

## **Are Post-Session Student Surveys Useful?: An Examination of Self-Assessment and Gendered Language in Student Surveys**

Many writing centers have clients complete post-session surveys about their experience in their tutor sessions. In this panel of two tutor-scholars, we seek to examine how useful these surveys are for tutors and writing centers. We explicate this through two different lens (abstracts below): tutor's ability to use the client surveys as reflection and how clients perceive gender differences in their tutors in the surveys.

### *Panel Part One:*

#### **Post-Session Surveys and the Effectiveness of Praise**

The struggle to determine the best assessment practices in Writing Center spaces has been explored throughout our scholarship history (Schendel and Macauley). As part of those separate attempts at assessment, centers have potentially ignored a source of reflective feedback that can be used by tutors as useful self-assessment material and as another source of qualitative assessment for the center itself: post-session client surveys. Researchers have pondered the effectiveness of post-session surveys as assessment tools in the past as clients may feel the need to be overly supportive or appreciative in the moment (Lerner). The question I hope to answer, then, is two-fold: 1) can we, both tutors and Writing Center administrators, find within these survey responses legitimate feedback that may apply to either tutor self-assessment or to assessment of the effectiveness of the center as a whole, and 2) can (or maybe, should) these survey questions be reframed to promote effective reflection and assessment? With the goal of constantly adapting and improving the center and our tutoring practices in mind, I will attempt to find both praise and feedback that provides opportunities for tutor growth within our center's post-session client surveys as well as a way to identify and showcase the strengths that allow our center to be successful. This will hopefully help other centers consider the ways in which we may rely on our clients to promote better tutoring and assessment practices as they may rely on the center to better understand good writing practices.

### *Panel Part Two:*

#### **Conceptions of Gender in the Writing Center: An Analysis of Client Surveys**

The question of students' perception of gender in their teachers and tutors has been widely analyzed in instructor evaluations (Mitchell and Martin; Schmidt) as well as in student perceptions of their tutors (Hunzer; Mudd). These works, however, have not adequately addressed the issue of how students perceive their tutor's gender. My presentation addresses the issue of how students give anonymous feedback in client surveys about their tutors, based on the tutor's gender. My project addresses the issue of how students provide feedback for their tutors through studying if and how they use gendered language. Specifically, in my project, I will look at five female and five male tutors' client survey data and then code them for their gendered language. I hope to discover patterns within the client surveys regarding gendered language and stereotypes in order to reveal the connections between instructor evaluations, student behavior in sessions based on their tutor's gender, and how they will anonymously provide feedback about their tutors. In summation, by closely examining client surveys, this project sheds new light on the rarely acknowledged issue of gendered language in students' writing center evaluations.