Imagining WAC�s Future: Coloniality, Diversity, and Sustainability

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CHAPTER 17.

IMAGINING WAC'S FUTURE: COLONIALITY, DIVERSITY, AND SUSTAINABILITY

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We were tasked with imagining the future of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) but quickly realized that we could only do so by honoring our subjectivities and positionalities. Thus, this collective exploration considers three major concepts that we think should drive the future of WAC, each presented with our individual takes: *Coloniality*, *Equity*, and *Sustainability*.

We discuss these concepts not in the predictive but in the aspirational. For this publication, we have decided to preserve a conversational tone to keep the polyphonic nature of our envisioned WAC of the future. The ideas presented here are not a coherent whole, but in staccato, as a chorus. Many of our ideas align, some of them diverge, others perhaps even contradict. With that goal, we'll end with a collective list of action items and questions we might take from here.

COLONIALITY

How international is "international"? – Federico

Decolonial studies have pointed out that coloniality is not necessarily a matter of military and material colonialism by foreign invaders; it is instead a more subtle and pervasive epistemological and symbolic enterprise: a Eurocentric and U.S.-centric, rational-modern, racially-oriented, English-dependent, center-to-periphery, Global North to Global South paradigm of knowledge-making, beliefs, symbols, and ways of communicating. This is illustrated with the North-South divide proposed by Willy Brandt in 1980 (Lees, 2020; see Figure 17.1).
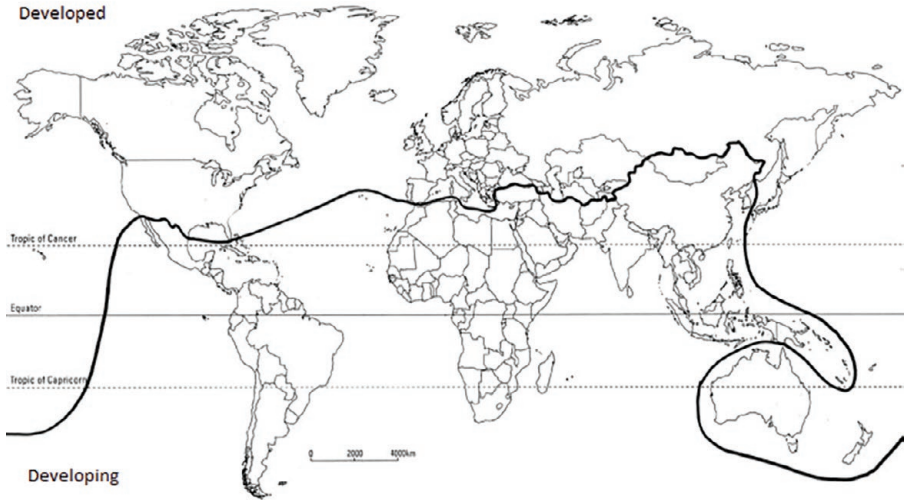
Figure 17.1. Brandt's line (photo by Jovan.gec on Wikimedia Commons).

Consequently, modern-day coloniality is a *coloniality of knowledge* (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). The geopolitical location of scholars, texts, and languages impacts the politics of academic knowledge production. Interestingly, this means that Northern, English-based knowledge production is located in a supposedly *zero point of observation* (Castro-Gómez, 2007) or an *unmarked locality* (Lillis & Curry, 2010) that produces seemingly universal claims (Navarro, 2022).

This is often the case within composition and writing studies. According to Bruce Horner and colleagues (2011), the "field operates with the tacit assumption that scholarship . . . is located—produced, found, and circulated—in English-medium, U.S.-centric publications only" (pp. 271–272). At the same time, the field implicitly circulates a particular narrative, as Christiane Donahue (2009) puts it, of an American "unique knowledge, expertise, and ownership of writing instruction and writing research" with "universal courses, sovereign philosophies and pedagogies, and agreed-on language requirements" (p. 213). Even within writing studies, privileged groups are not required to specify or discuss their locations and viewpoints, which are naturalized as universal, as Jacqueline Joyce Royster and Jean C. Williams (1999) pointed out.

Some of the most prestigious and influential journals in the field help exemplify this point. *Written Communication*, for instance, claims to be "an *international* [emphasis added] multidisciplinary journal that publishes theory and research in writing" (Written Communication, n.d.). However, 73.2 percent of the authors who published there between 2016–2018 were based in central English-speaking countries and regions—namely, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada,

Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Ireland—while 100 percent of the papers were published in English. Moreover, 90.5 percent of the members of the editorial board are based in the same central English-speaking countries and regions. We find the same situation in *Across the Disciplines*: 100 percent of authors were based in the United States and Canada in articles only published in English between 2016 and 2018, and there is only one member of the editorial review board based outside the United States in a non-English speaking country. Therefore, knowledge produced in these and other similar journals hide their particularly-located gaze to offer a supposed universal take on writing and the teaching of writing.

So the future of WAC could involve considering non-English-speaking literature and traditions to promote North-South research reciprocity and exchange (like this one!). In particular, mainstream journals and publishing companies could effectively democratize international participation and publish in different languages. They could genuinely wonder about the limitations of mainstream knowledge, especially considering their declared or implicit international, universal reach. I believe that the WAC Clearinghouse book collections are pushing the boundaries in the field and fostering more diverse conversations among different traditions. Books have consistently included scholars from many places and more recently have been published in languages other than English. Perhaps more importantly, authors worldwide have increasingly played roles as book editors, chief editors, and peer-reviewers. That is, gatekeeping has been gradually democratized and editorial decision-making has made room for other perspectives to push the boundaries of the field through various ways of knowing that have previously been seen as outside the mainstream.

How does "coloniality" figure into our institutional relations? – Al

I'm speaking from central Oklahoma, the traditional home of the Caddo, Creek, Muscogee, and Seminole Nations and the Wichita Tribes, as well as the traditional migration and trade routes of the Apache, Comanche, Kiowa, and Osage Nations.

I'm also speaking from the figurative lands of rhetoric, composition, and writing studies, which have been and continue to be colonized by the aestheticism of *belles lettres* and the field of literature. In preparing for this address, I've spent some time glossing over patterns in WAC/WID literatures, and just as a very broad, general observation, notice that, corresponding with Sue H. McLeod et al.'s (2001) *WAC for the New Millennium* and the conception of *Across the Disciplines*, starting in the early aughts, we have increasingly diverged from traditional humanities and letters work, perhaps even more so than our closest sibling fields in writing program administration and writing center work, by

warming up to empiricism. And when we don't have numbers, we seem to love using surrogate charts and graphs and tables. I'm unsure, in this moment, if we are creating and preserving our own culture, or if we're just capitulating to the dominant forces of STEM-oriented academia with its culture of big data, impact factors, and other epistemological quantifications. And I wonder if there's some kind of Vygotskian proximal development happening wherein we're so much in service to STEM that we end up assimilating their epistemologies.

So, I'm thinking of "coloniality" in different ways. First, the more literal global, historical events and how one lingering consequence is that English has become the de facto lingua franca of the world, including within the exchanges of global academics, which Federico explored in more depth. And the other, more figuratively, the territoriality of academic disciplines. More specifically, then, I'm thinking of the ways colonial processes work in our institutional WAC/WID initiatives. If we look at various institutional units, whether that's "content" units with academic disciplines/programs or administrative units, these all can be considered "imagined communities." And we can conceptualize them using "imagined geographies." I'm borrowing terms from Benedict Anderson (1983) and Edward Said (1978) respectively, who look at the formation of nation-states, sometimes naturally, other times forcibly, around shared or imposed cultural and political values. If we imagine campus units that WAC/WID has to work with as these imagined communities and imagined geographies, we can start to identify clusters, or "continents," if you will.

We can then ask questions like: What are the dominant cultures in this world? And each institution can be its own world. What have been the sordid sociopolitical and intercultural histories within and between campus communities that affect current inter-unit dynamics? And how can we use these institutional histories and policies? To help explore these questions, we can use a kind of power and relational mapping to inform our WAC outreach, advocacy, and decision-making.

What about reciprocity? – Alisa

Al's idea of "imagined geographies" has got me thinking about WAC as a connector. We in WAC connect faculty across the disciplines to one another; we connect disciplinary writing to research and principles in writing studies; we connect writing inside the academy to writing beyond the academy. I further see WAC as this generative hub of many cross sections within writing studies: writing assessment, transfer, genre studies, lifespan writing, media studies, problem-based learning. So much WAC work draws on and benefits from these various areas, but then WAC also provides a space to put these areas into

conversation. David R. Russell (2020) even recently described technical and professional writing and first-year composition as "two inextricably linked poles of transfer research with WAC/WID in the middle" (p. 478). The middle. The connective tissue. Interstitial.

My question, then, is this: How does WAC act as a conduit—a generative middle space—without subsuming or claiming everything as our own? And on the flip side, how does WAC maintain its visibility and identity amongst all of these connections in order to keep making them?

So, I'm going into my second year as faculty, hired to lead WAC initiatives; I can't call myself a WAC director because there's not a program yet. I'm facing the most classic issues for someone starting up a WAC program: I want buy-in from a variety of stakeholders across campus; I'm trying to learn the various campus initiatives and offices I can partner with and hook our mission into; and I'm working with top-down mandates while trying to cultivate a bottom-up approach to them. Even at this very old-hat, basic WAC-operations level (for which I'm lucky to have so much great scholarship to turn to!), these questions I'm asking about WAC as a connector and what that means in terms of coloniality are palpable.

Take these three short examples that have come up for me: One health and exercise science faculty member recently told me that she's cut out her main writing assignment (even though it cultivates the kind of thinking she would want her students to develop) because it's just too hard to teach. Students come in with writing skills that are too wide-ranging, and she doesn't have the expertise to get them on the same page, so to speak. Meanwhile, in political science, another faculty member insists that his students develop the analytical skills essential to becoming scholars in the field and that he will hand out as many failing grades as needed to push students there. And then over in statistics, a faculty member explained that she only assigns reports aimed at clients since almost none of their students will become academics and will instead be working in industry. I think it would be easy to read these examples and begin sorting or ranking these faculty members based on our own understanding of what writing is and what writing pedagogy should be. But what if we could refrain from immediately drafting responses in our heads? What if we, perhaps, opened space for more questions? What if we saw each of these scenarios as a complex confluence of factors that takes long-term collaboration to understand and find generative ways forward?

Going forward, I think we as WAC scholars and practitioners must wrestle with: What does it really mean to invite ourselves (physically or metaphorically) into others' disciplinary classrooms? Into other fields? What are we inviting in turn? How do we steep our work as connectors in collaboration and reciprocity?

Is it possible to offer all we can *and* receive all we can? To use our position as connector to constantly re-create our identities as a field, as programs, as scholars?

EQUITY

ARE WE READY TO DO LINGUISTIC JUSTICE WORK ACROSS CAMPUS? – AL

I want to start by sharing that it has been mentally and emotionally draining to be at conferences like IWAC, in organizations like AWAC, and adjacent ones in writing center and WPA communities, wherein I consistently find myself in spaces and moments where I'm one of only a very few non-white people, sometimes the lone, single one, among 20, 50, or in today's case, upward of 100 people. At a physical conference, I can at least sit toward the front, not see the room behind me, and forget for a moment that's the case. But it has been even more exhausting on Zoom, where everyone is always visible. The concept of equity, for me, is inextricably tied to adequate and proportional representation.

How does this play out in WAC/WID work? Pamela Flash and Teresa Redd's (2021) mid-conference plenary on Wednesday showed, through the illuminating live poll they did, that 78 percent of us who attended and participated feel that the most urgent question or work of WAC scholar-practitioners is "How can we best implement antiracist policies and practices?" So I'm making the assumption that knowing how to advocate for *Students' Right to Their Own Language* (CCCC, 1974) and specifically calls for WAC to be aware of linguistic difference (Matsuda & Jablonski, 2000; Zawacki, 2010; Zawacki & Cox, 2014), antiracist writing assessment (Inoue & Poe, 2012), and linguistic justice (Baker-Bell, 2020) are all administrative and pedagogical concerns that we agree are pressing in our work today.

The big question is: How do we do that? What I think we should do is actually take a step back and ask: Are we ready to do this work? One of the most common grievances I hear from WAC colleagues is that other academic units—often business and STEM, but also generally colleagues who may not have trained in language and writing—are bootstrapping standard-language colonizers who refuse to acknowledge other Englishes in student writing—including, but not limited to, Black and other vernacular Englishes, various international student Englishes, and other U.S.-regional or working class Englishes. Our war stories are replete with these instances. But if you have this grievance, a big question I have for you is: Who is doing this advocacy work? If your WAC/WID programs, writing programs, writing centers, and other stakeholders are homogeneously white, native English speakers and writers, how effective is your message?

Over the course of the Breonna Taylor/George Floyd BLM-protests culmination of summer 2020, many antiracism popular books entered our collective consciousness. One of the authors, psychologist Beverly Daniel Tatum, who wrote *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* (2017) and *Can We Talk about Race?* (2008), claims, through her studies, that children learn exclusionary racism through the example of their parents. Ironically, the white parents she studied tell their children to integrate and play with their non-white friends in their schools, but they themselves only socialize with white friends. So it's a form of the old adage, "Do as I say, not as I do." And to me this highlights the very human disconnect between our ideals and our actions, which, as smart and kind as we are, academics are not immune to.

Figure 17.2 provides a simple, scalar heuristic I've developed to help decide whether or not an academic initiative is ready to do linguistic equity and justice work with colleagues across campus or in other professional spaces:

Does my _____ look, sound, and read like my _____?

center	student population
program	city/town
department	region/state
conference	nation
organization	the world
journal editorial	
journal authorship	
WAC/WID initiative	

Figure 17.2. Heuristic for linguistic difference and justice work readiness.

Does my [blank] look, sound, and read like [blank]? And you can insert the appropriate variables depending on what the work is. For example: Does my program look, sound, and read like the student population I am advocating so hard for? Does my WAC/WID research project or initiative look, sound, and read like my country or region? And if you claim to be an international-level institution, conference, or journal, does it look, sound, and read like the world?

If the answer is no, I think we need to step back. And I mean that not just for whatever individual programs or initiatives we have going on, but also WAC as a whole subfield itself. Do we really think we are ready to go out there and advocate for antiracism, *Students' Right to Their Own Language*, antiracist assessment, and linguistic justice?

If I am the "linguistically ignorant" content colleague who refuses to acknowledge linguistic difference, and the agents of change you send out to me are always white, native English speakers, looking, sounding, and reading like

standard American English, and you tell me to value linguistic difference, but your actions show otherwise, why should I believe a single word you have to say? Perhaps we should work on equity at home first so that we can develop the ethos and integrity to go out there to do that advocacy work—when we're ready.

Where are the access points? – Alisa

When it comes to equity, I keep returning to this question: Where are the access points into WAC? Where are the access points into WAC for upcoming WAC scholars (e.g., graduate students)? For scholars in different disciplines (e.g., those in adjacent or non-adjacent fields who are doing this work)? For faculty at our own institutions? For students at our institutions? And most importantly, are those access points visible and intentional?

WAC is an academic discipline, a programmatic endeavor, a pedagogical approach, a philosophy. When I speak of access points, I am asking what thresholds must be crossed to engage with WAC across these levels and *who* is able to cross them. We know that it's easiest for things to run on autopilot: Social structures, philosophical approaches, and institutions all tend to churn out more of what they already are (e.g., conservatism often leads to more conservatism; whiteness often leads to more whiteness; etc.). If we want diversity, we must intentionally and strategically make visible the access points to engage with WAC. And we must build flexible structures that not only recruit to bring people in but further *value* these expansive views.

As an example, the WAC Graduate Organization runs a Cross-Institutional Mentoring Program, which pairs established scholar-practitioners in WAC with graduate students or early-career faculty at different institutions across an academic year. These cross-institutional mentoring relationships still grow and breathe and take different shapes, but the formal program creates a clear point of access. I had amazing WAC mentors in grad school, but it was because I was lucky and got shoulder-tapped to enter the field (i.e., I was asked to serve as the graduate research assistant for my institution's WAC program before I even knew what W-A-C stood for). That's not intentional. That's not equitable. But even beyond providing clear access points to promote equity, we have to then *value* it through reciprocity. One of the mentors in a recent study of the mentoring program said it like this:

> My mentee also is a person of color, and we have talked
> regularly about race and racism in academia in general,
> and in our field. [...] This has gotten me thinking about
> the importance of direct support of graduate students from
> minoritized groups, not just for those individuals, but for

the field. If we truly want the diversity of our scholarly community to reflect the diversity of our communities and our schools, as I believe most of us really do, I think we need more of the kind of direct, sustained, personal mentoring the Cross-Institutional Mentoring Project is creating. This work does not show up in publication records, or in major named initiatives, but I believe it makes a difference, one scholar at a time, that will change our field as much as the big picture work of big name scholars will. (Russell & Polk, forthcoming)

To this point, I'm starting to hate the term "organic." We often use it when we say we want things to happen or develop organically. I understand the sentiment of that and can even see its usefulness when it's evoked in opposition of strong-arming, or taking over, or moving too fast. But a lot of times, things happening "organically" just means things happening under a cover of occlusion—things happening for those already in the know. Or it means things happening the way they always have. If we wait for our institutions or our programs to organically turn over toward equitable approaches, we're going to be waiting a very long time. We have to make concrete interventions; we have to bake them into our structures, even if that means undoing some existing structures first. I think many are afraid that if we make things more formal, we lose flexibility. But flexibility doesn't have to be the cost of formality; we can stay flexible while still making visible—and expanding—the ways in.

How to teach writing to advance emancipation? – Federico

Until recently, the university system in Chile was relatively small and for a privileged minority. But students in Chile are probably the most active agents of change in society, and their agency has led to structural changes in education in the last decades. For example, the protests in 2011 helped create two new public universities and a national program of higher education with free tuition for low-income families; high school students smile as they hold a banner that reads "no more profit" (Figure 17.3). The demonstrations from 2019, on the other hand, led to the drafting of a new Constitution that aims to expand civil and educational rights; the image in Figure 17.4 shows a female teenager putting herself at risk as she stares at a male, armed member of the military, the very representation of law and order, among the riots and demonstrations. These images illustrate confrontations that emerge when the existing structures of education (and society in general) inevitably face realities that demand change, and consequently open up opportunities for (re)direction.

*Figure 17.3. Chilean students' demonstrations in 2011 (photo by
Simenon Simenon on Wikimedia Commons, June 30, 2011)*

*Figure 17.4. Chilean social demonstrations in 2019 which led
to a constitutional reform (photo by Migrar Photo).*

I currently work for one such new public university, founded in 2015. My first-in-their-family students wouldn't be there, and their university wouldn't be there either, if it weren't for their agency. In fact, the so-called "non-traditional students" are *traditional* students now as they are currently the most frequent university students in Chile and elsewhere; in contrast, universities, faculty, and pedagogies of writing are often the ones that seem at odds with present-day needs and realities in higher education.

However, historically excluded students in Chile embody and express dominant deficit discourses, as in "my abilities were pretty mediocre and not up to the standard required to face university challenges" or "I did not come with a knowledge base from school" (Ávila Reyes et al., 2021). These negative self-perceptions, often related to the type of school students attended and to a supposed lack of preparation, contrast not only with their agency and resilience; we have found that they engage in complex but stigmatized or hidden vernacular practices and often resist received dominant literacy practices (Ávila Reyes et al., 2021). In addition, they deploy self-sponsored strategies that help them build bridges between their authorial identities and higher education tasks and requirements. However, deficit discourses applied to marginalized student communities both hide and devalue students' agency, assets, resilience, and academic achievement, and at the same time, they secure discriminatory gatekeeping systems that function to stifle programmatic changes at our universities.

Based on these findings, we are putting forward an inclusive, equity-based pedagogy of writing designed for teachers across the curriculum (Navarro, 2021), which includes:

- Recognition and active use of vernacular practices students engage in in their communities.
- Writing tasks that make room for students' research, perspectives, and writing decisions, and that refer to meaningful, situated, and controversial topics (related to social struggles or family and community histories, for example).
- Critical reports and parodies of received literacy practices that invite recognition but also resistance, negotiation, and transformation.
- Promotion of mixed genres and code-meshing to train creative and sophisticated writers who play with their semiotic resources and talk and reflect on their choices.

These kinds of tasks and teaching strategies are not entirely new. Nevertheless, the future of WAC could involve systematically exploring what an inclusive,

antiracist, socially-just pedagogy of writing should be like. Such equity-based writing pedagogy wouldn't just aim to include or validate students' incomes (Guerra, 2015) and household and community practices but to truly transform our teaching practices and advance emancipation.

SUSTAINABILITY

Visibility or disappearance? – Alisa

Our last driving concept in looking toward the future of WAC is sustainability. It's a concept I think we all have a felt sense about; it describes something about lasting power, manageable growth, and/or continuing across contextual and generational changes. Of course, how to actually invest in and build toward sustainability can get rather complicated. In Michelle Cox, Jeffrey R. Galin, and Dan Melzer's (2019) book *Sustainable WAC,* they draw on no less than complexity theory, systems theory, social network theory, resilience theory, and sustainable development theory to propose a whole systems approach for launching and developing WAC programs. So while there are a host of factors that feed into sustainability, I want to draw out a healthy tension I think we'll have to wrestle with: visibility vs. disappearance.

Cox, Galin, and Melzer (2019) describe visibility as the "perception of a WAC program across its networks and projects," emphasizing that WAC "tend[s] toward stagnation and institutional entropy if program visibility is not a priority" (p. 49). At the level of an individual institution, this includes initiatives like "sponsored events, university-wide assessment, data sharing, program review, faculty support, student and faculty recognition, curriculum grants, [and] department-by-department planning" (p. 49). At the level of the field, we can see these moves toward visibility in the long-standing WAC Clearinghouse, our WAC journals, the IWAC conference, and the recent formation of AWAC.

But a word on disappearance: In Rita Malenczyk's (2012) piece "WAC's Disappearing Act," she describes WAC as being "gradually subsumed or dispersed into other disciplines or programmatic structures, and therefore being transformed into something other than what it was before, something perhaps less obviously about writing alone" (p. 90). She doesn't see this as a failure of WAC, but a success (or even a fulfillment) of WAC: that "faculty would embrace the movement so that it became simply part of the scene, with writing something they taught in each class (and something they could write and publish about)" (p. 104). She thus sees the disappearance of WAC as an opportunity for transformation.

We can create all the programs and professional organizations in the world—and I'm for that visibility. I'm for the formality, the division of labor, the collaboration, and the equitable pathways. But these organizations have to be REcreated, constantly. Because sometimes the fulfillment of goals inevitably leads to disappearance, or maybe that disappearance is telling us our original goals or structures are no longer responding to current needs. In other words, we need—and need to seize—these moments of transformation that are made possible by disappearance. We need to regularly invite a variety of voices in to re-visit and question even our most fundamental structures across our campus initiatives, our programs, and our profession: Is this still working? How have the stakes changed? What's been done? What can blend in or disappear to make room for what needs to happen now?

When we look toward the future of WAC, maybe we need the ability to do both: to carve out visibility when we need to, and to disappear when we need to. Or at least, to let *pieces* disappear. This is what gives us the ability to transform and shift our efforts of visibility to meet a constantly changing landscape.

How to make indexation our own? – Federico

Research is an essential dimension to the sustainability of teaching writing. It can be used tactically (Adler-Kassner, 2008) to convince stakeholders, fight for funding, influence educational policies, reach an academic position, or engage in international conversations. However, we face a challenge: Many stakeholders, policymakers, employers, and international colleagues expect that we publish some of our research in indexed journals, especially indexed in mainstream databases such as Web of Science (WoS) or SCOPUS.

So, in a way WAC sustainability depends on the existence of such indexed journals. But the truth is there are not many such journals when compared to other related fields like sociolinguistics, second language teaching, or higher education studies.

There might be good reasons for this configuration. Some WoS and SCOPUS indexed journals respond to a different epistemology, knowledge-making culture, or rhetoric than that of WAC. Moreover, SCOPUS or WoS are for-profit enterprises, neglect languages other than English, and measure scientific relevance in controversial ways (e.g., impact factor). However, indexation does not mean indexation in a particular way. It just means that a particular journal complies with certain quality and integrity standards which account for good research. As the criteria for indexation may vary, we should advocate for *specific criteria for* indexation instead of *against* indexation.

I will illustrate this point with SciELO (https://scielo.org). This acronym stands for *Scientific electronic library online*, a cooperative, not-for-profit, multi-lingual, open-access, South-based bibliographic database (Packer, 2009). It was created in Brazil in 1997 and now includes 17 countries, most of them from Latin America, together with South Africa, Spain, and Portugal. It lists almost 400 journals and half a million documents, including authors from all over the world (see Figure 17.5). It is free to publish and download any record, and journals need to be open-access to be indexed.

However, SciELO is not just a repository of open-access papers published in the Southern Hemisphere and written in many languages. Journals have to comply with standards that are common to many other databases, such as double-blind peer review, internationalization, or periodicity. The meaningful contribution of SciELO is to offer research that complies with quality standards and at the same time to be open-access and not-for-profit.

This scientific perspective may resonate with WAC scholars-practitioners as it reminds of WAC initiatives such as the Clearinghouse journals. So the future of WAC could involve indexing our own journals to engage in conversations with stakeholders to sustain our educational claims, programs, and policies. But, at the same time, it could involve fighting for alternative criteria for indexation that put forward free access and democratization of knowledge, together with multiple languages, approaches, and epistemologies.
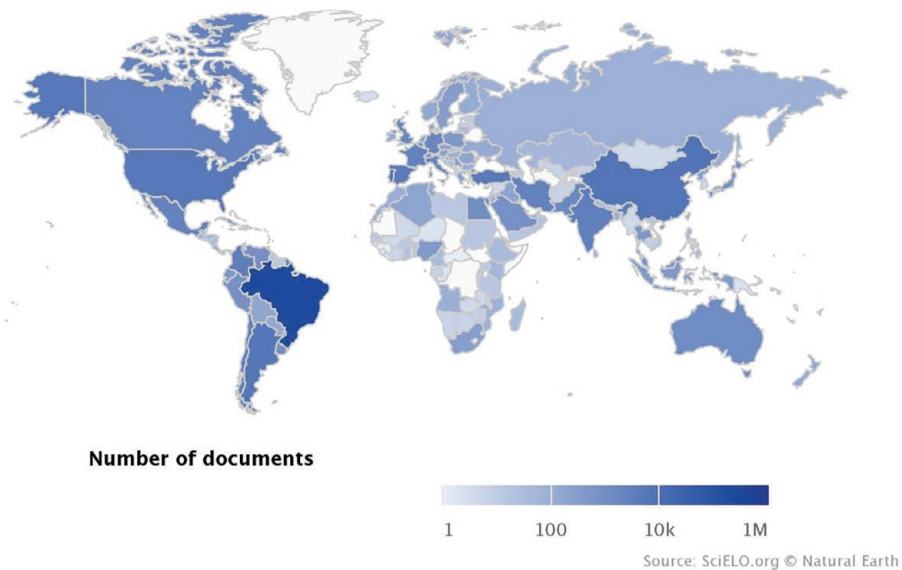

Number of documents

1   100   10k   1M

Source: SciELO.org © Natural Earth

Figure 17.5. SciELO distribution by authors affiliation
countries (https://analytics.scielo.org/; May 12, 2023).

Who are we? – Al

I want to dovetail from Alisa's reference to the Cox, Galin, and Melzer (2019) work on sustainable WAC, as well as Federico's deconstruction of the research and publication processes, which are very comprehensive in looking at institutional systems. We're also very good at making the subject of our work the students we teach and the content colleagues we reach out to. But we rarely think and talk about ourselves in reflexive ways. I'm not sure if that's maybe part of the STEM-ification or empiricization of writing studies—the hesitance to acknowledge the subjective. So I'm thinking about the agentic human behind these processes and asking the question: What is our role?

I'm borrowing from writing center discourse, specifically Elizabeth Cowan's (2002) "many hats" metaphor that writing center directors and tutors wear, contextually, depending on with whom they are interacting, and also from Shirley Rose and Irwin Weiser's (1999; 2002) works on "administrators as researcher" and the follow up "administrators as theorist"—all to pose that WAC/WID agents, too, need to be limber in the roles we inhabit.

To build and maintain more sustainable relationships, we need to maintain a high level of self-awareness of ourselves. If, as I mentioned earlier, the many groups and units we interact with on campus all hold different cultures and maintain different values on education and language, one role may be as anthropologist to better understand these differences. Once we do, what then? Are we missionaries? If so, what kind? The kind that go around campus and knock on all colleagues' doors at 8am in the morning to spread the gospels of April Baker-Bell, Asao Inoue, and Carmen Kynard? Are we politicians? If so, what kind? Are we colonizers and invaders? Should we be aggressive in liberating students' writing in other fields? Or do we subtly spread our cultural values like Hollywood does? WAC/WID is at the borders of writing studies. Are we border patrol agents who keep migrants from entering our field? And if they do enter, in what ways are we deporting them, caging them up, or giving them water so that they help rejuvenate our field intellectually?

The point I want to make here is that, to extend the metaphor, to build and maintain sustainable WAC relationships on campus, just like cross-cultural or multilateral international relationships, there isn't one template approach, but that we need to be more mindful, deliberate, and kairotic of the roles we embody and move between.

ACTION ITEMS

Ultimately, there is no "in conclusion" to be made here. At this point, we don't want you to feel a sense of finality for how these ideas factor into our WAC

futures; instead, we want all of us—the field, the journals, the organizations, and all the scholar-teacher-practitioners—to forge ahead exploring the questions and ideas we've presented here to see where it takes us.

Each of us must do the individual work of reflecting on how issues of coloniality, equity, and sustainability mark our work. Then we can move toward collective reflection in our programs and across our field. We've presented this cacophonous piece as perhaps a model and starting point for our collective reflection. In this spirit, we are not looking to close things, but to open them.

However, we are also aware that it is easy to get "stuck" in a state of reflection. All three of us have posed many questions throughout this piece, but we don't want to leave you with questions alone. We want to point toward *concrete actions* that might take up or realize the issues of coloniality, equity, and sustainability raised here.

To that end, after we presented this plenary talk, we circulated a Google doc to all IWAC 2020-21 attendees to crowdsource action items that came out of people's individual and collective reflection. We present those items here, almost verbatim as they were written in our crowdsourced document. They are not in any particular order, but instead represent the rhizomatic range of action items we might undertake as we continue to question and reflect on what kind of WAC future we want to build.

- Create plans of reciprocity (with research subjects, with faculty in the disciplines, with colleagues):
  - Create a group to investigate grants or sponsorships available and post these with calls for cross-institutional collaborative proposals.
  - Might we look to people in our field who have done well enough to be able to support or pool support with others to create a one time grant to research teams?
- Consider non-English-speaking literature and traditions to promote North-South research collaborations and exchanges:
  - What about having IWAC and the Institute outside of the US?
  - Listen to and learn from the educational organizations which already use multilingual application and delivery processes for conferences and workshops (like the recent ALES international writing studies symposium).
- Formalize advertisements and application processes for leadership and membership roles (at the institutional and professional levels):
  - How can we better support, and thereby sustain, junior WAC (jWAC) professionals?

- Imagine equity-based WAC pedagogies that draw from diverse students' experiences and incomes:
  - As much of our valuable research like this gets distributed among ourselves mostly, what action items might go beyond imagining to make a wider impact?
  - Revisit my personal teaching philosophy and use it to create a specific statement regarding student assignments (as in: What do we hope to accomplish with those assignments?).
- Regularly invite/conduct reflective check-points (of WAC initiatives, programs, and professional organizations):
  - Alongside but also beyond regular assessment, invite a variety of voices to re-visit even the most fundamental structures and consider possible revisions (what needs to be visible vs. what needs to disappear).
  - Our field's organization statements don't carry much weight—at least institutionally. Might there be cross institutional partners within a state or region, sponsored by funds or which seeks funds to research antiracist writing pedagogy, practices, genres across disciplines?
  - Can we return to collecting local studies that don't get published but, when aggregated, would reveal much about writing across disciplines and contexts? Self-report hasn't worked: Are there grants available to have research teams collect such info? Can we marshall the energy of retirees still invested in the field and those researchers still on payrolls who are interested and invested in collecting local and inter/national research but also have heavy teaching and publication pressures and couldn't do this alone?
- Fight for democratizing open-access indexation criteria to publish research which sustain WAC initiatives:
  - I wonder whether/how IWAC and AWAC might work together to seek/apply for the kind of (substantial) funding that would enable significant longitudinal research to take place. I also wonder if longitudinal research sponsored in any way by IWAC and AWAC might include but also go beyond assessment of WAC programs to look (more) broadly at the writing that students do alongside of, around, aside from, and atop the curriculum as well as after it.

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