

Proposal

Title: Fighting Racism and Navigating Burnout: Supporting Marginalized Consultants Doing Social Justice Work in Writing Centers

Keyword Set: consultants of color, systemic racism, decolonial project, personal narratives

Abstract:

People of color are expected to approach diversity work in a dissociated and intellectual manner by overlooking our personal experiences with race on a daily basis. People of color embody messy and antithetical roles in academia and Writing Centers, where we are both centered and marginalized, both praised for calling out privilege and simultaneously silenced and policed, both conditionally supported and institutionally challenged, both accepted and othered, both empowered and dehumanized. In this roundtable, two women of color consultants will share their personal narratives of engaging in social justice and diversity work in Writing Centers and will discuss the challenges they experience in these deeply complicated roles. Through sharing their narratives, the presenters seek to illuminate the invisible and emotional labor of doing social justice work as marginalized peoples in predominantly White spaces, how we navigate silence and complacency that are often the responses to our work, and the burnout we experience as individuals who are committed to the decolonial project, but constantly experience with systemic racism. To this end, the presenters will ask members of the Writing Center community to reflect on what really the work of writing centers is and will engage with complicated questions of fetishized diversity, supporting marginalized consultants, and engaging in radical change. The presenters will also briefly discuss the value of creating a space that supports marginalized consultants and how that contributes to the decolonial project.

Method: Roundtable

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