

## **Institutionalizing Academic Writing Now: From Margins to Center**

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Over the last decade we could witness an immense growing of institutional writing support in higher education in many European countries. A remarkable number of writing centers and writing programs started, and research, conferences, publications and organizations on academic writing are still increasing. These developments could lead to the impression that academic writing eventually became central to academia in Europe. In other words: academic writing seemingly reached the importance in higher education that those of us, who chose teaching and researching academic writing as profession, hoped it would achieve. For us, the support for gaining writing competences and the use of writing as a tool for academic learning are key for higher education. But do other stakeholders really see this importance, too? How much do, besides our growing profession, professors in other disciplines, administrators and students care for academic writing? Do writing centers or programs get the resources they need? Do writing scholars get the same recognition for their research as scholars in other disciplines do?

From talking with colleagues I often get the impression that within our local university contexts, neither professors nor administration seem to care as much as we do about academic writing. In writing center literature, there is even a debate about feelings of “marginalization” (e. g. Macauley/Mauriello 2007). It seems as if the growing of our professional field, as important and pleasing as it is, might not reflect what happens in our local contexts. There, many of us still struggle with creating sustainable structures, establishing an awareness for the importance of academic writing or gaining respect for our scholarship.

In this keynote I am going to take a closer look at what lies behind this diffuse impression of marginalization or perceived degradation that many writing centers and writing programs tend to face in local university contexts. Based on the theoretical concept of institutional work (Lawrence et al. 2009) and on empirical research on the institutionalization of writing centers (Girgensohn 2016), I will introduce a model for institutionalizing academic writing that connects writing studies with organizational research. It offers a way for understanding the complexity of the work we conduct within our local contexts beyond teaching and research. It also provides practical guidance for this work within a European context, where in many countries academic writing support is still far away from being regular practice in higher education.

### **References**

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