

WSU Writing Center STATEMENT of ANTIRACIST PRACTICE & COMMITMENT

As a participant of an educational system founded upon and embedded in racialized systems of advantage, the Writing Center’s unique positioning as a student service demands that we strive to meet the educational needs as well as the cultural needs of all our students in order to combat these inherited systems of advantage. This statement is not a guarantee of perfection, but rather a commitment to an enduring and tireless self-education on matters of race and culture as they relate to language and the various writing contexts present and necessary within the Writing Center.

What We Know

- Racism pervades systems, structures, rules, languages, behaviors and expectations, but it masquerades as normal or neutral.
- Promoting one pattern of language as the ‘default’—especially in academia—perpetuates discriminatory structures, including racism.
- Insisting academic English is ‘default’ silences the identities of those who express themselves in other ways.
- Variety of expression is a benefit, not a detriment.
- Students are regularly faced with choices about linguistic and rhetorical assimilation.
- Collaborative learning environments challenge power structures that marginalize voices and dictate knowledge.
- As a participant of the university system, the Writing Center is complicit in systems of racism yet also capable of grassroots disruption.
- Learning to write and committing to antiracist practices are complex yet necessary lifelong processes.

What We Do

- We work with any student from any class on any paper at any point in the writing process.
- We encourage students to take ownership of their own writing when and where they feel comfortable, and to approach their assumptions critically and analytically.
- We affirm the value of all patterns of language use
- We invite open and honest discussion of the racialized power structures and expectations of the university.
- We strategize with writers as they make rhetorical decisions to achieve their needs and goals, and uphold their voice and identity.
- We try to provide a bias-free environment to explore and express ideas.
- We discuss strategies to navigate our predominantly white academic institution’s expectations.
- We strive to examine our own biases.
- We pursue professional training and education related to the intersections of identity, race, culture, and writing.

Who We Are

We are a group of undergraduate or recently graduated students representing a wide range of disciplines. As a program, we strive to be as culturally, linguistically, and academically diverse as possible. As fellow students, we understand the responsibilities and concerns of student life. We admit to our role within the discriminatory systems of academia not just as a writing center, but as individuals. As such, we are committed to maintaining a brave space where peers collaborate, learn, survive, and pursue their goals.