

## **Pedagogies of Relation: Using Writing to Promote Learning and Belonging in a Post Pandemic World**

We propose a two-day workshop bringing together AALAC-affiliated faculty and staff who work with student writing in various contexts to discuss how to rebuild inclusive communities through writing interventions in curricula and co-curricular spaces.

Over the past three years, our institutions have been marked by alienation, burnout and a sense, for many, of the erosion of community—a central pillar of the residential, liberal arts college experience. The events of the past several years have pushed us to reconsider the extent to which our institutions are, in fact, welcoming and supporting those we admit. Unequally shared experiences of the pandemic and the ongoing fight for racial justice in America throw into high relief the need for a greater sense of community on our campuses, and for interrogating how existing structures—institutional and conceptual—stand in the way of building and sustaining community for our students and ourselves in the “post-pandemic” era.

Drawing upon our own scholarly and professional expertise, we ask how writing—as practice, field of study, curricular priority, and area of academic support—can provide opportunities to foster inclusive community at SLACs. This workshop is geared towards faculty who teach writing across the disciplines and who are excited to rethink how we enact community at SLACs. Because writing is a way we move toward each other, a way we facilitate critical and reflective communication, and is an externalization of our histories and biases, as well as our creativity and intellectual energy, we see it as a foundation for building critical, inclusive community spaces.

Put simply, we want to take seriously how writing might form the basis for pedagogies of relation.

Held in June 2023 at Middlebury College, day 1 of the workshop will feature reflective sessions that lead faculty to consider their pedagogical structures and methods in the context of the post- pandemic and the push for greater inclusivity on campus. Day 2 will provide workshops where participants will compare experiences, discuss questions raised by facilitators in large and small groups, and develop materials and curricula.

### **Outcomes:**

We will work with participants on academic-focused [individual development plans](#) and will follow-up 6 months later through a survey that measures how (and whether) participants applied what they learned in the workshop to their pedagogy, mentorship, and/or research. We will be available to connect via Zoom, for a check-in, as well.

### **Foci of the workshop sessions:**

1. Disciplinary writing for non-expert communities (public science writing, or “wicked problems” like climate change, systemic inequity, medical justice, linguistic justice etc.)
2. “Picking up the ‘SLAC’”: Admission is not inclusion, or, how to foster sustainable community in writing spaces on campus, curricular and extra
3. Writing Beyond the Curriculum/Writing Beyond Writing: digital storytelling, oral communication, individual and community reflection, visual rhetoric
4. Language justice and translangualism in writing curricula across the disciplines

Our overall goal is to provide faculty with tools to make concrete changes in the way they welcome, connect, and support students in their own work, both within and outside the writing classroom, and to raise critical questions that faculty can bring back to their institutions about the broader structural changes we can make to develop inclusive, diverse, and equitable communities for our students. Writing can foster inclusion at our colleges as it touches all we do at SLACs.

## **Workshop Leaders**

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