

The overall intent of this panel is to offer participants insight into the ways the Meaningful Writing Project has been replicated, revised, and enriched by additional research extending the original findings. Panelists offer findings from an updated survey, extensions of this research conducted with specific student populations and at multiple institutions, and a discussion of students' meaningful writing experiences in these new contexts. As the data grows, so does confirmation of what students tell us about their meaningful writing experiences: we now know more about the conditions for meaningful writing to occur and what practices need to be in place. But what are the implications for pedagogical shifts that can support students' meaningful writing? Participants will gain ideas for how they may both study and embed teaching for meaningful writing within their own institutional contexts.

This panel has the following presentations:

Presentation 1: Meaningful Writing Project Research: Recent Findings and Implications for the Student Writing Experience

Presenter(s): Anne Ellen. Geller, St. John's University (gellera@stjohns.edu), Neal Lerner, Northeastern University (N.Lerner@northeastern.edu)

The Meaningful Writing Project is a research study of what over 1,000 college seniors across three institutions describe as the most meaningful writing they completed in their undergraduate careers and what made that project meaningful. The most recent round of data collection focused on the advice hundreds of students across disciplines gave on teaching meaningful writing. They ask instructors to find a balance between freedom and structure, to offer choices of topic and genre, and to set up the conditions for learning that foster inclusion and connection. Meaningful writing is writing students find consequential, writing that builds on connections with their lives, their world, and their futures, and is valued as providing an inclusive learning experience.

Presentation 2: Meaningful Writing as Servingness

Presenter(s): Emily Jo Schwaller, University of Arizona (emilyjoschwaller@arizona.edu), Anh Dang, University of Arizona (anhdang@arizona.edu)

As faculty at a large HSI university of over 42,000 undergraduate students with 700 writing-designated courses in Foundations, General Education, and the major, we are focusing on how to implement inclusive and meaningful writing across silos at a large scale. Utilizing the Meaningful Writing Project framework and adaptations of the research instruments, we have researched with students and instructors how meaningful writing opportunities are defined, enacted, and designed at our institution. We share preliminary results from surveys, teaching materials, and focus groups from our stakeholders to illustrate meaningful writing as servingness. As over 600 institutions are designated as Hispanic-serving institutions, with an additional 400 designated as “emerging institutions” (Exelencia in Education) WAC has the opportunity to uplift student writing through this lens. We believe writing teachers and WAC administrators can operationalize servingness by providing students with opportunities for meaningful writing that promotes their linguistic and cultural backgrounds as assets. Our research will help participants understand how to incorporate strategies to implement meaningful writing at various levels such as through university policies, WAC professional development, and in the classroom in the service of supporting diverse student populations.

Presentation 3: The Meaningful Writing Experience Initiative

Presenter(s): Brendan Shapiro, College of Southern Nevada
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(Robyn.Rohde@CSN.EDU)

The Meaningful Writing Experience Initiative at College of Southern Nevada utilizes the findings presented in the initial Meaningful Writing Project study to create a cross-disciplinary scholarship opportunity that fosters student growth and celebrates high-impact and transformational student experiences early in students' college careers. Situated in a large urban community college, the program targets first-year students to promote engagement by asking students to identify and reflect upon meaningful writing. Such assignments, Eodice et al. state, offer students the chance to cultivate "relations to future selves, and the disposition for lifelong learning" (Eodice et al., 2016, p. 130). The program and its related study build upon Eodice, Geller, and Lerner's work by exploring the impact that meaningful writing has on students through a thematic analysis of students' written reflections. In this session, we will outline the program, present some initial findings based on analysis of student data, and discuss insights relevant to pedagogy and assignment design.

Presentation 4: Meaningful Writing, Meaningful Work

Presenter(s): Elizabeth Kimbell, Drexel University (ek674@drexel.edu)

The Meaningful Writing Project demonstrates how the meaningful is a powerful framework for understanding how students experience the college curriculum. The meaningful is also a salient access point in research in other fields, especially organizational design and human resource development, where researchers take meaningful work as a similar framework for exploration. Speaker 7 reports on research that bridges the gap between these fields. Through interviews of professional staff in community nonprofits, the project explores how people working for social change experience the intersections of writing labor and finding and making meaning in their jobs. Analysis is designed to discover if, how, and when writing plays a role in meaningful work. The research has significance in helping people in organizations labor for the common good, both its own employees as well as the better world they seek to bring about. It also helps us understand how writing across the curriculum might evolve as what it means to write at work is changing quickly in the context of AI and political upheaval.

Presentation 5: Multilingual Writers and Meaningful Writing Experiences

Presenter(s): Qianqian Zhang-Wu, Northeastern University
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(a.stephens@northeastern.edu)

While the Meaningful Writing Project surveyed a wide range of students, Speakers 8 & 9 wondered if experiences of undergraduate multilingual students were similar or different from overall findings. Their research at one institution explores the meaningful writing experiences of 325 undergraduate students who self-identify as multilingual. Through qualitative coding of open-ended survey data, they found that most respondents considered their writing meaningful when it allowed them to (1) share personal experiences, (2) connect to their academic or professional identities, and (3) improve a skill or learn a new way of writing. These findings are generally aligned with the results of The Meaningful Writing Project, offering evidence that the ways students find their writing meaningful are interwoven with their identities, histories, and aspirations. An implication is to view students through the lens of "superdiversity," seeing them as complex, mobile language users and viewing their histories, linguistic resources, hopes, and

aspirations as central to our work. This view serves as a starting point for deepening our understanding of linguistic diversity and constructing learning contexts that are truly meaningful.