

Call for Participants: Naylor Workshop on Undergraduate Research

Undergraduate Research's Role in Promoting Social Justice

Tentative Dates: September 24 – 26, 2021

[Application Link](#)

Some Background

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the 2020 Naylor Workshop on Undergraduate Research (UR) in Writing Studies. But even before that cataclysmic event, we had planned to address the other, longer-standing, pandemic of inequities that restrict access to this high-impact educational practice. As Alexandria Lockett, Alexis Hart, and Rebecca Babcock note in their chapter in the *Naylor Report on Undergraduate Research in Writing Studies* (2020),

while participating in UR has shown to have a “dramatic impact” on historically underserved students (Ishiyama 2001, 40), these very students have decreased access to HIPS, in large part because marginalized students continue to face serious structural constraints including “invalidation, stereotypes, invisibility, lack of connectedness, hostility, and microaggressions” (Mendoza and Louis, 2018, 19).

This marginalization is called out not only in the chapter on Access, but also throughout the *Naylor Report*; there are consistent calls for more “capacious” and “consequential” research that matter to undergraduates. **However, just calling out these deficiencies is not an adequate response. Deliberate action is needed, and real opportunities exist.**

The 2021 Naylor Workshop on Undergraduate Research thus proposes to continue that work. As Lockett, Hart, and Babcock also note:

As the Introduction to [the Naylor Report] suggests, because of the nearly universal presence of required writing courses at post-secondary institutions, “few other fields of study have the opportunity to welcome students with a vast range of interests, abilities, and aspirations into the academy and to play such a crucial role in their post-secondary experiences.” But with that opportunity comes the responsibility to acknowledge the diversity and intersectional identities of students who enter campus writing spaces and to make undergraduate research (UR) in writing—as well as its methods and work products—inclusive of those lives and those interests.

Our vision for the 2021 Naylor Workshop on Undergraduate Research in Writing Studies proceeds from that responsibility. It will help us to understand better the multiple pandemics of COVID, racism, and challenges to democracy. While the 2019 Naylor Symposium began that work by gathering prominent scholars from across the US to assess the state of UR in our discipline and by publishing the *Naylor Report*, the 2021 Workshop will continue that work by including a wide range of undergraduate researchers in that conversation.

We are especially interested in receiving applications from those working in the space of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) such as HBCUs, HSIs, as well as single-sex colleges and universities and community colleges. We will make special efforts to welcome these often-excluded voices to our Workshop.

Call for Participants

While we will continue to welcome proposals for research projects in any areas related to literacy and literacy education, we encourage proposals from undergraduate researchers doing work at the intersection between language and social justice issues, especially related to race, gender, sexuality, and related areas of inequity. The questions below are meant to help you better understand some of these intersections

- How might the perspectives of undergraduate researchers help to widen and deepen our attention to social justice issues related to the identities of those we serve (or fail to serve) in writing studies?
- How do considerations of access and equity affect the way we define undergraduate research?
- What is the labor of integrating social justice goals into undergraduate research? What are strategies for more equally distributing this work and increasing participation?
- What experiences in writing classes suggest the need for more equitable practices?
- How might we be more inclusive of underrepresented or marginalized students? How might we study these practices in systematic ways? How might our research methods be more useful for such studies?
- How might writing centers play a role in equitable approaches to race and other identity issues?
- What kinds of research methods engage students in matters of equity, inclusion, and access? Which assumptions and practices inhibit conversation about these issues?
- What might discourse analysis reveal about the role of language in promoting, or failing to promote, equity?
- In what ways have our pedagogies and approaches to writing confronted, failed to confront, or even promoted racial inequities? How might we do better? Have we lived up to our 1974 statement on [“Students’ Right to Their Own Language?”](#)
- How has writing pedagogy and assessment recognized, or failed to recognize, difference? Who is left out?
- How might our field provide access to undergraduate research to a wider range of students and institutional types?
- In what ways might community-based research promote racial and social justice through a wider understanding of the role of language and its power structures? What other publics beyond the classroom might our research serve?
- How might feminist approaches to writing studies promote equity?

Ready to Apply? [Application Link](#)

What is different about the 2021 Workshop?

While the 2021 Workshop will continue many of the successful features of past iterations, there will be some key accommodations and enhancements to support and advance this work in these difficult times.

- Since it only became clear that we could hold the Workshop recently, we will accept proposals on a rolling basis until capacity is filled.
- We will hold the workshop in person for those who are fully vaccinated and feel safe traveling, but are also working on virtual components and a virtual version should the pandemic spike.
- We will make some time to discuss bigger issues as a group related to how we can continue the work of the Naylor Symposium and the *Naylor Report*, looking to take some next steps on those recommendations. We envision brainstorming draft statements and related research to 1) address the systemic inequities in our work, 2) articulate the research impulses of today’s students, 3) consider how the work of undergraduates can influence the future of our discipline’s work, 4) acknowledge the various forms of circulation that should be seen as the products of UR in our field, and 5) consider how we might move forward with developing a Network for Undergraduate Research in Writing Studies.
- We may invite some students from MSIs who are interested but not yet fully engaged in undergraduate research so they can learn about the Workshop and how to get involved in undergraduate research. This will allow them to observe and be mentored by more experienced undergraduate researchers and mentors, and perhaps seed work on their campuses and allow them to return for a future workshop.
- While we believe that much can be accomplished during our workshop, we acknowledge that it is largely the launch of something that will require consistent attention. We will imagine, then how various publication venues, institutions committed to this work, disciplinary organizations, and other apt locations can support this work. So the final hours of the Workshop will be devoted to planning future activities that will advance the larger goals.

Plenary Speakers

With this theme in mind, we have invited two prominent experts in Writing Studies whose research areas address race, equity, and intersectionality, as plenary speakers and workshop leaders:

Dr. Sheila Carter-Tod, Associate Professor of English at Virginia Tech University.

Sheila Carter-Tod, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of English, at Virginia Tech where she was director of



composition for five years. After directing the composition program, she was Director of Curricular and Pedagogical Development for the **College Access Collaborative** (a unit which aims to increase academic preparation, access and affordability for first-generation, low-income, underrepresented minorities (Black, Latino, and Native American), women and students from rural and inner-city communities). She has published articles and/or reviews in *Writing Program Administrators Journal*, *WLN*, *CCCs* and *Reflections*, textbooks as well as chapters in several edited collections. She has served as an editorial reviewer for numerous publishers and journals. Additionally, she has been elected to a number of leadership roles within NCTE, CCC and CWPA. In her research teaching, service and outreach, she has worked to create equitable, visible and accessible governance structures. Her current research focuses on teacher professional development as a sustainable method for transfer and pedagogical explorations of race and rhetoric.

Dr. Alexandria Lockett, Assistant Professor of English at Spelman College.

Dr. Alexandria L. Lockett is an Assistant Professor of English at Spelman College. She is lead author of *Race, Rhetoric, and Research Methods* (WAC Clearinghouse, April 2021) and co-editor of *Learning From the Lived Experiences of Graduate Student Writers* (Utah State University Press, May 2020). She also publishes about the technological politics of race, surveillance, and access in articles that appeared in *Composition Studies*, *Enculturation*, and *Praxis*, as well as chapters featured in *Wikipedia @ 20: An Incomplete Revolution* (MIT Press), *Humans at Work in the Digital Age* (Routledge), *Out in the Center* (Utah State University Press), and *Black Perspectives on Writing Program Administration: From the Margins to the Center* (SWR Press). An extended biography is available via her portfolio at: www.alexandrialockett.com



About the [Naylor Workshop](#):

In its first five years, the Workshop has attracted over 140 students and mentors from nearly forty states. Its participants have gone on to present at professional conferences, to publish their work, and to have impact on their campuses and communities. We have also featured leaders in the field's undergraduate research work as plenary speakers—including **Jane Greer, Jessie Moore, Joyce Kinkead, Jess Enoch, and Laurie Grobman**—and have had many other national experts serving as mentors to participants.

The Workshop helps undergraduate researchers in Writing Studies to move their project (which can be at any stage of development) ahead in ways that are richer, more valid, and more theoretically informed. Attendees participate in mini-workshop sessions to learn a variety of research methods, and work closely with mentors who help them hone their project's focus. By the end of the workshop, attendees report, they have a much clearer path forward and a much stronger understanding of our discipline's work.

We hope mentors will encourage students engaged with undergraduate research projects in Writing Studies to apply. ***Successful applicants also receive free room, food, registration, and funding to defray travel costs.*** They need not be writing majors—we have had successful applicants from Writing Centers, from disciplinary courses that focused on discourse analysis, from those engaged in community projects, research on creative writing and publishing, and so on. Like our field’s research, the Naylor Workshop embraces all facets of writing studies.

We also invite faculty to apply to become mentors at the workshop. Past mentors have reported that it is an intensive, exhausting, but fulfilling experience as they work within an idealized learning space with talented students from across the country. You can join us with students or come on your own. If you have students join you, we will assign them to other mentors for the workshop so that they get multiple perspectives.

Visit the website at www.ycp.edu/naylor for more details, the full Call for Proposals, and instructions on how to apply as either an undergraduate researcher or a mentor.

Feel free to address any questions to Dominic DelliCarpini, Naylor Endowed Professor of Writing Studies, at dcarpini@ycp.edu.