

**Call for Proposals: Special Issue of *The Writing Center Journal*
“Research, Voices, and Possible Futures: Writing Centers in the Era of AI”**

Since the swift adoption of generative AI (GenAI) tools like ChatGPT in late 2022, writing centers have been navigating rapid and uneven change. Across colleges and universities, guidance on GenAI often has been left to individual instructors, leaving students, writing center tutors, and administrators to negotiate a wide spectrum of policies and attitudes—from enthusiastic adoption to outright prohibition. At the same time, campus conversations increasingly turn to strategies intended to preserve learning and prevent GenAI plagiarism, including in-class writing, oral exams, restricted writing environments, such as Respondus LockDown Browser, and digital surveillance tools like Turnitin Clarity.

These developments are affecting labor and workloads, tutor-writer relationships, and session attendance (Lindberg & Palma, 2025). At a moment of broader institutional precarity, some writing center stakeholders worry that our “very existence” may be “potentially under threat” as students turn to AI rather than tutors for writing feedback (IWCA AI Task Force, 2025, pp. 7–8, 14; Lindberg & Palma, 2025). That concern exists alongside broader ethical and pedagogical questions surrounding GenAI, from exploitative labor practices and environmental costs to overreliance on AI and the possible effects of cognitive offloading on critical thinking and writing development (Greene & Kupsh, 2026; IWCA AI Task Force, 2025; MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force, 2023; Lindberg & Palma, 2025).

Yet this same disruption also may create new possibilities for writing centers. As institutions reconsider what writing is, how it supports learning, and how it should be taught and assessed, writing pedagogy once again has become the subject of sustained campus conversation. Writing centers occupy a central position in these discussions. Our work sits at the nexus of durable and transferable human practices like communication, collaboration, critical thinking, reflection, and care. The path ahead is neither simple nor settled, but this moment offers writing centers an opportunity to “build social capital in the institution” (Cheatle, 2026, p. 44) and “to lead rather than to retreat. . . . To name what we know in the face of many unknowns” (Johnson & Wynn Perdue, 2026, p. 18).

Writing center scholars and practitioners have responded quickly to these changes. Early voices have explored tutor education, practical approaches to navigating GenAI in consultations, tutor reflections, and student uses and perceptions. The two 2025 GenAI-focused issues of *The Peer Review*, as well as Elisabeth Buck and Joshua Botvin’s (2026) edited collection, *Writing Centers and AI: Generating Early Conversations*, offer important contributions to these conversations. Researchers also have begun examining the complicated relationship between GenAI and linguistic justice, including its potential to support multilingual writers while simultaneously reinforcing standard language ideology (e.g., Botvin, 2026; Dunning & Borges de Oliveira Leal, 2025; Lindberg, 2025; Lundin, 2025).

What remains comparatively scarce is sustained, full-length empirical and theoretical scholarship that can help writing centers understand these changes and make informed choices about how to respond.

This special issue seeks to extend these early conversations by assembling research and practice that can inform responses to GenAI across institutional contexts, professional roles, and orientations—from purposeful adoption to critique, pushback, and resistance. We invite original

theoretical and empirical scholarship as well as shorter praxis-focused contributions exploring generative AI and writing center work.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Reframing or retheorizing writing center pedagogy and expertise in the age of AI
- Defining GenAI literacy and critical AI literacy for writing center contexts
- Presenting empirical research that centers tutors' and students' experiences, practices, and perspectives
- Examining the effects of GenAI on writing centers, including usage, student expectations, language ideologies, labor, and the consequences of alternative assessment practices such as in-class writing and oral examinations
- Investigating writing centers' roles within campus AI initiatives, including student surveys, institutional "pro-AI" initiatives, academic integrity responses, faculty or contingent-labor pushback, and industry partnerships
- Exploring collaborations among writing centers, WAC/WID programs, first-year writing programs, ESL/EFL programs, libraries, teaching and learning centers, and other campus partners
- Sharing pedagogical approaches for emerging consultation needs—for example, working with students who want help making AI-assisted writing "sound human," supporting writers who want to integrate GenAI purposefully, or helping writers reduce their reliance on GenAI when that reliance may interfere with learning

Rather than presume a single future for writing centers, we hope this special issue will foster a global disciplinary conversation about the choices now before us: what we want to preserve, what we may need to reconsider, where resistance is warranted, and where new practices may expand our work. Together, these contributions can help articulate the continuing centrality of writing centers as "infrastructural hubs of transfer" (Nowacek, Leonard, & Rounsaville, 2024, p. 242) amid technological and pedagogical disruption and (r)evolution.

Submission Types and Timeline

The issue will include approximately **6–8 long-form articles** of 6,000–8,000 words, including references, as well as **1–2 short-form "Matters of Praxis" pieces** of 2,000–4,000 words, including references, that focus on specific pedagogical approaches or practices.

Please submit a **300–500-word proposal by October 30, 2026**, to wjgenaispecialissue@gmail.com. Proposals and manuscripts should follow *The Writing Center Journal's* guidelines for authors.

To support timely publication of the special issue, we anticipate the following schedule:

- **October 30, 2026:** Proposals due (300–500 words)
- **November 15, 2026:** Proposal decisions and invitations to submit full manuscripts
- **January 30, 2027:** Full manuscripts due
- **February–July 2027:** Review and revision
- **August 1, 2027:** Final manuscripts due to editors
- **December 2027:** Anticipated publication

Questions about the special issue may be directed to wjgenaispecialissue@gmail.com.

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