

## President's Report

17th Annual CWCA/ACCR AGM (Virtual)

May 23, 2024

Presented by CWCA/ACCR President, Stevie Bell.

*The Canadian Writing Centres Association / association canadienne des centres de rédaction (CWCA/ACCR) acknowledges that the work of our association and our member centres takes place on the traditional lands of many Indigenous nations and communities across the geographical area now known as Canada. Our acknowledgement is a starting place for reconciliation and action, and we are committed, through our [Statement of Commitment to Antiracism](#), to actively countering the harms of racism and colonization in our work and in writing centre research, advocacy, and praxis.*

Dear members,

I am pleased to provide an update on the recent initiatives and developments within the Canadian Writing Centres Association / association canadienne des centres de rédaction (CWCA/ACCR). Top of mind for the board this year has been increasing uncertainty among members in light of the economic downturn in Canadian higher education. This concern is reflected in the board's Position Statement on precarity as well as the panel on precarity featured on the third day of the conference. It is the board's hope that the CWCA/ACCR's position statement on [Writing Centres in Canada](#) and the proposed Statement on Precarity in the agenda package will support members in their efforts to advocate for stable and appropriate support for writing instruction and writing program administration at institutions of higher education across the country. Members are also invited to contact the board to disclose changes at their institution and to request direct and personalized advocacy letters to their administration. Looking to next year, the board is gearing up to conduct a survey to document precarity amidst changing conditions.

This past year, the board has also kept a close eye on trends in generative AI and the ways it has been integrated into writing tools such as word processors (i.e., MSWord), plagiarism checkers (i.e., turnitin.com), and grammar suggesters (i.e., grammarly). We have considered penning a formal statement on generative AI-integrated writing tools based on this [crowdsourced response to the emergence of generative AI from Canadian writing experts](#), but have not felt ready/knowledgeable enough to do so. We invite member leadership on this front.

As a reminder, any member(s) can craft position statements and bring them to the membership for approval by majority vote. There is precedent for members doing this; for example, in 2020 the BCWCA executive group brought the statement on antiracism to the CWCA/ACCR's membership for approval. Members can bring position statements directly to the membership in an all-members' meeting with or without first requesting the CWCA/ACCR board's input.

Perhaps in light of precarity across the field, the board struggled to find volunteer conference chair(s) this year. This prompted the board to consider the extent to which this type of leadership work tends to be inaccessible to precariously employed individuals. The board decided that recognizing the value of this labour and providing financial compensation for it (where it is otherwise un-compensated by institutions) greatly enhances access to this type of leadership in the field. The board worked to create a process for hiring a conference chair or co-chairs among individuals without institutional recognition and funding for conference organization service work. We successfully hired a graduate student, worked to support them throughout, and saw their hard work come to fruition at this conference. Congratulations to Megan Gregorchuk for her excellent work on this conference! It has been a joy to see and support your impressive leadership this year.

The board has witnessed the possibilities that become available when this funding is available to precariously employed and/or under-compensated and/or under-resourced members and will seek to continue the practice of funding the conference chair position going forward. The projected cost of funding this position will be built into conference fees going forward, although the board will work to keep fees as low as possible and free for many members in an effort to remain as inclusive and accessible as possible.

In addition to the conference, the board has continued to oversee two opportunities for cross-institutional dialogue between members: the listserv and the CWCA/RCCR blog. The listserv is hosted by groups.io and is managed by the Membership Chair, Julia Lane. Members are encouraged to use this listserv to seek and share ideas, insights, creative solutions, challenges, etc. Please note that the listserv is a space for member dialogue; it is not monitored, controlled, or censored in any way by the CWCA/ACCR board. Should any member or group of members wish to bring issues forward to the board's attention, the best way to do so is to contact the Secretary, Jenna Goddard.

The CWCR/RCCR blog serves as an opportunity for members to explore ideas, offer works-in-progress, share programming reflections, and more. The board encourages members to make use of the blog as an opportunity for exchange and dialogue as well as professional development. It is a wonderful opportunity for knowledge mobilization as well as low-stakes publishing, especially for peer tutors and junior scholars. Please note that the CWCR/RCCR is in search of a new managing editor! Please contact Jenna if you're interested in exploring this opportunity to contribute.

I'd like to take a moment to formally thank my colleague and friend Brian Hotson for his leadership as the Canadian Writing Centre Review blog editor the last several years. Under Brian's direction, the CWCR has flourished, reaching 5 volumes since its launch in 2019 and garnering thousands of reads. This accomplishment has helped this new initiative develop a strong basis on which to continue expanding. Brian is always hustling to encourage colleagues across Canada to think of their work as worth sharing in writing (because it is). He is an engaged and empathetic mentor and has modeled a groundbreaking approach to editorial practice that integrates a writing centre tutoring ethic. I want to encourage Brian to recognize that this is worth writing about and, indeed, I hope he finds an avenue to share it as an editorial approach that many others may wish to emulate. He may consider the CWCR as a potential forum for this publication...

To conclude, I'd like to encourage all members to get involved in the organization in whatever capacity they can—in the CWCR blog, in the conference, in listserv discussions, in affiliate groups, in member initiatives, in advocacy work, and, of course, in service roles on the board. The CWCA/ACCR lives in these connections between us all.