



Across the Disciplines

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Language, Learning and Academic Writing

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Call for Proposals

A special issue of *Across the Disciplines*, Spring 2018

Teaching Contemplative Writing Across the Disciplines

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With increasing evidence that contemplative practices in the college classroom can improve cognitive and academic performance, student concentration and the retention of information, as well as psychological well-being and the development of the whole person, faculty across a wide array of academic disciplines are using contemplative practices to enhance student learning and experience (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Gunnlaugson, Sarath, Scott, & Bai, 2014; Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011; Palmer & Zajonc, 2010; Shapiro, Brown, & Astin, 2008). As contemplative strategies increase and become more widely used across higher education, this is an ideal time for a special issue of ATD that focuses on elements of a contemplative pedagogy in the context of writing across the curriculum and writing in the disciplines.

We are particularly interested in the use of contemplative (sometimes called reflective) writing as a set of mindfulness practices taught in higher education. In *Contemplative Practices in Higher Education*, Barbezat and Bush (2014) describe contemplative writing “as a practice that emphasizes process rather than outcome” (p. 124). Included in their discussion of contemplative writing practices are journal writing, freewriting, writing about reading, mindful writing, and storytelling. These exploratory genres invite students to move beyond content-based reflections to inquire into an inner journey of learning and insights. Like other contemplative pedagogical practices, the goal of contemplative writing is to challenge objectivism, resist binaries, integrate emotion and intellect, and emphasize knowledge gained through first person experience. This is not to say that first person experience is the most authoritative documentation of events. However, contemplative writing is an attempt to critically and thoughtfully situate first person experience as another legitimate domain of knowledge making. As Tobin Hart (2004) says, while “the rational-empirical approach ... has set the standard for knowledge across most disciplines.... Contemplative knowing is a missing link, one that affects student performance, character, and depth of understanding” (p. 28). Contemplative writing is a critical tool for building students’ understanding of the interiority of their experiences to ignite an interconnected understanding of self in relation to other and the roles one might consider to play with that newfound understanding.

Authors from all disciplines are encouraged to submit proposals for manuscripts that address mindful or contemplative writing practices in teaching within higher education, particularly as they relate to disciplinary discourses, interdisciplinary communication, and student learning. We welcome proposals for theoretical pieces, practical and experiential narrative essays that are tied to theory and/or research, case studies, creative works, and qualitative research. Manuscripts might address research on specific uses of contemplative practices and writing in teaching within any discipline to explore questions such as:

- What does a course based on contemplative inquiry and writing look like? What theoretical and/or practical considerations about teaching and learning might the instructor make for such a course?
- How does instruction in contemplative or mindful writing practices affect students' writing within their disciplines?
- How has technology influenced the use of contemplative writing pedagogies in disciplines across the University?
- What research methodologies inform the teaching and learning of contemplative writing pedagogies as applied in specific disciplines?
- Are there scalable, cross-disciplinary pedagogies for incorporating contemplative writing throughout classes in University WID or WAC programs?
- In required courses within the hard sciences for the majors – what does practice in contemplative writing foster in students and how does it extend their skills as budding professionals?
- How do contemplative writing practices create a sense of inter-relatedness in specific disciplines? What might be the disciplinary value of such outcomes?
- How do instructors conceptualize contemplative approaches and in what ways do instructors communicate such approaches to their students?
- What do instructors perceive and experience as barriers to integrating contemplative approaches to writing and how do they navigate through such barriers?

These questions are meant as suggestions for possible topics. We welcome other ideas for related topics and issues.

Deadline for Proposals: April 30, 2017

Notification of Acceptance: June 15, 2017

First Full Paper Submission: October 30, 2017

Reviews to Authors: December 15, 2017

Final Paper Submission: February 28, 2018

Publication: Spring 2018

Proposal Format: Please submit a 300 word proposal (excluding references) explaining your topic, the research and theoretical base on which you will draw, and your plans for the structure of your article, following the general guidelines for *ATD* at <http://wac.colostate.edu/atd/submissions.cfm>. Final manuscripts should not exceed 8000 words (including abstract, references, and appendices). Please use the modified APA Style Guide as indicated on the *ATD* website. Send your proposal to guest editors Marlowe Miller (Marlowe_Miller@uml.edu) and Kakali Bhattacharya (kakalibh@ksu.edu) and also to *ATD* editor Michael Pemberton at michaelp@georgiasouthern.edu. Please provide full contact information with your submission.