WCRP□: ORAL HISTORY GENERAL QUESTIONS

The following are the basic questions for WCRP oral history interviews. These questions can be revised and altered as we do the interview, and some might be omitted if you wish. Feel free to identify any of the general questions that you consider irrelevant for your interview, but please do not dismiss questions without due consideration—an oral history interview is a mind and memory exercise so it does not matter if everything that you say comes out in chronological order. Feel free to add information related to your publications, projects, and points of interest and even your experiences with students. Feel free to talk about all these things in more detail (or you can summarize). The whole process is very flexible. We can stop when you wish for a break too. Let’s see how it goes.

General:

Will you tell me a little about your background?

Where did you grow up?

Get your education?

Writing Center Experiences

How did you get involved in writing center work? □

Years? Locations? If multiple locations, we might want to do a set of questions for each place.

What training, if any, did you have in writing center administration before your first position as director?

Did you feel prepared?

How was the center staffed?

How many people were on staff? □

What formal training was available for your staff?

What methods did you use? □

Where was your center located? □

What people/experiences influenced you the most or helped you determine future plans? □

Were you affiliated with an academic department, student services, or independent? □

What was your employment status at the various writing centers you’ve been involved
with (faculty or staff, administrative or non-administrative, tenured or untensed, part- or full-time)?

How much support did you receive from your institution(s)?

How do you think other teachers and administrators not working in the writing center perceived the work you and your staff did in the writing center?

Do you have a favorite story about your writing center experiences or something that stands out as a defining moment or occurrence?

What do you consider your greatest successes in the writing centers you’ve worked in?

What have you done particularly well?

What were the most challenging experiences or difficulties you remember?

Regional & National Writing Center Work:

What regional and national writing center organizations did you participate in during your time as a writing center director?

Did you hold any elected offices or receive any recognition as part of your participation?

Please tell us something about each of the writing center offices you held or honors you received at the regional level.

Please tell us something about each of the writing center offices you held or honors you received at the national level.

Is there anything else you would like to share with the archive about your regional and national writing center experience?

Present:

How many years have you worked in writing centers?

How involved are you with the writing center community today? Local? Regional? National?

How has your early writing center work influence your current professional career as an administrator and/or as a teacher?

Are you still in contact with writing center professionals?

What changes have you observed in writing centers since your were a writing center director?

In your opinion, how does the writing center community compare or differ from other
academic/professional communities?

If you could tell future scholars about writing centers and you work in them, what would you most like for them to learn from what you’re shared in your oral history?

Do you have anything else you’d like to add?

Do you have any historical materials related to your writing center or to the regional and national writing center organizations your affiliated with that you would be willing to donate to the WCRP?