Abstract

Writing centers exist in a variety of institutional contexts, being housed in high schools, community colleges, universities, and other spaces across the globe. Because of the diversity in context, clientele, and staff, writing centers are perfectly situated as objects of research. Oftentimes, though, this research is rooted in what Stephen North identifies as lore, or anecdotal evidence that does not utilize grounded, empirical research. Furthermore, as this lore is translated into best practices to enact in the center, "conclusions are drawn about peer tutors, information is produced for peer tutors, but rarely are these things created by peer tutors. Tutors are often objectified and essentialized in the literature devoted to them. In this way, tutors are disallowed a voice in the literature that pertains most directly to them" (Boquet 18). This thesis, then, aims to bring methods of empirical, grounded research into the realm of writing center research, specifically for undergraduate peer tutors. Through an examination of the salient literature of the field, interviews with writing center professionals, and an inclusion of potential research questions and methods, readers of this document will gain an understanding of the overarching trends in writing center research and the methods conducive to producing data-driven, valuable publications.

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