

Carolinas WPA 2017 Wildacres Retreat Call for Proposals

By *Patrick Bahls* on June 30, 2017

Call for Proposals

14th Annual Fall Carolinas Writing Program Administrators Conference

Communities and Contact Zones: Doing Justice

September 18-20, 2017 | Wildacres Retreat, Little Switzerland, NC ([Directions](#)) | \$200 (includes 2 nights lodging and 5 meals)

- **Proposal deadline: Friday, August 25, 2017**
- **Registration deadline: Monday, September 11, 2017**

[Carolinas Writing Program Administrators](#) is accepting proposals on the theme of “Communities and Contact Zones: Doing Justice” for its Fourteenth Annual Fall Conference.

Twenty-six years after Mary Louise Pratt published “The Arts of the Contact Zone,” our profession continues to grapple with ways to call out colonialism in our classrooms and universities. We seek ways to invite heterogeneity of expression and perspectives, and we strive to work with conflict and discomfort in ever-contested learning spaces. Our conference site itself is a contact zone in which the white supremacist history of the property contrasts with its present mission to serve as an inclusive, anti-discriminatory site for dialog across differences. The dialectic between community and difference that Pratt calls attention to comes into play in nearly every aspect of our work in the Carolinas as we attempt to do justice to our best ideas, do justice with our students and colleagues, and do justice in often conflicted institutional contexts.

What are you working on in your classrooms, your programs, or your research? What challenges are you experiencing in your communities, in your justice work? What successes have you had in working with or across differences? How do we do justice to the ideas, like Pratt’s, that invigorate our work? As teachers, as program leaders, as community members, as researchers, how do we do justice with each other? How might the community of Carolinas WPA further your work toward those ends?

Keynote and Workshops: “Contemplating Race: Mindfulness as Antiracist Pedagogy.” **Emma**

Howes and **Christian Smith** from Coastal Carolina University will facilitate workshops on using contemplative practices in the classroom to enact antiracist pedagogy. They will discuss some of the theoretical background for this work, providing exercises that cultivate mindfulness to build critical literacy skills in spaces where differing discourses meet. They will also address the ways we, as instructors and administrators, may benefit from our own development of contemplative work. In this way, participants will be asked to consider the value in creating slow reading and writing practices to facilitate agents to more carefully consider their initial encounters with text. This encourages deep engagement with literacy practices for navigating multiple, often clashing, discourses, and helps build empathy through the work of deep, rhetorical listening. Contemplative practices may thus allow students of writing to move from affectively-driven reactions to reflective responses.

Conference Schedule and Format. The conference begins at 5:00 pm on Monday, September 18, and concludes at 10:00 am on Wednesday, September 20. A keynote talk on Monday evening will be followed by a full day Tuesday of workshops, small breakout interest groups, and activities on the beautiful mountaintop of Wildacres Retreat, with a closing session Wednesday morning. All meals are provided.

The conference format encourages engagement of participants from a broad variety of institutions and programs.

Those presenting should prepare for 15-20 minutes to discuss their work and seek feedback from those with shared interests. Those leading retreat activities or mini-workshops should prepare for 45-60 minutes focused on lively participant involvement.

Wildacres Retreat is a low-tech setting conducive to relaxing, collaborating, and learning with friends and colleagues across the Carolinas.

Proposals. You are entirely welcome to attend this conference without presenting, but those whose proposals are accepted will be listed on the formal agenda, which may help with obtaining travel funding. Proposals also help us plan appropriate interest groups and design activities around members' goals.

We welcome creative interpretation of the theme. This forum is especially appropriate for work that would benefit from feedback and focused workshop time. Carolinas WPA welcomes individual and team presentations at any stage of development and from people working in any teaching or administrative positions related to writing in the Carolinas.

You may submit a proposal for one of two types of activity:

- **Individual or team presentation** to be placed into 1-hr discussion groups with other presenters. Plan for approximately 20 minutes per person including discussion time.
- **Retreat activity:** Solo or co-lead anything from yoga or an Appalachian plant identification walk to a mini-workshop related to the conference theme. Plan to have 45- to 60-minutes. We welcome creative use of Wildacres' indoor and outdoor common spaces.

Be prepared to work without AV equipment. (Internet is *very* limited and we may not have access to projectors.) Each proposal should be 250 – 500 words including:

- Names and contact information (email, phone, home institution) for each person associated with your proposal
- Type of activity (individual or team presentation 15-20 minutes per person; retreat activity or mini-workshop of 45-60 minutes)
- A title and brief description of what you will share
- Your specific goals for presenting
- Questions for attendees that will help you elicit feedback relevant to your goals.

Submit your proposal via email to Collie Fulford (collie.fulford@gmail.com) and Paula Patch (ppatch@elon.edu) by 11:59PM Monday August 25, 2017, using the subject line "CarWPA Proposal yourlastname."

Registration and Cost. The registration fee of \$200 includes 2 nights' lodging and 5 meals at Wildacres, as well as all conference materials. Conferencegoers must register by **Monday, September 11, 2017**. No refunds after Friday, September 8. The registration link will be opening soon on our [conference page](#).

Questions or Comments? – Contact Collie Fulford at collie.fulford@gmail.com.