

# Rachel Robinson

## Administrative Philosophy

My administrative philosophy stems from my understanding of writing centers, programs, and departments as spaces that acknowledge whole personhood in their connections between university structures and the students they serve. I enact this through a deep commitment to valuing whole people (bodies and emotions) in the spaces in which I work with students and faculty and through a constant accountability of my own positionality in the academy. Embodying a stance and space invested in the needs of students and faculty from within the university allows administrators to be more dedicated to student growth and development. As an administrator—for both writing centers and writing programs—I believe my job is to help students and faculty see a place for their whole personhood on campus, creating space for their work to be transformative.

My position as an administrator is one of balance and flexibility. I believe administrators are at their best when they are aware of where they can push and pull at their own policies and procedures in order to afford students and faculty the agency they need. In order to do this, administrators must be aware of the needs of their students and faculty and must make themselves available to them in ways that allow for students and faculty to talk openly and honestly about their needs.

Administrators act as a go-between for faculty, students, and stakeholders. Therefore, administrators need to be flexible in their approaches to working with these groups in order to build relationships that serve all. In order to remain flexible, yet strategic, in my approach to working with these groups, I consider the needs of students, faculty, and stakeholders while building campus relationships that further the mission of the writing program. In practice, this work often shows up in assessment and reporting. For example, quantitative data—like student evaluations, teaching observations and consultant reports—should be collected and examined each semester alongside more qualitative data, like stories and first-person reports of classrooms and writing centers. Together, this data helps paint a picture of a whole department that values whole people transparently and with deep interest. Developing an ethos of interest and transparency allows a department to maintain funding and relationships and, therefore, continue working toward progressive and transformative institutional practices.

Finally, as an administrator, it's imperative to me that consultants in writing centers and faculty in classrooms understand the values of the multiple voices, and multiple Englishes, that might be heard and used in academic spaces. Understanding that writers are the experts of their own tongues should help consultants and faculty see the value of true collaborative work and of student agency. To help consultants understand these values, as an administrator I must be prepared to answer questions and provide training on multiple Englishes while also educating faculty on the mission of the writing center or writing program. In practice, this work often looks like rigorous training for all and (un)learning for some. For example, workshops from experts in the field provide not only a chance for consultants and faculty to listen first, but also provide a model for diversity from which programs and centers can grow.

# Rachel Robinson

*Administrative Philosophy*

It is important to make sure my consultants and faculty understand that the center and the classroom are invested in them and their students as whole people. In an academic environment, this understanding encourages consultants and faculty to approach their work in a way that acknowledges the intersectional identities—and sometimes languages—across the table, or screen, from them and meet their writer where they are.