# multimodality and welcoming diverse writers online: developing a consulting philosophy

## introduction (Slides 1-3)

### Title slide (slide 2)

* Multimodality and welcoming diverse writers online: Developing a consulting philosophy
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* April 13, 2023
* Our materials are available at aub.ie/owca or you can scan the QR code.

### Agenda (slide 3)

* Each presenter will:
  + Reflect on how writing consulting philosophy statements prepared us to  
    tutor diverse learners online
  + Discuss how we have centered diversity, equity, & inclusion in our work
* Audience members will:
  + Reflect on core values and plan a philosophy statement
  + Engage in writing and discussion activities

## Multimodality and DEI at University Writing (Slides 4-12)

### philosophy statement excerpt (Slide 5)

"As a white, queer writing program administrator, I maintain awareness of my identities to understand how they shape my work. Through a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, I work to create a welcoming working and learning environment for staff and students with diverse backgrounds and identities. By fostering community-building and critical conversations amongst our staff, I seek to develop spaces where our employees and students feel a sense of belonging and recognize that they are valued and appreciated."

### Our context (Slide 6)

* Auburn University (AU): public, land-grant, R-1 university (30,000+ students); Alabama; PWI; 40% legacy students
* University Writing (UW): WAC/WID writing support unit
  + Houses a number of programs, especially the ePortfolio Project and the Miller Writing Center (MWC)

### ePortfolios & the MWC (slide 7)

* ePortfolio Project
  + AU's 2012-2022 QEP for accreditation with SACSCOC
  + ePortfolios are integrated into academic programs across campus and supported by the MWC
* MWC
  + Offers synchronous (F2F & online) and asynchronous tutoring
  + Peer consultants learn about multimodality and develop their own ePortfolios as part of professional development

### Multimodality (Slide 8)

* Connects to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by shifting writers' concepts of identity and meaning-making (Kress,2008; Nash, 2018)
  + Identity: a reflective model can encourage students to explore how their identities shape their writing (Leigh, 2012; Schwartz, 2014)
  + Meaning-making: writing is a social practice, and writers can write toward a new, more equitable future (Wargo, 2017; Wargo, 2018)

### Multimodality and DEI (Slide 9)

* Backgrounds and identities are assets to writing, tutoring, and learning (Archer, 2017)
* Connections between writing and negotiations of power can be explored (Boyd, 2017; Knobel & Lankshear, 2014)
* Home literacies are welcomed (Nash, 2018)
* Expanded concepts of academic writing can welcome linguistic diversity

### Online, (A)synchronous tutoring (Slide 10)

* Inherently multimodal
* Poses challenges to consultants in:
  + Developing the rapport that encourages clients to ask meaningful questions (Worm, 2020)
  + Recognizing opportunities to utilize practices grounded in DEI
* Philosophy statements invite reflection on these challenges

### Philosophy statements (Slide 11)

* A required part of consultants' ePortfolios
* Asks consultants to reflect on their backgrounds and identities, identify their core values, and determine how to enact their values within consultations (F2F and online)
* Encourages consultants to center DEI and engage in multimodal composition

### UW’s Vision Statement (slide 12)

* Philosophy statements scaffolded toward collaborative development of a program mission statement:
  + "University Writing's vision is to empower the Auburn community through diverse, equitable, and inclusive writing and instructional support" (University Writing, 2022)

## Serving LGBTQ+ Writers in Changing Spaces (Slides 13-18)

### Philosophy statement excerpt (slide 14)

I am a white, cishet graduate student and educator.

“Teaching and consulting involve working with writers with a range of identities in spaces that will continue to change form. It is my goal to center both the safety and growth of my students, regardless of identity or space. Because I cannot and do not wish to fully control the conversations that happen in the spaces I educate in, I believe it is my responsibility to encourage agreements and expectations for conversations, whether they be online, in-person, or elsewhere.”

### Brave/safe spaces (slide 15)

* Brave spaces promote collaboratively setting expectations and rules  
  for conversations instead of avoiding difficult topics altogether (Arao  
  & Clemens, 2013).
* Safe spaces aim to provide protection but can lead to people  
  viewing safety as synonymous with comfort (Arao & Clemens, 2013).
* Writing center spaces avoiding discussion of identity erases a part  
  of students’ identities, which affects how consultants and clients  
  engage with the writing (Pittendrigh & Camarillo, 2017).

### Affinity Group (slide 16)

* Last semester I participated in one of University Writing’s first  
  affinity groups: LGBTQ+ Allies.
* I joined the group to further develop my teaching philosophy  
  and pedagogical skills in both writing center and ELA classroom  
  spaces.
* Both environments center writing and identity.

### ONLINE “SPACES” (Slide 17)

* Online appointments complicate what counts as a “space.”
* Online appointments change how consultants and  
  clients establish a connection (Worm, 2020).
* A change in space doesn’t have to mean a change in content.
* Text chat offers a unique-to-online method for establishing the  
  expectations for conversation.

### Welcoming lgbtq+ clients online

“Hey \_\_\_\_, I hope you are doing well. I want to preface our appointment by acknowledging that writing is a very personal thing and connects directly to the writer’s identity. My goal today is to aid you along your writing journey, and I understand that some topics may be hard to discuss. While I encourage discussion to foster growth, I am only one part of our appointment today. So, if you have any expectations you would  
like to set for our conversation, please share them!”

## Nontraditional Learner Support (Slides 19-24)

### philosophy statement excerpt (Slide 20)

"The experience of writing can be trying and discouraging, and the act of sharing that writing can reveal a sense of vulnerability. Thus, gaining the trust of my clients is incredibly important to me, and I take time to address progress, provide possible solutions, and celebrate successes to build that trust. As an employee, PhD student, and soon-to-be mother, I understand potentially competing identities, and I hope to build an environment of acceptance and validation from the very beginning."

### Nontraditional students (Slide 21)

Definition can be based off age but mostly:

* Enrollment patterns: Anything different than the "typical" immediate enrollment into college after high school
* Financial/family: full time employment, multiple dependents, family obligations or constraints
* HS graduation status: GED or completion certificate recipients

(National Center for Education Statistics)

### Adult learners in the mwc (SLIDE 22)

* Clients come in with years of prior or current workforce experience and family responsibilities
* These experiences have helped me shape my philosophy and better understand how I can approach and better assist this identity

### ONLINE INTRICACIES (SLIDE 23)

* Online as a modality option offers opportunity and flexibility (Barron et al., 2023)
* Online writing center tools offer quick and efficient ways for students to get the most out of their sessions
* Some may not fully understand the extent of technological capabilities and opportunities that come with their education and need additional assistance (Gos, 2015; Wisniewski et al., 2020)

### WELCOMING NONTRADITIONAL CLIENTS ONLINE (SLIDE 24)

**During meeting:**

* Consider organizing discussion in a "goal-oriented" way
* Offer opportunities for cognitive reframing (Ackerman, 2018)
* Briefly cover the range of online tools that can be used; refer back to tools during the discussion

**After meeting:**

* Include a bulleted list or organize follow-up form to encourage self-efficacy moving forward

## Multimodal WC for Multilingual Writers (Slides 25-30)

### philosophy statement excerpt (Slide 26)

"As an international graduate student and multilingual writer, I found that if there is a welcoming and safe environment, I would be more willing to share my ideas. I want to provide such a place for diverse students. So, whenever I have appointments, I adjust my mood to be positive because it is easy for people to feel frustrated, upset, and desperate. The writing center could be a place to ease their writing difficulties with both academic and psychological support."

### Needs of Multilingual Writers (SLide 27)

* Language level
  + They care about ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ in language use: grammar (Nakamaru, 2010)
    - Word choices and sentence patterns
  + Writing skills
    - Structure/organization and format
* Communication
  + Practice speaking skills in English
    - Conversation is regarded as one of the best ways to learn another language (Rafoth, 2015)
  + Learn communication skills through negotiated interaction
    - Listen to understand intonational cues and recognize humor, sarcasm, and other expressions (Rafoth, 2015)

### Multimodal WC & Multilingual Writers (SLide 28)

* Advantages of multimodal online WC
  + Provide a coordinated system and more choices (Barron et al., 2023)
    - Offline: scheduled & drop-in appointments
    - Online: synchronous & asynchronous
* Ease multilingual writers' nerves with “space and time”
  + Comfortable space
  + Time flexibility

### Strategies for Creating a “Harbor” (SLide 29)

* Send a greeting text (welcome linguistic diversity)

"Hi, dear \_\_\_\_\_. This is Huan. Welcome to the Miller Writing Center (MWC). Nice to meet you. The MWC values perspectives from individuals and the linguistic diversity of the world. How may I help you in this appointment?"

* Provide one-minute video instructions on how to use the multimodal WC functions with different languages
* Suggest communication tools
  + Video/Voice talking/Text

### Support from WC (slide 30)

* Peer Consultants
  + Learn about multilingual learners through MWC pre-semester TESOL training curriculum
  + Offer mini-lessons on world cultures and languages
* Administrators
  + Keep updating the multimodality of WC
  + Guide PCs to have their consulting philosophy

## Philosophy Statement Activity (Slides 31-34)

### REFLECT ON CORE VALUES (SLIDE 32)

* **Katharine:** justice, kindness, meaningful work
* **Jonah:** empathy, growth, empowerment, humor
* **Clare:** trust, validation, positivity
* **Huan:** compassion, safety, support
* Visit <https://aub.ie/values> or scan the QR code to enter your values

### REFLECTIVE WRITING (SLIDE 33)

1. How do your identities shape the core values you identified?
2. What do you intend consulting to do for your clients? For yourself?

Adapted from Miron (2023)

### DISCUSSION (SLIDE 34)

1. How do you enact your core values and intentions as a peer consultant or administrator?
2. How do you enact your core values in each modality?

## Q & A (Slides 35-36)

### Questions for discussion (slide 36)

1. Do you utilize philosophy statements in your context? How do these shape how you serve diverse writers?
2. How has the modality of your writing center changed? How is it changing?
3. How has your approach to consulting changed with asynchronous interactions in the writing center?