

Call for Proposals

The Inaugural Journal-based Mini-conference Sponsored by *The WAC Journal*

Not Just a Number: Student Age in WAC/WID Classrooms

May 9, 2024

Dear Friends & Colleagues,

Over the last few decades, a multitude of learning environments and educational tracks have emerged in the United States education system. There are early scholars programs, advanced placement courses, and dual enrollment. Additionally, we have seen more students returning to the classroom after job shifts, retirement, or needing extra credentials. Presently, many college classrooms have a more diverse student population than ever before.

As instructors, guides, or mentors of emerging writers, this virtual mini-conference calls for us to interrogate how pedagogical instruction must address a classroom full of individuals at different ages. A variety of ages in the classroom presents unique challenges and opportunities, and each non-traditional student faces their own complex experience within the university. What is our role in the education of non-traditional students in terms of age? How can WAC pedagogy best support these students?

Scholars are invited to relate theory and/or experience with practice in their discussions of ways we might transform WAC to serve students of different ages within WAC courses. Students who are not the traditional 18-22 year-old range typically have more responsibilities to navigate outside the classroom, encounter different social and cognitive needs, and must revisit and catch up on academic thresholds. We invite proposals that address broad categories related to age and WAC scholarship, including but not limited to the following:

- **Age and Writing Identity:** How does age shape a student's perception of their writing abilities and identity? How can instructors empower learners of various ages to embrace their unique voices and experiences?
- **Lifelong Learning and Writing:** How does writing instruction contribute to lifelong learning, and how does this process change as individuals age? What role can the composition classroom play in supporting continuous skill development across the lifespan?
- **Socio-cultural Perspectives on Age and Writing:** How do cultural norms and societal attitudes towards age influence writing practices and instruction? What role does age play in intersectional identities, and how can this be navigated in the composition classroom?
- **Age and Teacher-Student Dynamics:** How does the age of the instructor impact the teaching and learning dynamic in the composition classroom? What strategies can be

employed to create inclusive and productive learning environments across generational boundaries?

- **Age and Digital Literacies:** How do generational differences impact digital writing practices? How can educators leverage technology to bridge the gap between different age groups in the composition classroom?
- **Students in Transitional Education Settings:** How can writing composition instruction facilitate smooth transitions for students moving between different educational levels and environments? What strategies or theory promote continuity and growth in writing skills during key transitional phases?
- **Students Who Are Still Minors:** What ethical considerations should be taken into account when teaching writing to underage students? What methods and tools are most effective in engaging adolescent learners in writing composition, considering their cognitive and emotional development?
- **Returning Students and the WAC course:** What unique experiences and perspectives do returning students bring to the composition classroom, and how can these be leveraged to enrich the learning environment? What are the cognitive, emotional, and physical considerations for teaching writing to elderly learners, and how can instructors adapt their approaches accordingly?

We are especially interested in contributions that take creative approaches to WAC, writing to learn, or experiential learning and promote solidarity and inclusion across racial, gendered, class, or age-related identities in a variety of institutional contexts. Additionally, submissions by adult or returning learners that focus on any of these topics are welcome.

We welcome submissions for:

- panels (typically three or four speakers)
- roundtables (typically five to seven speakers)
- individual presentations (which will be combined with other proposals to form a panel)
- teaching demonstrations

We ask presenters to limit themselves to one speaking role in panels, roundtables and teaching demonstrations (excluding service as a chair or respondent to a panel). In addition to a speaking role on a panel, roundtable or teaching demonstration, we also encourage participants to consider participation as a workshop leader and as a presenter of a poster session.

We also ask presenters to consider issues of accessibility as they develop their presentation. Useful information about accessible presentations can be found on the Composing Access site at <https://u.osu.edu/composingaccess/>.

For more information about the conference and the call, please visit [our landing page](#) on Clemson University's Pearce Center website <https://pearce.caah.clemson.edu/outreach/events/mini-conference-in-wac-and-wid/>.

To submit a proposal, please use [this Google Form](#) (<https://forms.gle/SmvZ8VTA3BZgAxFZ6>). All proposals are due by **February 19, 2024**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out in Spring of 2024.