

Spring 2018

## Empowering Metacognition in the Writing Center

Katelyn Parsons  
*University of Southern Maine*

Deanna Richards  
*University of Southern Maine*

Garrett Erb  
*University of Southern Maine*

Jake Angelico  
*University of Southern Maine*

Vic Schalk  
*University of Southern Maine*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking\\_matters](https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking_matters)



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#), [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Student Counseling and Personnel Services Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Parsons, Katelyn; Richards, Deanna; Erb, Garrett; Angelico, Jake; and Schalk, Vic, "Empowering Metacognition in the Writing Center" (2018). *Thinking Matters Symposium Archive*. 162.  
[https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking\\_matters/162](https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/thinking_matters/162)

This Poster Session is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at USM Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Thinking Matters Symposium Archive by an authorized administrator of USM Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [jessica.c.hovey@maine.edu](mailto:jessica.c.hovey@maine.edu).



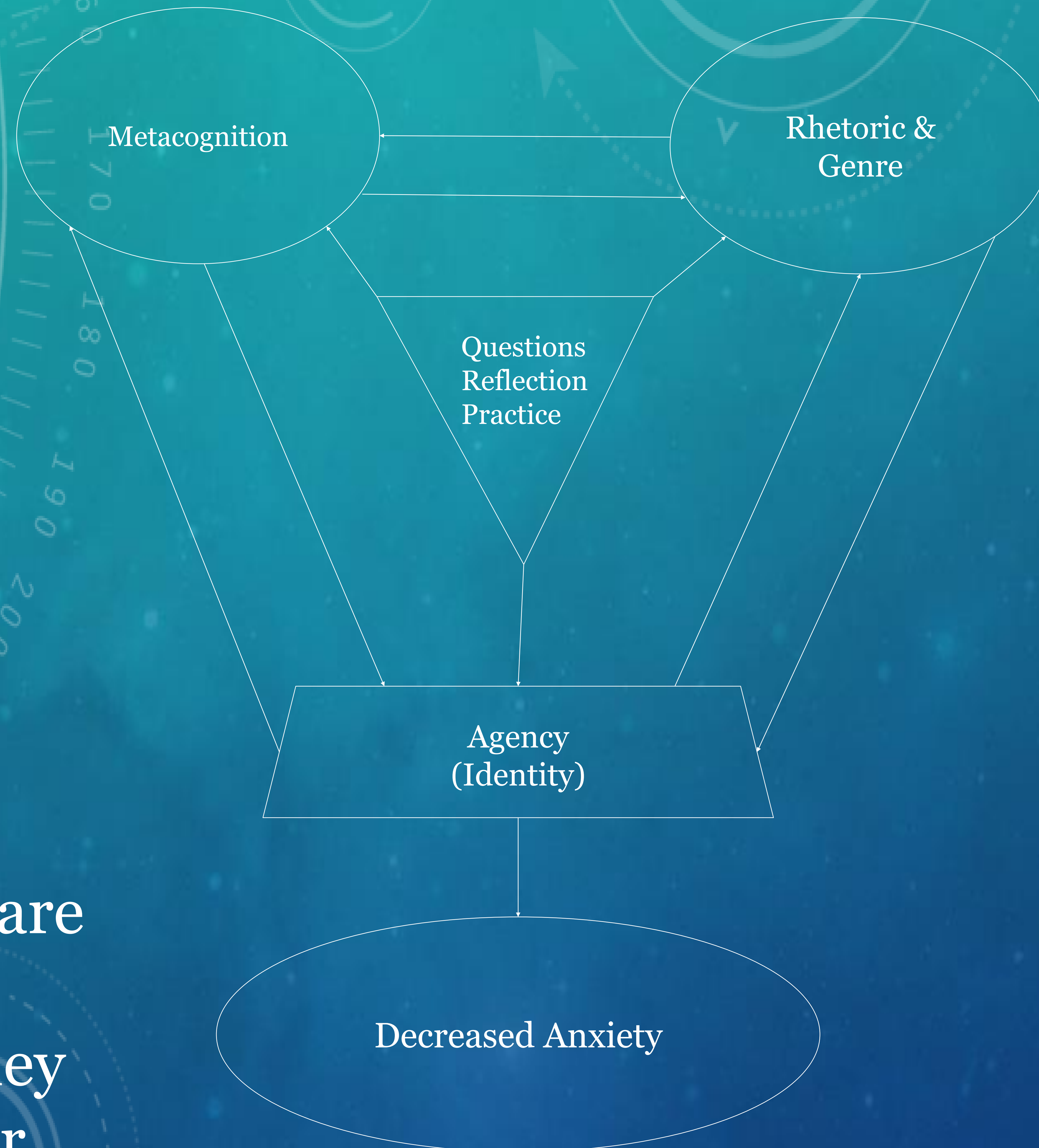
# Empowering Metacognition in the Writing Center

Deanna Richards, Garrett Erb, Jake Angelico, Katelyn Parsons, Vic Schalk, with faculty mentor Patricia Hager  
LAC 335 & 338

## Abstract

Anxiety about writing often impedes students from writing. This “writing paralysis” is often seen at the Writing Center. In order to become better writers, writers need to reflect, ask questions, and practice writing. These strategies enable the development of a metacognitive process that empowers student writers to understand why certain rhetorical conventions are chosen over others. The Writing Center encourages metacognition by facilitating writing strategies with student writers. This project explores how the Writing Center’s work assists the process of metacognition by asking questions about student writing processes and drawing on students’ knowledge of different genres and intended audiences. We then consider how students can transcribe the answers to these questions into future writing.

When writers are aware that they’re making rhetorical choices, they feel more agency over their writing.



## Writing Center Strategies:

### Questioning

*Asking questions about rhetorical decisions*

### Reflecting

*Reflecting on past writing experiences*

### Practicing

*Encouraging drafting--writing is recursive*

## Conclusion

By promoting understanding of how rhetorical conventions differ across disciplines, and by empowering students to be aware of their rhetorical choices, we can reduce the anxiety that often inhibits the writing process.

### References

- Bazerman, C. & Tinberg, H. (2015). Writing is an expression of embodied cognition. In L. Adler-Kassner & E. Wardle (Eds.), *Naming what we know: Threshold concepts of writing strategies* (pp. 74-75). doi:10.7330/9781607325789.c005
- Salem, L. (2016). Decisions...decisions: Who chooses to use the Writing Center? *The Writing Center Journal*, 35(2), 147-171. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43824060>
- Taczak, K. (2015). Reflection is critical for writers' development. In L. Adler-Kassner & E. Wardle (Eds.), *Naming what we know: Threshold concepts of writing strategies* (pp. 78-79). doi:10.7330/9781607325789.c005
- Weisser, C., Reiff, M.J., & Dryer, D.B. (2015). From the editors: 30 years of genre as social action: The past, present, and possible futures of RGS. *Composition Forum*, 31. Retrieved from <http://compositionforum.com/issue/31/from-the-editors.php>