

Discussing GenAI Use in Writing Consultations

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HOWE **WRITING** CENTER

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Overview

Introduction

Questions for the Group

Case Studies

Q & A



Introduction

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is a new agent in our writing center ecosystem.

- Consultants must understand how to discuss it with writers in a manner that supports effective, ethical, and developmentally appropriate use.
- Since 2024, three Tutors' Columns in WLN have been dedicated to consultants questioning the role of GenAI in consultations (Patchen 2024; Lester 2024; Neves 2025).

Goal: Help consultants feel prepared to address GenAI use in consultations and improve support for writers who may use it in their processes.

Dani Lester, "GenAI in the Writing Center," 2024

- "GenAI, by nature of its creation and monetization, obfuscates authentic positional perspective and limits diversity in authorial voices" (Lester).
- Example of speech to text tutoring instead of directly addressing AI use in consultations.

Timoteo Neves, "Harnessing the Power of GenAI," 2025

- Used AI to stimulate thought and prevent writer's block in a consultation.
- "Writing centers offer an essential human element" (Neves).
- Tutors can model GenAI to enhance creativity and critical thinking.

Abigail Patchen, "The People Make the Place," 2025

- Tutors have supplemental knowledge that GenAI does not.
- GenAI can aid student development, but it cannot scaffold and develop a writer.
- "We can do everything AI can do, but AI cannot do everything we can" (Patchen).



Our Take on AI

As consultants at the Howe Center for Writing Excellence, we hold the following beliefs.

- We are committed to helping writers develop critical thinking and composing skills.
- Artificial intelligence can serve as an aid in composing processes, but we do not believe that GenAI should be used in place of an author's original vocabulary or ideas.
- Transparency about AI usage in writing centers can help consultants navigate sessions, and that implies that consultants should not be reporting unauthorized uses of AI.
- Consultants should be informed and available to discuss ethical uses of AI in student consultations.

If you've *discussed* GenAI use in consultations or with consultants, what affective responses did you have?



In what ways
have you seen
writers ***use*** GenAI
in consultations?

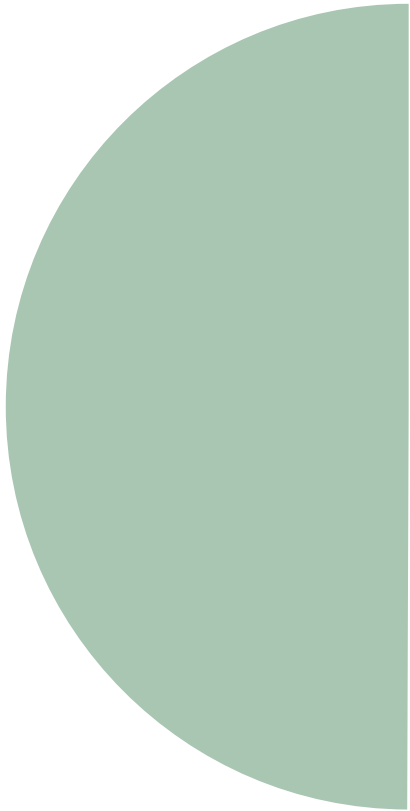
Share a story?




Did you feel comfortable addressing or responding to AI use?

Would you have responded differently looking back?





How should
consultants talk to
writers when
consultants and staff
members have varied
and dynamic
perspectives on AI?



Possible Scenarios

Scenario #1: A consultant who is anti-AI has to work with a writer who has engaged with AI in their composing process?

What kind of training might prepare consultants to have a conversation about AI use?



Possible Scenarios

Scenario #2: An ESL student comes to your writing center to discuss a final draft and states that they have used AI heavily for grammar, tone, and phrasing. How would you address this use of AI in a consultation? Does an anti-AI policy limit ESL students?





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Thank you!

Any questions?



Works Cited

Hall, Brady. "Generative AI and Linguistic Equity for EL Writers Across Disciplines." *WLN: A Journal of Writing Center Scholarship*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2025.

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