

# SSWCA 2022

## Revolutionary Partnerships

A Conference for Peer Tutors, Program Directors, and School Administrators

March 2022

Northeastern University - Boston, MA

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### Call For Proposals

The Secondary School Writing Centers Association is thrilled to announce our tenth annual conference for secondary school writing and peer tutoring centers, directors, and administrators. We are thrilled to return to an in-person conference format and to partner with Northeastern University, 826 Boston, and the National Writing Project. Building on the success of our previous conferences and in keeping with our core values of student leadership and a peer learning model, we invite **tutors**— individuals, pairs, or small groups—to propose presentations for our upcoming conference. In keeping with our goal of supporting the needs of and building community among secondary school writing and peer tutoring centers nationwide, we also invite **directors and administrators** to propose presentations that address the work done in leadership roles. Conference presentations are intended to examine tutoring practices, to draw upon writing and peer tutoring center research and theory, and to discuss innovative solutions. Our conference aims to build scholarship in the field and promote effective practice.

We invite you to consider the many connotations of the words in this year's conference theme: **Revolutionary Partnerships**. As schools and tutoring centers across the country have been affected by COVID-19, we have observed courageous movements forward, improved and fundamentally different approaches, and a surge in new and renewed alliances--between SSWCA and other organizations and institutions, between centers, between tutors and directors, and between tutors and clients. We challenge you to reflect on how your center has been revolutionized in and through new connections of all kinds. We hope that you will consider revolutions and collaborations on both large and small scales -- pandemic-related or not -- that created epiphanies and innovations for your center or for you as an individual learner. The conference is an opportunity to share the ways you have brainstormed, researched, and implemented ideas that revolutionized your center, your methodologies, your energy, and your client experiences. How have you challenged the status quo? How have you created rapport, solidarity, and mutual exchanges? Given these scenarios, **in what ways can you offer ideas, insights, or strategies that show how your center, school, or community has generated and/or benefitted from *Revolutionary Partnerships***? (See below for guiding questions to help build your proposal.)

We invite novice and experienced tutors (middle school, high school, and higher-ed), directors, and administrators to submit proposals to present during SSWCA 2022. No matter the topic, your proposal should be grounded in sound research and theory\*, rather than just your experience. (See note.) The most successful presentations are interactive (rather than lecture), ask participants to

engage, and include creative visual components. Consider conferences or presentations you have experienced. What engages you as an audience member? Include those types of engagement in your presentation. Please make sure your presentation will fit within the allocated time frame. (See below for time frames allowed.)

**Please submit your proposal no later than midnight EST on Friday, November 5, 2021.**

## Conference Session Formats

The majority of presentations will take place in-person. However, to provide more equitable access for our members who cannot travel, a limited number of presentations will be offered via Zoom in the days prior to the conference.

This year's in-person conference presentation formats include:

1. **Workshop** (45 minutes; 2-4 presenters): Session leaders guide participants through examining an essential question or a challenge many centers may face in an interactive workshop-style format. Successful workshops involve activities wherein participants create a plan or a product to bring back to and implement in their center.
2. **Insight Presentation** (20 minutes; 1-2 presenters): One individual or a pair of presenters deliver(s) a 20-minute presentation that offers a clear insight on a specific topic or offers an approach to addressing a question or challenge encountered by your center. Presentations will be paired with another presentation with a similar focus to offer audience members varying viewpoints on a topic as part of a longer, 45-minute session.
3. **Snapshot Session (for those who have tutored in a middle school - current 7th-9th graders only)** (10 minutes; 1-2 presenters only): One individual or a pair of presenters share(s) strategies or information about a specific topic related to middle school writing centers for 10 minutes as part of a longer, 45-minute session designed specifically for an audience of middle school tutors and directors. Just as with an Insight Presentation, this presentation should offer a clear perspective on a specific topic or offer an approach to addressing a question or challenge encountered by your center.
4. **Panel Presentation** (45 minutes; 2-4 presenters): A group of presenters collaborates to offer various perspectives on the same general topic or different approaches to addressing a question or challenge. Successful panels engage the audience in collaborative exercises and provide time for small-group and whole-group discussions at various points throughout the presentation. You are encouraged to collaborate with tutors or colleagues from other schools!
5. **Zoom Presentation** (30-45 minutes; 1-3 presenters): An individual or group of presenters synchronously offers various perspectives on the same general topic or different approaches to addressing a question or challenge. Successful presentations engage the audience in

collaborative exercises and may provide time for whole-group discussions at various points throughout the presentation. You are encouraged to collaborate with tutors or colleagues from other schools!

- a. The SSWCA board will determine the top few presentations by examining interest and novelty of the topic, level of engagement, and relevance to the conference theme.

[\(Example of Zoom proposal from 2021 revised for 2022 format\)](#)

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

### ★ For Workshop, Insight, Panel, and Zoom Presentations:

- A title that clearly reflects the content of your presentation
- The format your presentation will take (Workshop, Insight, Panel, or Zoom)
- The general topic of your presentation
- A summary of the content of your presentation (200 words)
- A description of the research\* upon which your presentation is based and of how you will incorporate the research into your presentation. (100-200 words)
- A detailed outline of how time will be allocated in your presentation
- An abstract for the conference program (50 words)

### ★ For Snapshot Sessions (for those who have tutored in a middle school - current 7th-9th graders only):

- A title that clearly reflects the content of your presentation
- The format your presentation will take (Snapshot)
- The general topic of your presentation
- A description of the content of your presentation. What information will you share? What research or experiences is your presentation based on? (100 words)
- A clear outline of what how time will be allocated in your presentation
- An abstract to appear in the conference program (50 words)

## Guiding Questions

**NOTE:** You are encouraged, but not required, to include the conference theme of *Revolutionary Partnerships* in your proposal.

Consider the many connotations of the words *revolutionary* and *partnership* and how they relate to peer tutoring and writing center work:

### Revolutionary

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| → Progress      | → Transform  |
| → Reform        | → Regenerate |
| → Invention     | → Convert    |
| → Life-changing | → Excitement |
| → Action        | → Innovation |

## **Partnership**

- Alliance
- Collaboration
- Cooperation
- Connection
- Reciprocity
- Rapport
- Inclusion / Equity
- Diversity
- Philanthropy
- Compassion

**When choosing a focus, we invite you to consider the following questions and have designated several for specific groups; however, these designations and prompts are not limiting. You are welcome to propose ideas beyond what is suggested below.**

## **Revolutionary**

- What problems have occurred in/with your center? How have you had to revolutionize your methods to solve these problems? (These problems do not need to be centered around the pandemic.)
- What do you do when your center experiences an internal or external revolt? What plans do you have in place to handle the expected or unexpected divisions that arise? How does having a plan impact the tutors, clients, and center?
- Revolutions are often associated with strong leadership. Who are your leaders, and how do you train them to lead, especially during a rapid change? How do you foster leadership qualities among tutors and allow for new leaders to emerge?
- Who are your go-to supports in a sweeping transformation? How do you develop and sustain those relationships?
- What resources or guiding principles do you turn to in order to revolutionize your methods? Your center? Your approach to tutoring? How often do you review/retrain using those resources?
- All centers have a mission or vision. How was that created? How is that mission being revolutionized as a result of change?
- (For directors) How does the work you are doing speak to the work others are doing in the larger field of writing center practice and theory to regenerate energy and enthusiasm for the vocation?
- (For directors) What training do you offer to bring awareness to clients who are struggling through a mental health crisis? What techniques can tutors use to support clients facing these challenges? How can our approaches to mental illness be transformed?
- (For university tutors) What boundaries or divisions did you encounter as you transitioned to college life/tutoring, and how did/are you creating solutions?
- (For university tutors/directors) What revolutionary ideas arise at the university writing center and how are those situations transformational?

## **Partnerships**

- How is the tutoring process one of partnership? How does a tutor create an alliance in this context?

- How do leaders communicate with each other, especially in ways that are mutually beneficial?
- What new resources have been created or are being created through collaboration? How do you evaluate those new resources to see if they fit your needs?
- As you think about your next steps (graduating, opening a new writing center, transitioning to online, publishing, etc.), how do the partnerships and relationships you experience create new meaning for how you see yourself in the writing center world? What new alliances do you want to see happening/being discussed?
- How do you create a welcoming atmosphere for and with clients so they feel like equal partners during sessions?
- How do you create effective outreach strategies and materials to include all students?
- How do you partner to create trust between tutors and/or trust between a tutor and a client, especially a reticent or resistant client?
- How can we work together to create and foster equity in our centers?
- How do you ensure that all members of your center have the ability to contribute to the meaningful work of tutoring and writing?
- (For directors) How does your center support the emotional needs of tutors or clients through shared interests and efforts? How do you help create rapport and empathy between clients and tutors?
- (For directors) As a director, there are many stakeholders to appease. How do you partner with administrators, PTAs, funding sources, etc. to understand the need for mutual benefit and exchange?
- (For directors) How do you create a center where the tutor population reflects the student population?
- (For directors) Who should be the partners in a center? What is the role a director should play, tutor leaders should play, and the tutoring community should play when generating rules, procedures, etc.?
- (For university tutors) What partnerships did you find to help when you felt isolated or separated? (people, resources, strategies, etc.)
- (For university tutors) How did you partner with your classmates, professors, and the writing center staff? How did this compare to your relationship-building in the high school writing center?

## Proposal Submission Guidelines & Instructions

**AVAILABLE RESOURCES:** For more information about how to write a proposal, to learn more about how to incorporate research into your proposal, to review our proposal evaluation rubric, and to see examples of effective proposals from past years, visit [sswca.org](http://sswca.org)

**DEADLINE:** Please submit your proposal no later than midnight EST on Friday, November 5, 2021. We will notify you of the status of your proposal via the email address you provide by

Monday, December 13, 2021. You will be asked to confirm your acceptance by officially registering for SSWCA 2022 by Friday, January 28, 2022.

**IMPORTANT:**

- **Submitting a proposal is an acknowledgement that you are willing and able to present in person in Boston and that anyone under 18 years old has permission from a parent/guardian to participate.**
- **In order to ensure a fair and unbiased proposal review process, please omit any identifying information (names of presenters, schools, and/or centers) from your proposal.**

**TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL:**

- **USE THIS [SSWCA 2022 PROPOSAL TEMPLATE](#)**
- **Submission forms will be available in the fall.**

**CONTACT:** Please email conference co-chairs **Vivian Blair, Seth Czarnecki, and Stacey Hahn** at **sswca.board@gmail.com** with any questions about presentations.

\*Note: Sound research and theory is defined as published articles or larger texts. This might include texts read in tutor-training courses, articles published in *The Journal of Peer Tutoring in Secondary Schools*, *WLN*, *Writing Center Journal*, *Praxis*, *The Peer Review*, or other authoritative works.