



# SWCA

Southeastern Writing Center Association



## Call for Proposals

### 2023 Southeastern Writing Center Association Conference

#### *Navigating the Rivers of Change*

**Location:** Memphis, TN (at the Guesthouse at Graceland)  
**Dates:** February 9-11, 2023  
**Host Institution:** Christian Brothers University  
**Host:** Clayann Gilliam Panetta, ([cpanetta@cbu.edu](mailto:cpanetta@cbu.edu))  
Christian Brothers University

At the [SWCA 2023 conference](#) we invite you to explore ways writing centers are places of advocacy and renewal, places that navigate opportunities to build bridges toward important changes and innovations at our institutions. As you think about how your writing center fits into these descriptors, we encourage you to use our host city, Memphis, TN, as inspiration for your [proposals](#).

If you listen to the beats on Beale, you may hear a Blues rendition, a rockabilly rendering, or a homage to Three 6 Mafia. When you watch the river flow underneath the M bridge, you will see a welcoming and beckoning to Memphis to come sit a spell and enjoy some catfish and BBQ. These scenes of Memphis reveal and confirm a certain definition of the place we call home. But that's not all Memphis is.

If you listen and look more closely, aligning your senses to other movements and sounds around this city, you can hear another beat and observe another flow ever present in Memphis. These other Memphis offerings harness meaning and welcome complexity. Themes of action, restoration, and advocacy—activities that recognize Memphis' marked history and add opportunity to embrace change and inclusion—are sprinkled throughout our city. Just as the river is ever changing, constantly bringing us a new narrative, Memphis embraces change and the hard work that comes from making change happen. When you are here, notice the rhythm of

movement that exudes when you look and listen to stories of survival, stories that look toward the future. Notice the ideas that are ever transforming our city. See how we navigate our rivers of change.

Our writing centers, too, are places always searching for ways to embrace necessary change, ever evolving towards renewal and advocacy for individual students. We have grown beyond Stephen North's (1984) ideas and evolved to places with inclusivity statements, safe zones, and awareness of multiple rhetorics across both cultures and disciplines. We have reached out from our English-Department-centric focus to navigate across campus, advocating for students—no matter their disciplines, learning needs, or communicative modalities. At the same time, we encourage our staffs to be sensitive to neurodiversity and the mental wellness of students who enter our space. Most recently, we have shifted strategies, modalities, and pedagogies to accommodate the frustrations and opportunities handed to us throughout the pandemic.

These actions often start in bridging connections with those unfamiliar or unable to move past an antiquated view of what we do in writing centers. Much like the river, our goals can meander, skirting boulders that get in the way of good work; changing directions inside of one moment is not altogether unusual. In the end, our navigational choices happen because we are advocates for students.

By applying writing center theory and using Memphis as inspiration, our call for proposals invites attendees to explore our work of advocacy, our strides toward renewal, and ways we navigate to make advocacy and renewal possible in the first place.

As you ponder these ideas, consider these questions and themes:

### *Making Purposeful Change*

- How have your writing center rhythms changed over time? To what end?
- When do you know your current practices need updating?
- What has necessitated your writing center changes?
- What are the effects of particular changes?
- What are your strategies for installing updates?
- What are the effects of your changes on your intended audiences?
- How do changes affect others outside your dedicated writing center space?
- How does change affect staff training?
- How do you promote or advertise change?
- Is there a better time for change than another?
- How did your writing center change its rhythms in response to the pandemic?
- What continued pandemic challenges affect purposeful change?

### *Establishing Advocacy*

- How does your writing center advocate for students?
- How does your writing center navigate through changes for students?
- When is navigation easy?
- When is navigation hard?

- When are our navigational points hard to maintain?
- What did the pandemic teach us about our navigational choices?
- How do you participate in activism?
- How do you start activism?
- How do you establish peace?
- How do you maintain justice?
- What did the pandemic teach us about advocacy?

### **Presentation Formats**

We invite proposals for sessions in the following formats:

- individual presentations (10 minutes)
- panels (50 minutes)
- workshops (50 minutes)
- roundtables (50 minutes)
- ignite presentations (5 minutes)
- poster presentations

### **Submit your proposal:**

<https://southeasternwritingcenter.wildapricot.org/proposal-submission>

### **Important Dates & Deadlines**

October 25, 2022:	Proposals due
November 15, 2022:	Applications for scholarships due
February 9-11, 2023:	Conference