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### The Art of Likes: Writing Centers' Navigation of Social Media Tensions

#### **Panel Abstract:**

This panel considers how writing centers might best use social media. Three presentations explore the potential benefits and inherent tensions created when WCs join online communities to share their artistry. First, presenters share their marketing materials created with special attention to social media design features. The next presenter asks what assemblage theory teaches us about social media usage. Finally, two presenters share how their university's writing center supports instructors' development of anti-racist curricula through social media content. Attendees and panelists will discuss most valuable practices for social media usage and leave with new ideas to implement in their own centers.

#### **Panel Proposal:**

“An artist's duty,” according to Nina Simone, “is to reflect the times.” In this light, writing centers' use of social media, especially as it pertains to the promotion of social justice, becomes an artistic endeavor. However, little research examines the art of navigating the tension created when capitalist platforms are used for anti-racist education. By exploring recruitment, promotion, assemblage, and the development of community resources, this panel carefully considers how writing centers might best use social media.

While the first set of presenters are administrators whose writing resource center enjoys a well-established social media following, they annually recast their online presence with the help of marketing interns. The WRC is housed as part of the University Writing Program, but its operations are somewhat separated from it. Despite the resulting institutional, financial, and perceptual constraints, the WRC administration and staff create art. After presenting a curated collection of marketing materials, the presenters discuss challenges and opportunities resulting from their focus on marketing, then facilitate a dialogue on how best to navigate these constraints while promoting the vibrant WRC community.

A second presentation asks, “What can assemblage theory help writing centers know about social media usage?” Assemblage theory emerged from art (Seitz) and philosophy (Deleuze and Guattari) but has entered rhetoric and composition (Johnson-Eilola and Selber). Combining these three disciplines, the presenter first defines assemblage theory and identifies several relevant concepts. She then (re)conceptualizes WC social media practices in three areas: existing conversations about social media in writing centers, space, and ethics. Through this thought experiment, participants are invited to apply an artistic awareness of the elements that compose their own centers and to think more critically about social media usage.

Finally, two WC consultants share content developed in response to calls from scholars such as Asao B. Inoue to employ anti-racist pedagogy. With the 2017 discovery of the remains of enslaved people underneath a campus building, the presenters’ community must address a university’s racist history that still exerts considerable influence. Given both social media’s and writing centers’ close, though complex, relationship to social justice, Facebook emerges as a space to encourage writing instructors’ development of anti-racist curricula. The presenters discuss strategies in their effort to reframe existing writing center best-practices as explicitly anti-racist work through the creation of online content. This act of reframing requires artistry in the creation of visual content and in the bridging of seemingly disparate concerns.