

# WPA-GO SPRING NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2026



WPA-GO, proudly sponsored by the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA), is an organization comprised of graduate students, allies, and mentors who are dedicated to supporting graduate students in their preparation for writing program administration. We seek to strengthen mentoring and networking connections between graduate students and professional WPAs as well as provide opportunities for awards, organizational service, and professional development.

Our Spring 2026 newsletter includes committee updates, an interview with the accessibility committee, exciting professional development and academic milestones, as well as information regarding our annual [Graduate Research Series](#).

## Committee Updates

### Diversity Committee

- Rachael Hathcoat and Stephen Adukpo, Co-Chairs of the Diversity Committee, have begun securing speakers for WPA-GO's annual Speaker Series. This year's theme is "College English in 2026: Disruption and Innovation." Stay tuned for more information about this exciting summer event!

### Accessibility Committee

- Kelsey Hawkins and Hunter Whitt, Co-Chairs of the Accessibility Committee, put together our Disability Studies x Rhet/Comp Bibliography, which highlights and shares scholarship related to disability studies and rhetoric & composition.

### Outreach Committee

- Carina Jiaxing Shi and Helena Mazzarella, Co-Chairs of the Outreach Committee, composed and circulated the call for proposals for WPA-GO's annual Graduate Research Series. Page 5 of this newsletter includes additional information about this unique opportunity.

### Digital Presence Committee

- Nariman Hawily designed WPA-GO's biannual newsletter to help keep members informed of upcoming changes and developments to the organization.
- She is also actively promoting WPA-GO's annual Graduate Research Series on social media.

## An Interview with the Accessibility Committee

Hunter Whitt, Co-Chair of the Accessibility Committee, discusses his work within WPA-GO and his unique experiences navigating academia as a graduate student experiencing disability.

**Nariman:** How would you summarize your responsibilities as Co-Chair of WPA-GO's Accessibility Committee?

**Hunter:** I would say my responsibilities are working with Kelsey (Co-Chair) on meetings and creating things like the coffee talk and the Disability Studies X Rhet/Comp working bibliography. I still feel like am just getting started in the committee but I would say my purpose as Co-Chair is to help push more disability focused ideas and practices like the DS and rhet/comp bibliography and look for new ways to use DS scholarship in writing programs. I also aim to bring community engaging approaches to invite people inside or outside the committee to discuss anything on the level of disability related topics; examples would be expanding into more collaborative work like writing projects or conferences. Something that has impacted me as a disabled instructor/student is reading and adding open discussions about DS literature and see how that then helps navigate ableist barriers in academe.

**Nariman:** How has your work in WPA-GO as a graduate student experiencing disability informed your own research interests and/or professional development?

**Hunter:** My work in WPA-GO as a disabled graduate student has informed my research by thinking more deeply about how personal narratives shape writing programs. Every time I chat with the committee, I am reminded of how disability approaches and positionalities can shape the future in writing programs.

## An Interview with the Accessibility Committee

**Nariman:** I understand that alongside Kelsey, you recently developed a Disability Studies X Rhet/Comp Bibliography. What do you hope people take away from this resource?

**Hunter:** I think one thing that I want people to take away is the important concepts and frameworks of disability studies scholarship and people can apply that to their own works. I still am thinking about how we can expand the conversations to apply the scholarship in our research and in WPA scholarship.

**Nariman:** What kinds of institutional support or resources might benefit those experiencing disability in academia?

**Hunter:** That's a difficult and good question. In my experience, it can be deflating relying on resources in higher ed. While, yes, you can find accommodation support with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), that is not the sole experience of disabled grad students. Therefore, in a grassroot/holistic way, I think what benefits disabled grad student support is finding disabled grad students and scheme up a navigation around academic barriers.

*This interview has been edited for length and clarity.*

The Disabilities Studies X Rhet/Comp Bibliography was created by Kelsey Hawkins and Hunter Whitt to highlight and share scholarship at the intersection of disability studies and rhetoric & composition. These entries represent the research, theories, interventions, and frameworks that disabled graduate student and gWPA contributors have found especially meaningful in their roles as students, scholars, teachers, and activists.

## Call for Proposals Graduate Research Series

WPA-GO's annual Graduate Research Series is an opportunity for graduate students to explore the interdependent relationship between labor and positionality. This year's series will be held virtually on **August 7, 2026**.

We welcome proposals that speak to the visible and hidden labor graduate students undertake and the effects of that labor on one's own positionality.

Review the full CFP [here](#). Proposals are due June 20. If you have any questions, please reach out via email to WPA-GO's Outreach Committee Co-Chairs, Helena Mazzarella (hrm70@pitt.edu) and Carina Jiaxing Shi (jshi58@umd.edu).

We look forward to reviewing your proposals!

## Professional Development Updates

### Publications

- Carina Jiaxing Shi has a book review coming out "Translingual and Transnational Graduate Education in Rhetoric and Composition, edited by Nancy Bou Ayash and Carrie Byars Kilfoil, Utah State University Press, 2023. 230 pp. *Composition Studies*, Spring 26 Issue 54.1. Reviewed by Carina Jiaxing Shi, University of Maryland, College Park." Her other review was published by *LiCS*: Shi, C. J. (2026). "All Are Connected: From Traditional Chinese Medicine to Students' Literacy Practices Reviewing Doing Difference Differently: Chinese International Students' Literacy Practices and Affordances by Zhaozhe Wang." *Literacy in Composition Studies*, 12(2), 53–57.

## Publications

- Kelsey Hawkins has one recent and one forthcoming publication. The former is a co-authored piece titled "Supporting Students' Own Languages in the Writing Classroom: Adaptable Writing Assignments for Enacting Linguistic Justice in Local Contexts" published in the second installment of *Xchanges'* Graduate Symposium. The latter piece, "Beyond Retrofitting: Networking Cripistemologies for Radically Inclusive Writing Assessment," has been accepted for publication in the special issue of the *Journal of Writing Assessment* on disability and neurodivergency in alternative assessment.
- Durga Bhusal has a forthcoming publication titled *'(Un)Silencing Liminal Identities Across Border Dreamscapes: A Duoethnographic Study of Nepali Postgraduates Studying in the United States'* in the Handbook of Beyond the Academic Pipeline for Asian Scholars: The Power of Care, Healing, and Alternative Pathways in Language Education, published by Routledge.
- Nariman Hawily is co-authoring an article for *The Peer Review* that will be published in Fall 2026.

Be on the lookout for these pieces!

THE  
PEER  
REVIEW



**XCHANGES**  
An Interdisciplinary Journal of Technical Communication, Rhetoric, and Writing Across the Curriculum

# Professional Development Updates

## Conference Presentations

- Taylor Dickson presented “Documenting ‘Righteous Rage’ and Joy in Solidarity ‘Post’ Pandemic” at Rhetoric Society of America in May.
- Nariman Hawily presented “Listening and Learning: Understanding Multilingual Students’ Perspectives and Experiences in the Writing Center” at the Online Writing Centers Association (OWCA) conference in April.
- Kelsey Hawkins attended CCCC’s where she co-presented with Khushi Patel, a member of the Accessibility Committee on cultivating cultures of liberatory access in the field’s conference spaces.
- Durga Bhusal attended CCCC’s, where he presented on reimagining first-year composition through digital composing. He also presented at the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) conference, “Bridging Borders: Technical and Professional Communication as a Site of Geographic, Intercultural, and Technological Negotiation,” in El Paso, Texas, in April.
- Carina Jiaxing Shi presented at CCCC’s on “Translingual Realities in Chinese ESL Contexts.” Carina will be presenting at the 2026 Conference on Writing Education Across Borders in Jiangxi, China on the translingual practices of the musician Khalil Fong.

## Academic Milestones

- Kelsey Hawkins has accepted an offer to begin doctoral work at Syracuse University's Composition and Cultural Rhetoric program.
- Durga Bhusal has been accepted for a summer fellowship workshop at the Digital Media and Composition Institute (DMAC) at The Ohio State University.
- Taylor Dickson was awarded the English 201 Outstanding Instructor Award at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.
- Carina Jiaxing Shi received the Ann G. Wylie Dissertation Fellowship for Fall 2026!

## Connect With Us!

Follow us on Instagram [@wpa\\_go](https://www.instagram.com/wpa_go)

Check out our [site](#) to learn more about [WPA-GO](#) and ways to get involved!