



Philosophy and Commitment to Antiracism

The College of DuPage (COD) Writing, Reading, Speech Assistance (WRSA) area fully supports the College's vision and mission for diversity and inclusion. In addition to providing academic assistance to the subjects listed in the acronym, WRSA, our staff seeks to articulate and affirm our dedication and commitment to providing a space in which all students and staff feel **W**elcome, **R**espected, **S**afe, and **A**ccepted.

In its mission statement, the COD Learning Commons states that its underlying purpose is to serve as a "comprehensive center that provides academic support to all College of DuPage students and staff . . ." WRSA is a subset of the Learning Commons and was founded with the goal of facilitating lively, collaborative discourse to assist students in developing strategies to become better writers, readers, and speakers. WRSA services are not only intended to assist students in their academic growth, but in their development as human beings and awareness of antiracism, as well.

We recognize that post-secondary education and, more specifically, the concept of "academic" writing and speaking perpetuated by these institutions can demonstrate oppressive standards for students of color. We also recognize that writing centers, as a training ground for post-secondary writers, readers, and thinkers, can do one of two things: remain complacent in these institutional ideals or challenge them. In WRSA, we choose to challenge the dominant narrative. We affirm that there is no singular English language and strive to contest the constraining notions of writing, analyzing, and speaking. Further, we aim to revise inequitable and outdated practices.

Our current staff includes a mix of multidisciplinary Academic Assistants from a myriad of backgrounds. Cultural, linguistic, and academic diversity provides the solid foundation for which WRSA prides itself. Through professional development, Safe Zone training, required modules focused on social injustice and discrimination as it relates to academic literacies, discussion, and research, WRSA coaches eagerly learn equitable pedagogies for coaching to ground their practices in antiracist philosophy and racial awareness. WRSA emphasizes student agency, critical literacy, and building writer awareness for all student populations. Through our practices, our mission is to provide the highest level of support for underrepresented groups based on an antiracism/race theory perspective.



A team of lifelong learners, WRSA coaches are dedicated to continuing to explore issues of antiracism and social justice and are committed, but not limited, to the following actions:

- We commit to ongoing critical reflection of past and current systems of oppression in efforts to play our role in the combat of such systems.
- We acknowledge that there is a standardized language of oppression that exists within academia and vow to continue educating ourselves and our students when presented with examples of oppressive language during appointments.
- We affirm that there are many ways to speak and write so as not to assume a default, universal, or discriminative form of the English language. To best serve our students, WRSA staff includes and learns from specialized ESL Consultants.
- We listen to students, reassure student agency, encourage self-advocacy, and fight for marginalized voices to be heard.
- We maintain scheduling policies to ensure availability of services for all student populations, as well as to avoid an over-reliance on coach assistance resulting in students' loss of work ownership.
- We examine our own positionalities and implicit biases in order to foster lively engagement with students in a non-judgmental manner focused on student success.
- We will name racism when we see it, as we adopt a no-tolerance-for-racism policy in WRSA. Issues will be addressed as necessary.
- We work collaboratively with all members of the College of DuPage community, simultaneously leaving the authority of work in students' hands and remaining sensitive to where they are in their learning.
- We will not turn students away and will serve experienced and inexperienced writers, readers, and speakers in any discipline at all stages of the writing, reading, and speech processes.
- We strive to provide a non-threatening environment and safe place for students and will act as allies for those that may benefit from additional College referrals in the forms of Financial Aid, Veterans Services, Access and Accommodations, Counseling and Advising, and information on resources for food insecurities and student diversity inclusion.
- We provide resources on "Tips to Avoid Oppressive Writing" on our web page.
- We look to hire qualified staff irrespective of their race, color, religion or creed, gender, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, citizenship status, or physical or mental handicap or disability (if otherwise able to perform the essential functions of the job with reasonable accommodation).
- Our ultimate aim is to help students develop their voice, skills, and critical thinking. Rather than focusing on fixing, editing, or correcting a student's rhetoric or language use, we celebrate opportunities to discuss a writer's decisions, thought processes, stylistic choices, and understanding of assignment details as individual learners.
- We commit to ongoing assessment of our progress on the aforementioned items, as well as adopt new action steps as we continue to learn.
- We invite feedback on this document and welcome suggestions in our steps towards antiracism.

College of DuPage

Writing, Reading, Speech Assistance



425 Fawell Blvd.
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137-
6599

(630) 942-3355
cod.edu/write

College of DuPage Campus Resources

College of DuPage Mission, Vision, and Values:

https://www.cod.edu/about/mission_vision_values.aspx

Center for Student Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

https://www.cod.edu/student_life/resources/csdi/index.aspxhttps://www.cod.edu/student_life/resources/csdi/index.aspx

The Learning Commons Policies:

https://www.cod.edu/academics/learning_commons/pdf/learningcommonspolicies.pdf

Writing, Reading, Speech Assistance Mission:

https://www.cod.edu/academics/learning_commons/writing/coaching.aspx

College of DuPage Institutional Philosophy:

https://www.cod.edu/about/mission_vision_values.aspx

College of DuPage Equity Statement and Values statement:

https://www.cod.edu/student_life/resources/csdi/

College of DuPage Center for Student Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

https://www.cod.edu/student_life/resources/csdi/

College of DuPage #ChapsUnite Against Racism:

<https://www.cod.edu/about/chaps-unite-against-racism/>

LGBTQIA+ at College of DuPage:

https://www.cod.edu/student_life/resources/lgbtq/

Counseling, Advising and Transfer Services

https://cod.edu/student_life/resources/counseling/