

NEWCA @ 25: Revisit, Reflect, Renew

University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT

Saturday, April 4, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm and Sunday, April 5, 8:30 am to 11:00 am

Proposals due by December 31, 2008

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Harvey Kail

Twenty-five years ago, Dr. Harvey Kail gave the keynote at the very first NEWCA meeting which was held at the University of Hartford. We are happy to announce that he will return to West Hartford to launch us into the next twenty-five years. Professor of English and Writing Center Coordinator at the University of Maine, Orono, Harvey Kail has been an active member of the writing center community for over thirty years, continuing to explore peer tutoring, collaborative learning, and theories of composition. His current scholarship is both forward looking and retrospective, as his recent publications include exploration into the global development of writing centers, particularly in Europe, as well as historical investigation into peer tutoring manuals.

Conference Theme: NEWCA @ 25: Revisit, Reflect, Renew



During this, our silver anniversary, we are calling for proposals that explore writing center histories, present(s) and futures. Remaking the well-known cultural symbol ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle,’ the theme of the 2009 conference is “NEWCA at 25: Revisit, Reflect, Renew.” The theme of this year’s conference evokes our historical roots and also looks to the enduring and new questions and goals in writing center work today.

A glance at the program from the first NEWCA conference in 1985 reveals themes that are familiar to us today, themes such as tutor training, finding funding, working with ESL writers, and the place of technology in the writing center. These themes are echoed in recent NEWCA conference programs and have been suggested on recent conference evaluations as themes that participants wanted to see offered in future conferences. So what *has* changed over the past 25 years? In what ways do we enact or reinvent the practices of our predecessors? How can we learn more about inherited practices by inquiring about our local writing center’s history? And what actions can we take now to shape the course of future writing center work?

The twenty-fifth year benchmark provides us with an opportunity to revisit, reflect, and renew—to consider the dynamic nature of writing center work as well as the importance of knowing, sharing and learning from our histories.

We invite proposals for workshops, roundtable discussions and panel presentations that investigate questions such as:

Revisit

- What writing center practices, theories, and research have survived the test of time? What can we learn from an exploration of our writing center and institutional histories?
- What assumptions (i.e., about students, writing, tutoring, the learning and teaching of writing) do we need to revisit?
- What enduring issues or conversations do we revisit again and again?
- How do our centers encourage and work with students who revisit the writing center?
- How are writing centers externally revised and relocated?
- How does history repeat itself in the writing center or, what can we learn by revisiting our own local histories and reviewing our writing center artifacts?
- How has NEWCA changed? What needs has NEWCA met before and how might the organization grow or meet more needs in the future?

Reflect

- What do we need to look at, alter, re-see, re-envision?
- How has the changing landscape of education and institutional politics affected writing centers?
- How has writing center practice, research, and theory evolved and to what end?
- How has the language used to describe writing centers and writing center work evolved?
- How have we reinvented ourselves – in terms of technology, student body, identity within the institution, professional identity?
- How have our ideas of writing centers changed (e.g., high schools, online writing centers, satellite writing centers, etc.)?
- How have changes in our students changed our thinking about writing centers?
- What steps can we take now to record and preserve our current practices for future writing center staffs, administrators and researchers?

Renew

- How do we reaffirm our legacy of commitment to all writers?
- How can writing centers not only continue to survive, but thrive?
- What are our renewable resources in writing center work (literally and figuratively)?
- How do we renew our energy in the writing center—re-center our work, recommit to our missions, revitalize our communities?
- How can tutors renew and reinvigorate writers' interests?
- How do we re-energize our writing center staffs through training and professional development opportunities?
- How is technology changing writing and the ways that we conduct tutoring sessions?

This year we would like to continue to reach out to community college and high school writing centers in order to include more voices and perspectives in our ongoing discussion. We also highly encourage tutors and first-time presenters to send in proposals. We welcome presentations of original scholarship and research in formats that foster active dialogue with conference participants. Historically, successful presentations are *dynamic exchanges* between audience members comprised of peer tutors, graduate students and other writing center professionals and faculty. And, as a result of feedback from

last year's conference, we would like to encourage proposals for the facilitation of roundtable discussions. *Your proposed workshop, roundtable or panel should actively involve the audience.*

Proposal Guidelines

Please prepare a 250- to 500-word proposal and a 75-word abstract for a 20-minute individual presentation or a 75-minute workshop, roundtable, or panel.

Please include the following information in your proposal:

- Proposer's name, position (i.e., tutor, director, etc), institution, institutional or home address, telephone number, and email address
- Presenters' names with title and contact information, as above
- Title of presentation, a one-page description of presentation, and a 75-word abstract for inclusion in the conference program
- Type of session (i.e., panel presentation, roundtable discussion, workshop presentation)
- Specific audiovisual and technical requests (*NOTE: Presenters should plan to bring their own laptop computers*)

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of *relevance* to the conference theme and *application* to a broad audience of writing center tutors and administrators. Submissions will also be reviewed on the basis of *originality* (novel perspectives, approaches, and methods), *interactivity* (audience participation vs. oral delivery of an essay), and *clarity*.

Proposal Submission

Submit your proposal by **December 31, 2008**, electronically to the chair of the NEWCA Proposal Reading Committee, John Hall, at johnhall@bu.edu. You may submit your proposal as an MS Word attachment or included in the body of the email. For more information about submitting proposals, please contact John Hall via the above email address or call him at 617-353-6632.

Sharing our Histories at NEWCA 2009

We will also provide resources for people interested in archiving these materials at their home institutions or with a centralized archive such as the Writing Center Archive at the University of Louisville or the National Archive for Composition and Rhetoric at the University of Rhode Island.

For More Information

For other questions related to the conference, email the NEWCA chair, Katherine Tirabassi, at ktirabassi@yahoo.com or call her at 603-358-2924.

For more information about the conference, registration, or scholarship opportunities, visit the NEWCA website at <http://www.newca-conference.com>.

For more information about the NEWCA organization, events and online discussions, visit our blog at <http://newca.wordpress.com/>

We hope to see you at NEWCA 2009!