



Call for Participants

11th Annual Naylor Workshop
on Undergraduate Research in Writing Studies
26 – 28 September 2025

Flipping the Script and Closing the Loop: From Undergraduate Research to Innovation

Some Background: There's been something knocking around in my head for a while now. Each year at Naylor, undergraduate researchers propose meaningful changes for the ways we educate. And each year, as we say goodbye at the end of an exhausting and fulfilling weekend, we often wonder what will come of those proposals. For many of us, the Naylor weekend sometimes feels like the story of *Brigadoon*, in which a blessed and magical village appears for a single day only once in a century and then disappears into the mist at day's end. Thanks to the generosity of our patrons, Irv and Diane Naylor, we have the opportunity to enjoy the blessings of Naylor every year. But what happens to these (often impassioned) calls for change when each year's workshop participants fly off into the mist?



This year, we'd like to address that question by playing with an idea that last year's attendees developed:

- *What if undergraduates and mentors not only focused upon refining their projects, but also partnered to develop a prototype / action plan to pilot the project?*
- *And what if, by weekend's end, undergraduates found a partner willing to pilot their prototyped idea (even in some small form) in their classroom or home institution?*

And let's remember (this year especially): One of the goals of the Naylor endowment—and of Writing Studies—is to advance social justice and literacy. Given the many challenges we currently face as a country to free speech, free and diverse expression, and care for the underserved, during this year's workshop, we are especially interested in ways that your work could support literacy and its relationship to **democracy, free speech, and civic engagement**. If applicable, tell us about how your work will serve the interests of social justice on your campus and/or in your communities, and in the important spaces between the two. **The final prompt on the proposal will allow you to speak to this.**

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- As always, we welcome proposals for research in any areas related to literacy and literacy education.
- Since language plays a role in all fields of study, language-related proposals from students in any discipline are welcome.
- We encourage work in progress, *from early ideas to almost-there work that would benefit by some feedback*. This is a workshop, not a conference, so we assume your ideas will grow and change!
- **Successful applicants also receive free room, food, registration, and funding to defray travel costs.**

This year, we especially encourage proposals from undergraduate researchers that *envision specific and concrete ways to improve writing instruction on your own and/or other college campuses*. If you were in charge, and based on your lived experience as an undergraduate as well as your early research, what change might you make, what innovation might you advocate for, what big idea would you float?

We invite proposals that innovate any location where writing instruction happens, such as (but not limited to):

- first-year programs or courses,
- upper division writing courses
- writing in the disciplines or in a specific discipline,
- courses for the underprepared or underrepresented,
- writing centers,
- community-based writing or workplace writing
- courses in writing majors, etc.

Developing your topic: The questions below are meant to help you think through your topics, not to limit them:

- How have your experiences in writing classes suggested the need for new practices in how literacy education is provided to both those in college and those who don't have access to higher education?
- In what ways has writing instruction (and writing centers) served, or failed to serve, students who are differently-abled, whose language skills do not fit the norm, or whose communication skills are not fully captured by traditional pedagogies?
- How does "academic writing" (and the ways we teach it) serve, or fail to serve, students and/or various communities? What ideas do you have for doing this work better—and how might you study and test those ideas?
- In your experience, how do writing centers value, or fail to value, all students' needs? How might Writing Centers do this work better? How might writing centers play a role in equitable approaches to race and other identity issues, and how might tutoring practices be more sensitive to cultural differences?
- How might new approaches to teaching creative writing be used to promote literacy education, social justice, and/or innovation?
- In what ways might we improve attention to the language styles of various disciplines—and employ new individuals in the work of teaching writing across disciplines?
- In what ways might the teaching and tutoring of writing be more sensitive to the needs of students with diverse language backgrounds, or whose mother tongue is not English? How might your research propose practices that serve underrepresented or marginalized students and/or their uses of language? How do you propose implementing these practices in systematic ways?
- Given that males have long been the dominant voice in colleges, how might feminist approaches to writing studies promote new and/or more equitable approaches to teaching and tutoring?
- In what ways might engagement in community-based research help students to see the value in their writing and communication skills? How might working with publics beyond the classroom change the experience of undergraduates?
- How might the teaching of literature promote literacy? How might we change literature courses to do that better? What new genres should we include to widen our understanding of what constitutes "literature."
- What might discourse analysis reveal about the role of language in various sectors of our culture—eg., in science, in business, in politics, etc.?

About the Naylor Workshop: In its decade, the Workshop has attracted over 200 students and mentors from over 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 Jessie Moore, Joyce Kinkead, Jess Enoch, Sheila Carter-Tod, Jane Greer, Laurie Grobman, and (Naylor alumnus) Megan Schoettler—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. Attendees report that by the end of the workshop 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.

READY TO APPLY? Start your application Process by downloading and completing the
[Researcher Proposal Form](#)