

A History of the MiWCA Ideas Exchange

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### Abstract

This history of the Michigan Writing Centers Association (MiWCA) is supplemented with the online archive of MiWCA Ideas Exchange documents on the MiWCA website. The documents were sent from Lansing Community College to the Oakland University Writing Center to be scanned and compiled into a translatable history. From its 1994 origin to the present, the conference has helped many ideas come to fruition among Michigan writing centers.

Documenting the history of the MiWCA Ideas Exchange will create an archival, written record of the organization since its inception that will follow the guidelines of Associated Press Style for conciseness and structure. This MiWCA history was compiled in summer 2019 with the help of Oakland University Writing Center Director Sherry Wynn Perdue and factual confirmation from other writing center staff members. Documents were compiled and maintained by Jill Reglin at Lansing Community College, who started the MiWCA when she was a graduate student (Jill Johnson) at Michigan State University. Efforts were made to establish complete records of each conference, but there were a few issues with document access. The purpose of this history is to present readable information to both keep the origins of the organization alive and influence writing center staff to exchange their own ideas at future MiWCA gatherings.

## A History of the MiWCA Ideas Exchange

### **Why Archive Writing Center Resources?**

Creating an online archive documenting MiWCA's history will be a valuable resource to writing center directors and staff members. Documents will no longer be in boxes, and writing stories about them will allow the conference's history to be permanently preserved. Archival work is important because it: a) creates a translatable history, giving writing centers — in this case, a statewide writing center organization — easy access to historical documents and records of former gatherings, b) contributes to local understanding, informing new and former consultants of collective histories, and c) is useful when needing to show progress, giving us tangible means to display growth through the depiction of notable accomplishments, staff levels, and center usage. David Gold said archival research is “like putting together a jigsaw puzzle without the picture on the box as a guide” (as cited in Nall, 2014, p. 103). Histories have to be pieced back together with the help of documentation, tangible artifacts, and humans with historical connections to the organization as sources of information. Showing other writing centers and writing center organizations the importance of archival work and how history can get lost if it's not compiled may influence them to eventually take on similar projects to document their histories.

**List of MiWCA Conferences**

1. 1995 — University of Michigan-Flint
2. 1996 — Macomb Community College
3. 1997 — Northwestern Michigan College
4. 1998 — Saginaw Valley State University
5. 1999 — Grand Valley State University
6. 2000 — University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
7. 2001 — Central Michigan University
8. 2002 — Michigan State University
9. 2003 — University of Michigan-Flint
10. 2004 — Lansing Community College
11. 2005 — Grand Valley State University
12. 2006 — Northwestern Michigan College
13. 2007 — Muskegon Community College
14. 2008 — Madonna University
15. 2009 — Oakland University
16. 2010 — Lake Superior State University
17. 2011 — Saginaw Valley State University
18. 2012 — Michigan State University
19. 2013 — Grand Valley State University
20. 2014 — Lansing Community College
21. 2015 — Southwestern Michigan College
22. 2016 — Macomb Community College
23. 2017 — Oakland University
24. 2018 — University of Michigan-Flint
25. 2019 — Central Michigan University

### **Conference Origin: MCTE and the Summer Invitational Institute**

In 1993, members of writing centers in Michigan began communicating to establish a network for the distribution of writing center pedagogy and idea implementation. The meetup took place at the Michigan College English Association Conference in Lansing, according to a record of board meeting minutes from 2002.

In 1994, Michigan's writing centers began communicating to establish a conference for the distribution of writing center pedagogy and idea implementation.

The conference was started by Michigan State University (MSU) graduate student Jill Reglin (née Johnson) when she was working at the MSU Writing Center. She contacted Michigan centers to establish a communication of ideas and practice, leading her to organize an all-day special interest group meeting.

On Oct. 21, 1994, Michigan writing center administrators and staff held their first workshop as part of the Michigan Council of Teachers of English (MCTE) annual conference, called "Writing Centers in Michigan: Getting to Know Us." Thirty-two attendees from 13 Michigan schools gathered at the MCTE workshop, collaborating on creative introduction practices (interviews, poster-making, etc.) and then imaginative solutions to writing center issues. At this meeting, the Michigan Writing Centers Project (MWCP) was born.

Workshop feedback emphasized the useful conversation about writing center work, but the discussion was cited as somewhat one-sided, since many of the attendees were from Michigan State University (MSU). Johnson said the lack of attendees and the number of individuals who were new to writing center work made conversation a bit difficult.

According to the MiWCA website, two other meetings were held from 1994-1995: one at the MSU Writing Center and the other at the Spring Conference on English Language Arts, also known as the “Bright Ideas” conference.

A special interest group meeting was held April 1, 1995, to discuss future writing center collaborations, the possible start of the MiWCA, a statewide newsletter, a future fall open house at the University of Michigan-Flint, and “establishing a presence” at the fall MCTE and spring Bright Ideas conferences.

Reglin worked with Patti Stock, MSU Writing Center director, and Sharon Thomas, associate director, in the 1994-1995 year to get a grant from MSU to fund the first MWCP Summer Invitational Institute, according to the MiWCA website. The MWCP proposal was approved for \$15,000 for the period of May 15, 1995, through Aug. 14, 1996, by the MSU vice president for Research and Graduate Studies. The week-long summer institute provided an extended opportunity for collaboration and mentoring among established and newly emerging writing centers.

The MWCP Summer Invitational Institute took place June 5-16, 1995. Fourteen applicants — most of whom were writing center directors — were chosen to attend the two-week institute and received either a \$750 stipend or up to three graduate course credits. Participants kept daily logs, with two people required to write summaries of each day’s activities to receive credit.

At the institute, topics discussed ranged from starting a writing center, to assessing students needs, to record keeping/statistics. Other topics included engaging student writers, creating strategies for answering essay questions on exams, and citing sources.

Evaluations said the institute was “a breath of fresh air,” and many attendees enjoyed furthering their knowledge about writing center practices. Others wished the institute lasted longer, feeling sessions were tightly scheduled and focused more on theory than practice.

According to the MiWCA website, the MWCP formed a steering committee during the Summer Invitational Institute. The site said, “When the 15-member Steering Committee next met at Western Michigan University on Aug. 10, 1995, the MiWCA was born and a constitution was drafted.”

**The First MiWCA: 1995 at the Marian E. Wright Writing Center,  
University of Michigan-Flint**

The first MiWCA Ideas Exchange was held Oct. 7, 1995, at the University of Michigan-Flint, with 80 attendees and conference presentations on subjects ranging from effective tutoring practices to effective administration and operation.

The conference also served as an open house for U-M Flint’s writing center. In a September 1995 invitational letter to writing center staff members, U-M Flint writing center director Robert W. Barnett encouraged Michigan centers to bring staff members to the conference to learn more about other institutions. Centers also were encouraged to bring materials they wanted to share with other writing centers.

Faculty members also reported on the success of the summer institute and held a business meeting where they nominated officers for the MiWCA board.

**The Second Annual MiWCA Conference: 1996 at the Macomb Reading and Writing Studios, Macomb Community College**

The second MiWCA was hosted by Macomb Community College on Oct. 19, 1996. The conference had five breakout sessions, named “How do We Know if our Writing Center is Successful?,” “Tricks of the Tutoring Trade,” “Helping the ESL Student,” “Your Writing Center’s Manual — Let’s Get Started,” and “Ethical Dilemmas in The Tutoring Session: What Would You Do If ...”

Faculty members met to review MiWCA board policies and read the minutes from the board meeting earlier that year. New executive members were elected, and Johnson was replaced by Philip Greenfield as the MiWCA student representative.

**1997 MiWCA Bright Ideas Exchange at Northwestern Michigan College**

The Northwestern Michigan College Writing Center in Traverse City hosted the MiWCA Bright Ideas Exchange on Oct. 4, 1997.

With a \$10 conference fee, writing center members from across the state attended the conference to collaborate on new ideas. Topics ranged from using technology in writing center sessions, training staff members and exchanging methodologies.

The MiWCA board also met to discuss committee reports, the MiWCA consultants program, and a potential affiliation with the National Writing Centers Association.

This year was the first time the conference held multiple sessions concurrently throughout the day — the same format used today.



### **1998 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Saginaw Valley State University**

The 1998 conference was held at Saginaw Valley State University on Nov. 21, 1998, with a theme of “Writing Centers in the Age of Technology.”

More than 80 attendees from 15 institutions attended MiWCA in 1998 to hold sessions discussing using technology to support writing, online consulting, writing center record keeping, extending course support through the writing center, and more.

The MiWCA board also met to discuss elections, its newsletter, and upcoming goals for the following year.

### **1999 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at the Fred Meijer Center for Writing & Michigan Authors, Grand Valley State University**

Grand Valley State University hosted the Ideas Exchange on Nov. 5, 1999, to mark the 20th anniversary of the school’s writing center.

Writing center employees from 17 institutions came to MiWCA, with a total of 85 attendees. Conference topics were predetermined or established that day via a white board. Some topics discussed were online writing, ethics and dilemmas, consulting ESL students and peer work.

The conference hosted an MiWCA business meeting in the afternoon, where all directors, staff and faculty were encouraged to attend and discuss new officers, the next conference and other concerns.

**2000 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at the Sweetland Center for Writing,  
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor**

The 2000 MiWCA was held at the University of Michigan Sweetland Center for Writing in Ann Arbor on Oct. 28, 2000, and boasted 100 attendees.

Topics at the Ideas Exchange included how to work with high school students through writing fellowships, aspects of team tutoring, summative and formative assessment, and new OWL tutoring developments.

Board meeting records from March 2000 (the only ones on record for this conference year) focused on adding content to the newsletter and allocating funds to create scholarships to help students pay for conferences.

**2001 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Central Michigan University**

Central Michigan University hosted the 2001 MiWCA conference on Oct. 27 of that year. The first Ideas Exchange to have 120 attendees, the conference covered reflection, online tutoring pros and cons, how professors see writing centers, and attendees shared stories of their experiences.

The conference board meeting was held to discuss the standing of the conference scholarships, how to create excitement for the next Ideas Exchange, and whether to keep the database at MSU. The board decided to keep the scholarship money local and allocate it to pay registration for students presenting.

After the conference, the MiWCA had a total of \$777.10 in the treasury, according to that year's treasury report.

### **2002 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Michigan State University**

MSU hosted the Ideas Exchange “State of the Art: Critical Questions, Creative Ideas” on Oct. 5, 2002, to give the 110 attendees the chance to collaborate on ideas.

The conference focus stemmed from a writing prompt given to MSU’s undergraduate and graduate writing consultants, asking them what questions they would pose if they had a day to spend with writing center colleagues from across the state. The welcome letter from the MSU writing center staff highlighted how few chances writing center staff members have to interact with people in the same line of work.

Presentation topics stemmed from those students’ questions. Some topics concerned constructing effective practices for working with writers with different learning styles, confronting issues with plagiarism, establishing rapport with writers, and uncovering the answers to “burning questions” about writing centers.

The 2002 MiWCA board meeting covered announcements like the first International Writing Centers Association (IWCA) conference and discussed how to expand support for two-year college writing centers. Reglin received funding for her research project “Evolution of the Writing Center Statewide Network.”

The minutes for this meeting include a comprehensive list of all MiWCA interactions, mainly contributed by Reglin (then Pennington), which is Fig. 1 below.

<b>MWCA History</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
1993	Michigan College English Association Conference, Lansing	NA
1994	Michigan State University	NA
1995	University of Michigan, Flint	NA
1996	Macomb Community College	NA
1997	Northwestern College	85
1998	Grand Valley State University	90
1999	Saginaw Valley State University	100
2000	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	110
2001	Central Michigan University	120
2002	Michigan State University	110
2003	University of Michigan, Flint	*

NA-Not Available  
\* Future conference date

*Figure 1.* MiWCA history listed on the 2002 Board of Directors meeting minutes.

Note: the 1998 conference was held at Saginaw Valley State University, and the 1999 conference was held at Grand Valley State University. Attendance records are also a bit different from what is listed on the current MiWCA website.

**2003 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at the Marian E. Wright Writing Center,  
University of Michigan-Flint**

The 2003 MiWCA conference titled “Tutoring with UMF! Energizing Ourselves, Expanding our Centers” was held Oct. 4 at U of M—Flint and had 103 attendees.

In contrast to previous accounts, this conference was listed as the 11th annual Ideas Exchange, following the 2002 board meeting minutes that imply the MiWCA originated in 1993.

The Ideas Exchange had 110 attendees, 77 of whom were students, according to records of the following conference. New to the 2003 conference, tutors/consultants were invited to create poster presentations about research/writing center work they completed, which were then displayed throughout the day.

With four session slots, many sessions ran concurrently. Presentations discussed topics such as “The Creative Writing Writing Center,” collaboration among writing centers, outreach efforts, working with learning disabilities, and how disciplinary knowledge affects tutoring/consulting sessions.

The board meeting for this year included planning future conference locations, transferring conference proceeds to the MiWCA treasury from the host institution, handling the “inadequate database” to get more schools in the loop, and opening discussions about a statewide OWL potentially operated by Michigan Writing Centers.

**2004 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at The Learning Commons Writing Studio,  
Lansing Community College**

The 2004 MiWCA Ideas Exchange was held at Lansing Community College’s Writing Center on Oct. 16, 2004.

The conference, called “Ten Years in the Making,” was the 10th annual Ideas Exchange, when considering the 1995 U-M Flint conference as the first. This program also included a list of all MiWCA Ideas Exchanges, starting with the 1995 exchange.

In the opening address, Reglin (then Pennington), who was president of the MiWCA and the Ideas Exchange coordinator, welcomed newer writing centers and encouraged conference attendees to check out LCC’s newly renovated writing center space.

Sessions covered the theory and practice of writing centers, high school writing centers, the writing process, and academic integrity and ethics. Session attendees noted in conference evaluations that they felt particularly inspired by presentations on establishing high school writing centers and working with ESL students.

At the board meeting that year, the members voted on the amended MiWCA constitution and bylaws, along with discussing the addition of tutor/consultant training resources on the website and Reglin's (then Pennington) database updates.

### **2005 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at the Fred Meijer Center for Writing & Michigan Authors, Grand Valley State University**

Grand Valley State University was the site of the MiWCA Ideas Exchange on Nov. 5, 2005, with 106 people (21 administrators, 85 students) signing up to attend.

The conference included a Best Practices table, where writing center staff brought handouts detailing training activities, writing center services, tutor strategies, etc., to share with colleagues. These poster presentations and break-out sessions included topics such as active and passive voice in gendered use of writing and organizing thoughts.

Tutor talks discussed how self-worth can influence writing, establishing online writing centers through Blackboard (specifically, Saginaw Valley State University), connecting the writing center to other departments, and more.

Many break-out sessions were determined at the conference. The MiWCA board meeting also took place at that time, where faculty discussed fundraising tactics, developing online resources, and potential updates to the constitution.

### **2006 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Northwestern Michigan College**

Northwestern Michigan College hosted the Oct. 14, 2006, MiWCA Ideas Exchange.

Session topics ranged from in-class tutoring, the problems and possibilities of Turnitin, asking effective questions, and "performing the academic conversation."

At the board meeting, members reported on the attendance/budget of the conference and funds given to a Central Michigan University writing tutor/consultant for her honors project, and the board approved revisions to the constitution and bylaws.

### **2007 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Muskegon Community College**

“The Listening/Learning Connection” fall MiWCA conference was held Oct. 20, 2007, at Muskegon Community College.

Topics included an informal discussion of the different approaches to tutoring/consulting, issues faced by returning adult students and working with grammar and mechanics.

### **2008 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Madonna University**

Madonna University hosted the Ideas Exchange on Oct. 4, 2008, titled “Reaching Out: The Campus, the Community, and Beyond,” which focused on extending writing center services, concerns, and commitments further than the center itself.

The conference aimed to answer the question: “What are your strategies, proposals, dreams, or experiences related to reaching out beyond the physical or metaphysical walls of your writing center?” Discussed topics included tutor training, addressing student veteran needs, instilling passion in writing, and combating plagiarism.

The MiWCA board met to discuss the 2009 conference, future partnerships with high schools, and finances. Each institution was also required to write one paragraph for each session they attended for the WC newsletter.

### **2009 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Oakland University**

The Oakland University Writing Center (OUWC) hosted the 15th annual MiWCA Ideas Exchange on Oct. 17, 2009, where the center, only about three years old at that point, opened its doors to 105 attendees.

The theme of “Demystifying the Writing Center and Attracting a Broader Clientele” allowed for discussion of elements like developing understanding of texts, overcoming age gaps between students and tutors/consultants, writing center accessibility, and demystifying grammar. As of Oct. 12, 2009, there were 38 presentations on the Ideas Exchange agenda, with non-OU presenters traveling from as far as the Upper Peninsula, according to Dr. Sherry Wynn Perdue, OUWC director.

Conference materials also included guides on how to work through the new MLA 7th edition and APA 6th edition.

### **2010 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Lake Superior State University**

The 16th annual MiWCA Ideas Exchange, titled “Crossing Bridges: Connecting and Supporting Writers, Tutors, Teachers, and Administrators Across the Disciplines,” was hosted by Lake Superior State University on Oct. 15-16, 2010.

Conference sessions further explored topics mentioned in other Ideas Exchanges, such as working with adult learners, different majors, and ESL students; sustaining writing centers in high schools; building connections between the writing center and the classroom; and tone in sessions.



### **2011 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Saginaw Valley State University**

Saginaw Valley State University hosted the MiWCA conference for the second time Oct. 22, 2011, with a theme of “In the Center of it All!”

Sessions focused on making students more comfortable with writing-based conversation, “finding the center of reluctance in sessions,” embedded tutoring in developmental writing classrooms, and tutoring/consulting across cultures.

2010 board meeting minutes were unapproved at this conference, as they were not brought to the meeting. The meeting discussed whether members of hosting universities should be included in the conference registration, resulting in the registration fee being waived for host directors.

### **2012 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Michigan State University**

The “Telling Our Stories” conference was held Oct. 6, 2012, at Michigan State University, marking the second time the school hosted the event and also celebrating the writing center’s 20th anniversary.

Responding to emotional writing, embedded tutoring, the consultant versus the counselor, and reading in the writing center were among the topics discussed during the Ideas Exchange. The conference concluded with *The Kiva*, a movie featuring compiled submissions from various Michigan writing centers.

The board meeting focused on approving previously suggested bylaw changes and clarifying meeting minutes. At this meeting, Trixie Smith, MSU writing center director, said the IWCA contacted her to ask the then MWCA to change its name to the MiWCA, which would alleviate confusion and make it closer to other state writing center associations.

The confusion arose because the Midwestern Writing Centers Association (another MWCA) “felt their members were confused about calls for the MWCA (Michigan Writing Centers Association) Conference,” according to the 2012 meeting minutes (see Fig. 2). The MiWCA board members objected to this request, citing that it would be costly to change the name, it would be confusing to previous MiWCA conference-goers, and MiWCA is already taken by the Michigan Women’s Caucus for Art, concluding that Smith had enough evidence to say the then MWCA did not want to change its acronym.

**MiWCA v. MWCA:**

The IWCA contacted T. Smith because the Midwestern Writing Centers Association (another MWCA) felt their members were confused about calls for the MWCA (Michigan Writing Centers Association) Conference. The other MWCA suggests that the Michigan Writing Centers Association rename itself MiWCA, which is in keeping with other state writing center organizations. Some banter suggests the original MWCA sell the acronym to the Midwest group. Tim argues that we need to consider what costs would be involved with the change, that the other group has more options, and that the Michigan state group has existed with our name longer (since 1995). J. Reglin mentions costs would include new logo. She and K. Krol agree with Tim that research of costs is needed. Also, E. Schendel searches for MWCA and MiWCA and finds a host of names that would be confusing if our organization changed to MiWCA. General consensus is that MiWCA just won’t do. MiWCA is already taken by the Michigan Women Caucus for Art, and MWCA also stands for the Michigan Wood Carving Association. The confusion can be mitigated in ways that don’t involve a name change (such as not using “MWCA” on conference CFPs. The group concludes that T. Smith has enough to be able to explain the MWCA’s decision to not change its acronym.

*Figure 2.* MiWCA v. MWCA section of Oct. 6, 2012, board meeting minutes. The MWCA later changed its name after being asked by the Midwestern Writing Center Association, which also went by MWCA.

**2013 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at the Fred Meijer Center for Writing &  
Michigan Authors, Grand Valley State University**

The 2013 Ideas Exchange on Oct. 3, themed “Creative Collaboration,” was held at Grand Valley State University’s new library.

Session themes included understanding source documentation, writing center retention rates, serving students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, empowering students, and collaborating with international students.

A keynote was held during lunch, where Lee Van Orsdel, dean of GVSU's University Libraries, spoke about the knowledge market of writing consultants. A late afternoon session featured writing center alumni, who presented about "How Tutoring Writing Connects to Careers and the World of Work" to inspire current tutors/consultants.

### **2014 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Lansing Community College**

The 20th annual MiWCA Ideas Exchange was held Oct. 24, 2014, and hosted by Lansing Community College and boasted 200 attendees, the largest MiWCA has ever had, according to the 2015 "Last Five Years Overview."

Titled "The Center of it All?," the conference aimed to explore what issues remain unaddressed despite writing centers growing as student support systems. Topics discussed included using genre-based pedagogy in sessions with ESL students, bringing faculty members and graduate writers to the writing center, combating perfectionism, transcending stereotypes, and addressing writing center misconceptions.

The program featured a "Birth of the Michigan Writing Centers Association" spread that outlined the humble beginnings of the MiWCA in 1994-1995. It included photos from an early MiWCA conference, showcasing just how different the conference was then.

The annual board meeting was held to review the treasury, conference expenses, and members discussed the multiple issues with the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification

Professional Readiness Exam. Sherry Wynn Perdue, MiWCA treasurer, reported that the MiWCA earned its 5013C status as a non-profit organization.

### **2015 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Southwestern Michigan College**

“Blurred Lines: Focusing the Academic Kaleidoscope Through Collaboration and Creative Thinking” opened the doors of Southwestern Michigan College to writing center staff members on Oct. 17, 2015.

At the 21st annual Ideas Exchange, Kyle Boswell, director of the Mattawan High School writing center and language arts teacher, was the keynote speaker and discussed maintaining writing centers as fulfilling environments for staff. Presentations explored different “blurred lines” in writing center pedagogy, such as embracing discussions about race, approaching standardized test essays, examining institutional plagiarism policies, and how to better involve students.

### **2016 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at the Macomb Reading and Writing Studio, Macomb Community College**

The Macomb Reading and Writing Studio was the host of the 2016 MiWCA Ideas Exchange on Oct. 21-22, 2016.

Titled “Word Meets World,” the MiWCA Ideas Exchange ran concurrently with the Michigan College English Association conference. It was also the first Ideas Exchange to receive serious support from sponsors, which future conferences continued to build upon in the next couple of years.

Dr. Geneva Smitherman, director of the African American Language and Literacy Program at MSU, gave the keynote address — which Reglin said was an honor.

The conference theme emphasized language changes in society. The call for proposals aimed for writing center community members to look into how local work contributes to changes in language and culture.

“Writing centers often are the spaces where world meets word in a powerful way, where language changes (and therefore cultural changes) emerge and are explored through the deceptively simple media of print, digital writing, and conversation,” the call for proposals form said.

Presentations included women’s voices in creative writing, approaches to teaching first-year writing, and multimodal expression in classroom writing and teaching.

### **2017 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Oakland University**

The Oakland University Writing Center hosted the MiWCA Ideas Exchange on Oct. 21, 2017 and boasted 120 attendees. Ashley Cerku, operations coordinator of the OUWC, was the host and event planner.

Called “Writing Center 2.0: Navigating Writing Center Services Within and Beyond *What Is to What Can Be*,” the conference responded to Ben Rafoth’s 2015 claim that “writing centers need to interrogate our core beliefs about what we do (and don’t do), how we do it, why we do it, and for whom and by whom we do it,” according to the program.

The keynote address featured former writing center staff members, who shared their stories of life after working at the writing center. Attendees collaborated on practices such as working with non-native English speakers, serving nursing students, writing consultant training methods and making centers more inclusive.

Following the 2017 conference at Macomb Community College, Cerku secured both on- and off-campus sponsors, including getting most of the food donated from Applebee's, Trader Joe's, and McDonald's. Many other vendors, like multiple vendors — such as Tutor Trac, Bedford/St. Martin's, Paper Source, BD's Mongolian BBQ, and Starbucks — provided financial support or door prizes.

The MiWCA board meeting included discussions of a possible 2-day summer institute, transferring existing MiWCA resources to Wix (which are now maintained by Cerku, Oakland University Writing Center operations coordinator), and establishing a pre-conference for directors to share resources.

**2018 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at the Marian E. Wright Writing Center,  
University of Michigan—Flint**

U-M Flint opened its doors to 120 attendees on Oct. 20, 2018, for the 24th annual MiWCA Ideas Exchange, marking the third time the U-M Flint writing center hosted the conference.

With a theme of “Writing Center Myths, Facts, and Fables: The Stories that Surround Us,” the conference aimed to “interrogate the narratives surrounding writing centers,” according to the program. U-M Flint writing center director Jacob Blumner and coordinator Vicky Dawson hosted and planned the event.

Journalist Scott Atkinson was the keynote speaker. He discussed the important role writing centers played in his life and continue to have for his students, as he is a professor in U-M Flint's English department.

Session topics heavily involved conversations involved topics such as archival work, addressing racial bias in the writing center, working with science students, and self-reflection.

Like the previous two conferences, the 2018 Ideas Exchange secured sponsorship from on-campus departments like the university's College of Arts and Sciences, School of Education and Human Services, School of Nursing, School of Management, and the Department of English. Other sponsors included Hoffman's Deli, WOnline, the TutorTrack Systems.

The MiWCA board meeting addressed continuing to give two \$300 scholarships to MiWCA attendees who wanted to attend ECWCA, setting up a Facebook page for MiWCA, and Central Michigan University agreed to host the 2019 conference.

### **2019 MiWCA Ideas Exchange at Central Michigan University**

This year's MiWCA conference, "Access Matters: Writing Centers and Accessibility as a Process," will be hosted by Central Michigan University's writing center on Nov. 2, 2019. The 25th annual Ideas Exchange will allow many Michigan schools to collaborate on relevant writing center ideas.

### **How to Compile Future MiWCA Archives**

Future MiWCA Ideas Exchanges will need to be archived to maintain the continuity of this timeline. Archiving can be done by selecting important documents from conferences and scanning them in chronological order. Documents will likely start with important pre-conference communication (e.g. details concerning conference topics and materials to bring) and/or conference programs. After the program, any relevant, accepted proposals and any session presentation handouts can be included. MiWCA Board Meetings should also be included in the archived materials. Those will likely start with board meeting schedules and then include meeting minutes, which likely will not be finalized for inclusion in the records until the following MiWCA conference board meeting. Any relevant calls for proposals or additional MiWCA information can be included after the board meeting materials.

After scanning MiWCA conference materials, they must be uploaded to the MiWCA website under the “Past MiWCA Conferences” page for records. Physical copies of the materials can be stored in file folders and kept with the institution until ready to be filed in the U-M Flint writing center archives. This responsibility can be passed down to future Oakland University Writing Center consultants or delegated to a member(s) of the writing center that hosts each year’s conference.



## References

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