graduate level are often considered to be fully socialized into their academic communities and no longer in need of training and support for their writing. Reports coming out of the Council of Graduate Schools indicate that attrition and prolonged time to degree are problems that impact graduate students in all disciplines, and for many, attrition happens during the dissertation- or thesis-writing phase. Furthermore, graduate students from underserved populations such as students of color, students with disabilities, and first-generation college students are statistically more likely to suffer from attrition and to take longer to complete their culminating writing projects. These realities suggest that educational access and equity remain at issue for advanced graduate students.

This need for more access to graduate writing support is perhaps most clearly reflected in the increased demand being placed on writing centers to support graduate students. Nationally, comprehensive writing centers are serving more graduate students than ever before, and many institutions are setting up separate graduate writing centers in response to this need. Particularly for those students who are not receiving sufficient support elsewhere, university writing centers can be an essential resource for giving students a venue for talking about their writing, for facilitating and fostering writing groups, for sponsoring dissertation and thesis boot camps, for creating community, and for motivating and supporting students through the writing projects that will mean the difference between ABD and Ph.D.

Writing centers and those who support writing on our campuses must devote more energy to supporting graduate writers, to identifying what factors lead to graduate writing success (and, by extension, to degree completion), to considering what barriers to access exist for underserved student populations, and to researching the institutional and structural issues that lead to educational inequity. By doing so, we might design more effective writing center services, enact more equitable educational practices, and better support all graduate writers in our universities.

For this special issue of *Praxis*, we invite submissions that interrogate issues related to “Access and Equity in Graduate Writing Support.”

Lines of inquiry that submissions could address include (but are not limited to):

- Where and how are graduate students from underserved populations receiving writing support on our campuses, and how can writing centers and writing faculty offer more support for their writing?
- What kinds of support do graduate student writers from underserved populations need and want, and how does it compare to the kinds of support students are currently getting?
- What is the lived experience around graduate writing, especially for students from underserved populations?
- What are the particular circumstances that contribute to graduate writing success (and, by extension, to degree completion) for any of the following:
 - U.S.-born graduate students of color?
 - Graduate students with disabilities?
 - First generation college students who are undertaking graduate work?
 - International graduate students?
 - Multilingual graduate students?
 - Students at the intersections of these identities?
- How are graduate students building community as writers, and how can writing centers and writing faculty help to foster those communities?
- How can writing centers foster more collaborative writing and peer engagement among graduate students from underserved populations?
- How do or how can graduate students develop and foster informal networks of writing support, and how might writing centers do more to sponsor such informal communities?
- What opportunities do emerging digital technologies (e.g. apps) offer for supporting graduate writing?
- How can writing centers and others who support writing on campus help students create informal structures of support that bolster students’ self-efficacy as writers as well as the completion of their advanced graduate writing projects?

The editors encourage interdisciplinary submissions, collaborative submissions, and submissions by scholars of color and scholars with disabilities.

Because this is an open access online journal, we want to take full advantage of the affordances, including the ability to publish a range of genres (e.g. edited scripts, original cartoons, comic strips, photos, artwork, artifacts) and reflective writing. We welcome the empirical research-based or theoretical piece but we also encourage creative depictions of

the lived experience of graduate writing, graduate mentorship, and writing support. As such, submission length is tied to the context or genre. Please inquire with the special issue editors about multimodal submission formats.

Print submissions should be formatted in MLA style.

Deadline for submissions is May 15, 2016.

Submissions should be formatted as Word documents and sent to the special issue editors (shannonmadden@uri.edu & meodice@ou.edu).

Special Issue Timeline:

- May 15, 2016: Full drafts due
- May–June: Anonymous peer review process
- July–August: Authors revise based on peer feedback
- September 15: Final drafts due to special issue editors
- December 2016: Publication of the special issue