



Praxis: A Writing Center Journal (2003-2011)

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From the Editors: Expanding Borders

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Some of the most innovative writing center work is happening in secondary school and community writing centers. The *Praxis* Editorial Board reflects.

This issue of *Praxis* pairs what may at first appear to be two very disparate areas of writing center practice: secondary school and community writing centers. The differences between them are clear: secondary school writing centers serve a fixed population of young writers in an academic setting and they maintain the stability and instability that comes from academic funding; community writing centers, on the other hand, serve writers who bring a wide range of skill levels, ages, and writing projects, and they rely upon some combination of academic, grant, government, and charity funding. What they have in common may seem less evident at first, but is in fact what makes both dynamic and fruitful areas for inquiry. Because writing center scholarship has tended to emphasize writing centers located in institutions of higher education, community and secondary writing centers have not received the attention they deserve. Yet these are the very places where writing centers are growing—and innovating—fastest. In our efforts to remain on the cusp of new scholarship, *Praxis* is excited at the opportunity to explore these sites further.

While the methods and means of practice may differ among these writing centers and programs, they do tend to share similar philosophies and goals, especially concerning the advancement of social equity, service-learning, and self-enrichment that is taking place both inside and outside the academy, among younger students and our communities' citizens. Common to all these centers and programs is a conscious movement towards inclusion, access, and collaboration—a "reaching out," as contributor Jennifer Cooper puts it, that is the practical step towards providing more writers opportunities for expression and the public more opportunities for social and civic engagement.

You may notice some changes in *Praxis*' format. In the past, all articles in each issue related to a main theme, and the *Praxis* staff penned a "focus" article framing that theme. In an effort to bring more expert voices to the fore, the *Praxis* editorial board will now select a group of "focus" articles that lend different perspectives to the issue's theme. In this issue, whether it is through exchanging letters with inner city pen pals as Frankie Condon discusses in her article or instilling confidence in secondary school writers as Pamela Childers, Dawn Fels, and Jeanette Jordan discuss in theirs, there is at the center of each focus article an outreach-oriented core. Jennifer Cooper and Peggy Silva continue in this direction in their articles on providing university tutoring services for secondary school ESL students and establishing a secondary school center, respectively. And it is from these centers' philosophies and practices that other, more traditional or familiarly located writing centers might also expand their conceptions of the kind of work we do—and for whom—when we

talk about and teach writing.

The second major change in format is that Praxis is now opening the training, consulting, and columns sections for submissions of non-theme related pieces. In the first year of our existence, we regretted not being able to find a place for excellent articles that fell outside the theme. By grouping the theme-related articles in the focus section, we now have the opportunity to include articles such as Jessica Clark's piece on improving the institutional status of a writing center, Ginger Jurecka's reflection on writing centers' interactions with intellectual property debates, Joseph Hill's article on existentialism and the writing center, and Jared Bezet and Jessica Murray's considerations of contact zone theory and ESL consultations. We are pleased to continue our regular featured center and consultant spotlight. In this issue you will be introduced to the Salt Lake City Community Writing Center and Marilyn Little from the College of Lake County.

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Praxis is a project of the [Undergraduate Writing Center](#) at the University of Texas at Austin

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