

TABLE 1
Data from Returned Questionnaires (N = 224)

	Mean	SD
1. % freshmen w/adequate skills	28.1	16.9
2. % sophomores w/adequate skills	34.7	19.2
3. % juniors w/adequate skills	46.3	21.8
4. % seniors w/adequate skills	51.3	21.7
5. % graduates w/adequate skills	63.9	22.2
6. Kinds of Writing	Total	Percent
essay exams	16	30.16
lecture notes	14	40.14
term papers	13	70.14
brief papers	10	70.10
formal reports	87	0.08
research reviews	74	0.07
summaries	71	0.07
journals	63	0.06
other	58	0.05
lab reports	49	0.05
workbook entries	21	0.02
7. Which Three to Improve	Total	Percent
observing standard grammar	107	0.16
organizing (essay)	100	0.15
originating main/support ideas	81	0.12
organizing (paragraph)	80	0.12
spelling	62	0.09
using logic	56	0.08
punctuating	38	0.05
using vocabulary	33	0.05
proofreading	30	0.04
revising	28	0.04
varying sentence patterns	22	0.03
writing for different audiences	18	0.02
8. Reasons for Not Assigning Writing	Mean	SD
excess time & energy to respond	1.90	1.09
too many students	1.81	1.23
rife student problems	1.66	1.15
nonconductive course matter	0.68	0.98
instructor uncertain of response	0.58	0.78
poor teaching evaluations	0.47	0.85
low registration	0.27	0.71
instructor's ignorance of skills	0.26	0.58
instructor's ignorance of grammar	0.25	0.57
other	0.19	0.69
9. Recommended WAC Activities	Total	Percent
writing courses in all disciplines	137	0.21
writing required in General College	119	0.18
university-wide writing exit exam	112	0.17
faculty workshops	88	0.13
more required writing in English	78	0.12
team with English faculty	67	0.10
other	34	0.05
10. Incentives	Mean	SD
fewer students per class	2.75	1.23
reduced teaching load	2.92	1.11
additional pay	3.10	1.22
credit on year-end evaluation	3.22	1.07
no special incentive	3.29	1.15
reduced advising load	3.90	0.46
eligibility for summer school	3.92	0.34

Writing Center Support for Writing Across the Curriculum

Patrick Bizzaro, M.T. Crane-Rodger and Collett Dilworth
East Carolina University

The problems addressed by writing across the curriculum (hereafter, WAC) programs have both a national and a local significance. No doubt models exist at a wide range of universities for attacking the problems we are confronting at East Carolina University. But prototype programs, such as those at Michigan Tech and Beaver College as well as those modeled on the Bay Area Writing Project, have had but limited success when applied to the specific situations of universities other than the ones that developed them. As one theorist has put it, "the fundamental problem of WAC is not so much pedagogical as political, not how to create a sound program (that has been possible for decades), but rather how to administer it, how to place it firmly in the complex organization structure of the university" (Russell 184). Programs involving the use of writing as a tool for improved learning across the disciplines must be developed in each university by taking into account the unique features of the institution, its faculty, its students, its administrators, and its "feeder" system.

In fact, the local issues--the immediate and identifiable reasons for developing a WAC program--must provide a more compelling argument for instituting changes in instruction and in the various uses of writing than any national issue. After all, we can hardly expect our colleagues or ourselves to simply give in to the storm of sentiment in favor of WAC. We can no longer rest satisfied with the rhetoric of change so forcefully employed in early attempts at encouraging teachers in all disciplines to use writing in their classes. No more persuasive argument for gathering information and using that information as a basis for making WAC a natural part of a university's offerings exists than a quick look at what has happened to many of the programs developed at universities that modeled themselves after the prototypes.

At East Carolina, we realized that prior to designing a program, we needed to gather certain kinds of information, on the one hand, and only then adapt existing programs to the demands of our new needs, in this case to more successfully meet the way that existing programs were massaged until they more comfortably suited our current idea of the importance of writing as a tool for learning as well as for a tool for communicating learning.

1. Information Needed

East Carolina University is a state university located on the coastal plains of North Carolina. The student population of 14,000 includes nearly 8,000 men and women from eastern North Carolina (that is, from the area east of Raleigh). Students entering ECU have an average SAT score of 860. As we might have anticipated, they also have marginal reading and writing skills.

To deal with growing concern over the inadequate literacy skills of its students, the university committed itself to the development and growth of a multi-purpose writing center. Guidance to the director is offered by a Writing Center Steering Committee. With representation from 20 different units, departments and schools in the university, the topic of concern gradually--and, perhaps, inevitably--turned to the writing skills of students in their major areas. Anecdotal accounts of the travails of our graduates on the job provoked further and more statistical concerns.

We wanted, at first, to find out more about that 56% of our student population who come to ECU from the coastal plains. First, we found out the rating of students across the state as writers when compared to students from other states across the country. A 1985-86 writing achievement test revealed that only 21.7% of all North Carolina high school students were able to demonstrate adequate or better writing skills as compared to a national average of 30.9%. In statewide writing tests administered annually in North Carolina to all 11th graders, students in eastern North Carolina score lower than students from other parts of the state. We found that we had a particular

Items #1-#5 show the percents of students who manifest adequate writing skills according to the respondents. Because the intervals between these seven figures are arbitrarily set (25%, 33%, 50%, etc.) the means and standard deviations reflect these varying intervals, not a true equal interval scale. Still, the tendency is clear for rating of student writing ability to increase with students' class rank. Deemed "adequate" are about 1/3 of the freshmen and sophomores and about 1/2 of the juniors and seniors. Endorsement of graduate students' writing (about 2/3 rated "adequate") is less than hearty.

Response to item #6 were collapsed for this tally: if a kind of writing was listed for one or more courses by a respondent, it was counted once. The sums, therefore, represent the number of professors who use each type of writing in their instruction. Essay exams, lecture notes, and term papers are the most common types of writing required of students by professors in this sample.

The responses to item #7 show a concern for the traditional categories of rhetoric: style ("observing standard grammar"), arrangement ("organizing-- essay--paragraph"), and invention ("originating and supporting ideas" and "using logic").

The major inhibitions to teaching writing (item #8) relate mostly to the size of the problem and to the great effort required to teach writing. Less concern is given to instructors' knowledge and abilities and to adverse response by students. Few respondents indicate that lacking knowledge of "grammar" inhibits them from teaching writing.

The relatively high rating of "fewer students per class" and "reduced teaching load" as incentives to participate in WAC (item #9) complements the concern with the great effort required to teach writing indicated in item #8. This pattern suggests the staff is willing to undertake the work with little external incentive if the work can be made possible.

The most popular ways to implement WAC are to institute university wide policies mandating writing across the curriculum. Less popular are staff development programs and English Department initiatives.

Table 2 below shows correlations of responses to items #8 and #9 on the questionnaire. Relating these two items can reveal the relationship between what inhibits professors from teaching writing and the incentives that might address these inhibitions. The correlations show three factors: 1) concern with the size of the problem, 2) concern with student opinion, and 3) concern with knowledge of how to teach writing. The only incentives that show a relationship with faculty inhibitions are those that pertain to the size of the problem. As concern with the size of the problem increases, so does interest in lower teaching load and fewer students per class. Also related to this factor is an indication of "no special incentive," a tendency suggesting that the more faculty are concerned with the problem, the more willing they are to address it without extra incentive.

TABLE 2
Correlations of Items in #8 with Themselves and with Items in #9 (N=224)

	Inhibitions to Teaching Writing				Reg	Res?		
	Too Skil?	Cour	Rife Time Gram?	Eval				
Too Skil?	100	0	30	59	2	16	6	7
Cour	100	100	14	17	81	17	30	37
Rife			100	0	21	12	14	14
Time Gram				100	40	19	28	28
Eval					100	14	30	20
Reg						100	17	40
Res?							100	63
								100

problem--a problem, perhaps, unique to our institution--with the feeder schools whose graduates populate our classes.

To further determine the depth of our problem, the Steering Committee set out to measure that percentage of incoming freshmen capable of demonstrating in a placement essay minimal competency as writers. Between 1983 and 1987, nearly 12,000 students wrote placement essays. Using common criteria to measure success or failure--the ability to write sentences and to avoid major errors in grammar and punctuation, the ability to limit a subject to a workable size, the ability to stay on a chosen subject for the duration of a piece of writing, and the ability to follow a recognizable pattern of organization--we discovered that nearly 40% of our students enter the university as deficient writers.

We also wanted to find out what happens to students once they graduate from the university and take jobs in the community. In a 1986 study of ECU graduates writing on the job at two local industries, we found that nearly 82% of those surveyed had not received training in writing since freshman composition. This high percentage most concerned us when we found that these same employees spend 23% of their worktime composing documents and 17% of their worktime reading the documents of others. Further, 89% of those surveyed indicated that writing is of great or crucial importance to their job. Yet those surveyed stated that they have not been prepared to do the writing required of them on the job.

The Writing Center Steering Committee brought this information to the Faculty Senate, which unanimously approved a resolution that a proposal for writing across the curriculum be developed for East Carolina University. The Senate appointed all of the members of the Steering Committee to a Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Writing Across the Curriculum, chaired by the Director of the Writing Center who has since served as a Special Advisor to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in lieu of his responsibilities in the Writing Center.

Further information needed to be obtained, for the Senate charged the committee with the following tasks: (1) to collect relevant information about research on writing; (2) to study writing-across-the-curriculum programs in use at other institutions with student populations similar to the student population at East Carolina University; (3) to analyze these findings and any other relevant data in light of the needs of the ECU faculty and students; and (4) to make specific recommendations to the Senate for the development of a program in writing across the curriculum so that the Senate can use the available information to decide if such a program can and should be instituted at East Carolina University.

2. The Findings of the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Writing Across the Curriculum

To satisfy its charge from the Faculty Senate, the WAC Committee was broken into five subcommittees: one to collect relevant information on research in writing, a second to investigate programs at other universities, a third to survey faculty interests and needs, the fourth to survey students, and the last to make specific recommendations--based on findings supplied by the other four subcommittees--on writing across the curriculum at ECU. We will focus here only on the survey of faculty needs and on the writing center's support for WAC as it currently exists, suggesting that current programs can be adapted to new demands.

Faculty Needs

During November and December 1987, the subcommittee developed a questionnaire that was designed to gain information on the ECU faculty's opinion of issues and possibilities in writing across the curriculum.

During the third week in January, questionnaires were sent to 1,200 faculty members on the main campus and in the medical school. The number returned was 224. Tabulations are given in the table below.

TABLE 1
Data from Returned Questionnaires (N = 224)

	Mean	SD
1. % freshmen w/adequate skills	28.1	16.9
2. % sophomores w/adequate skills	34.7	19.2
3. % juniors w/adequate skills	46.3	21.8
4. % seniors w/adequate skills	51.3	21.7
5. % graduates w/adequate skills	63.9	22.2
6. Kinds of Writing	Total	Percent
essay exams	16	30.16
lecture notes	14	40.14
term papers	13	70.14
brief papers	10	70.10
formal reports	87	0.08
research reviews	74	0.07
summaries	71	0.07
journals	63	0.06
other	58	0.05
lab reports	49	0.05
workbook entries	21	0.02
7. Which Three to Improve	Total	Percent
observing standard grammar	107	0.16
organizing (essay)	100	0.15
originating main/support ideas	81	0.12
organizing (paragraph)	80	0.12
spelling	62	0.09
using logic	56	0.08
punctuating	38	0.05
using vocabulary	33	0.05
proofreading	30	0.04
revising	28	0.04
varying sentence patterns	22	0.03
writing for different audiences	18	0.02
8. Reasons for Not Assigning Writing	Mean	SD
excess time & energy to respond	1.90	1.09
too many students	1.81	1.23
rife student problems	1.66	1.15
nonconducive course matter	0.68	0.98
instructor uncertain of response	0.58	0.78
poor teaching evaluations	0.47	0.85
low registration	0.27	0.71
instructor's ignorance of skills	0.26	0.58
instructor's ignorance of grammar	0.25	0.57
other	0.19	0.69
9. Recommended WAC Activities	Total	Percent
writing courses in all disciplines	137	0.21
writing required in General College	119	0.18
university-wide writing exit exam	112	0.17
faculty workshops	88	0.13
more required writing in English	78	0.12
team with English faculty	67	0.10
other	34	0.05
10. Incentives	Mean	SD
fewer students per class	2.75	1.23
reduced teaching load	2.92	1.11
additional pay	3.10	1.22
credit on year-end evaluation	3.22	1.07
no special incentive	3.29	1.15
reduced advising load	3.90	0.46
eligibility for summer school	3.92	0.34

Items #1-#5 show the percents of students who manifest adequate writing skills according to the respondents. Because the intervals between these seven figures are arbitrarily set (25%, 33%, 50%, etc.) the means and standard deviations reflect these varying intervals, not a true equal interval scale. Still, the tendency is clear for rating of student writing ability to increase with students' class rank. Deemed "adequate" are about 1/3 of the freshmen and sophomores and about 1/2 of the juniors and seniors. Endorsement of graduate students' writing (about 2/3 rated "adequate") is less than hearty.

Response to item #6 were collapsed for this tally; if a kind of writing was listed for one or more courses by a respondent, it was counted once. The sums, therefore, represent the number of professors who use each type of writing in their instruction. Essay exams, lecture notes, and term papers are the most common types of writing required of students by professors in this sample.

The responses to item #7 show a concern for the traditional categories of rhetoric: style ("observing standard grammar"), arrangement ("organizing-- essay-paragraph"), and invention ("originating and supporting ideas" and "using logic").

The major inhibitions to teaching writing (item #8) relate mostly to the size of the problem and to the great effort required to teach writing. Less concern is given to instructors' knowledge and abilities and to adverse response by students. Few respondents indicate that lacking knowledge of "grammar" inhibits them from teaching writing.

The relatively high rating of "fewer students per class" and "reduced teaching load" as incentives to participate in WAC (item #9) complements the concern with the great effort required to teach writing indicated in item #8. This pattern suggests the staff is willing to undertake the work with little external incentive if the work can be made possible. The most popular ways to implement WAC are to institute university wide policies mandating writing across the curriculum. Less popular are staff development programs and English Department initiatives.

Table 2 below shows correlations of responses to items #8 and #9 on the questionnaire. Relating these two items can reveal the relationship between what inhibits professors from teaching writing and the incentives that might address these inhibitions. The correlations show three factors: 1) concern with the size of the problem, 2) concern with student opinion, and 3) concern with knowledge of how to teach writing. The only incentives that show a relationship with faculty inhibitions are those that pertain to the size of the problem. As concern with the size of the problem increases, so does interest in lower teaching load and fewer students per class. Also related to this factor is an indication of "no special incentive," a tendency suggesting that the more faculty are concerned with the problem, the more willing they are to address it without extra incentive.

TABLE 2
Correlations of Items in #8 with Themselves and with Items in #9 (N=224)

	Too	Skl?	Cour	Rife	Inhibitions to Teaching Writing			Res?	
					Time	Gram?	Eval		
Too	100	1	0	30	59	2	16	6	7
Skl?	100	14	100	17	14	81	17	30	37
Cour		100	100	0	0	21	12	14	14
Rife			100	100	40	19	28	15	28
Time				100	100	14	30	13	20
Gram					100	100	17	24	40
Eval						100	100	63	2
Reg							100	100	12
Res?								100	100

Pay	Load	Fewr	Incentives			None
			Eval	Advs	Summ	
7	32	56	2	5	11	46
6	6	2	3	8	13	1
4	0	6	11	11	7	8
0	17	16	11	9	0	24
10	16	35	11	1	3	36
5	6	0	6	7	3	5
5	8	16	7	6	0	8
4	2	7	1	7	1	1
7	0	4	25	13	3	15

Factor #1: Concern with the largeness of the problem (too many students with too many problems for too little time). The incentives related to this concern are either "no special incentive" or fewer students and lower teaching load.

Factor #2: Concern with student opinion (student evaluation and registration). No incentives are related to this insecurity.

Factor #3: Concern with knowledge of how to teach writing (lack of knowledge of composition skills, of grammar, and of appropriate responses to student writing). No incentives are related to this concern.

Responses to item #7 may be categorized as relevant either to sentence level features (spelling, punctuating, using vocabulary, proofreading, observing standard grammar, and using a variety of sentence patterns) or to discourse level features (organizing at essay level, writing for different audiences, revising, originating main and supporting ideas, and using logic). Identifying those respondents who see students' needs primarily at the discourse level permits a comparison between these two groups according to other variables. Table 3 compares the discourse and sentence level groups according to the types of writing they assign. The data show that the groups do not differ significantly in their types of writing assignments.

TABLE 3
Discourse Level (N = 98) vs. Sentence Level (N = 89)

	Discourse Level (N = 98)		Sentence Level (N = 89)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
lecture notes	0.25	0.43	0.28	0.45
essay exams	0.31	0.46	0.25	0.43
lab reports	0.08	0.28	0.08	0.27
journals	0.11	0.31	0.12	0.33
research reviews	0.15	0.36	0.10	0.30
summaries	0.12	0.33	0.11	0.31
formal reports	0.20	0.40	0.12	0.33
term papers	0.20	0.40	0.27	0.44
brief papers	0.19	0.39	0.19	0.39
workbook entries	0.05	0.22	0.02	0.14

Comments

Of 224 tabulated questionnaires, 65 had entries in the "comments" section. Comments fall into five categories: 1) advice on implementation of WAC program, 2) statements of respondent attitude toward writing and WAC, 3) descriptions of student writing problems, 4) descriptions of teaching techniques, and 5) critiques of existing programs. Below are summaries of main points in the comments.

On the whole, responses to the questionnaire suggest the faculty recognizes a significant problem with students' writing and is willing to address the problem directly. By far the greatest concern is with the time and effort required to help students develop

their writing skills. Fortunately this concern seems to be addressable not by external motivations such as increased pay, but by providing the time and student-teacher ratios sufficient to do the job.

The responses indicate some of the problems that inservice education of WAC faculty must solve. Correlations reveal a strong tendency ($r = .81$) for faculty to *covary concern for knowledge of grammar with concern for knowledge of composition skills. Concern with how to respond to student papers is also related to concern for knowledge of grammar and composition skills. We see, therefore, a tendency to understand the teaching of writing as substantially a matter of making comments about the grammatical features in students' papers. It is no encouragement that faculty are generally confident in their knowledge of grammar and composition skills, and therefore, we may fear, in their understanding of what it takes to improve student writing.

We can discern two basic perspectives on student writing prevalent among the faculty: 1) attention to students' view of the big rhetorical picture-- the main ideas, the audience, logic, revision of essays, etc. and 2) attention to students' view of the little picture--spelling, punctuation, grammatical errors, etc. Given the general tendency to understand writing instruction as commentary on grammar, we can see a contradiction in the outlook of those faculty concerned with students' seeing the big picture. Noting this contradiction may help some faculty give more attention to discourse level skills, but faculty whose concern is with sentence level features will likely resist abandoning an emphasis on sentence level skills.

Faculty report assigning many kinds of writing, but almost half the kinds of student writing reported are those that foster few writing skills: essay exams, class notes, and term papers. There is no evidence of respondents tending to develop writing assignments based on diagnosis of student writing needs.

Comments show much support for WAC and much concern over the problems in implementing it. They complete a picture of a faculty strongly committed to WAC at least for the present.

Writing Center Support: Adapting Existing Programs

One of the goals of the Writing Center is to provide support for writing done throughout the university. To do so, the Center offers several programs that, with slight adjustment, support efforts in WAC: diagnostic placement essays, a Program of Study, a Walk-in Service, a Referral Service and Research Skill Workshops.

The brochure from the Writing Center describes its Program of Study for students enrolled in English 1100 (the first part of a two part composition course required by the university) as a "... program designed to help students whose placement scores indicate they may have difficulty passing English 1100. Students work in small groups and in tutorial sessions on specific skill areas diagnosed as deficient during placement." In fact, students are placed into the Center on the basis of two placement essays (the first taken at orientation and the second taken during the first week of class) that are holistically evaluated by a group of trained readers.

Students identified as deficient in one or more areas of writing meet once a week for one hour--in addition to their three class hours--and work in small groups with a tutor until they complete a series of worksheets we refer to as the Program of Study. Once the worksheets are completed students take a third diagnostic essay to determine if they have acquired the minimal skills deemed necessary by the English Department to successfully complete English 1100. Over the past three years (1984-1987), more than 2,000 students have exited the Program of Study. The skills these students acquire assist them not only with their English classes but also with other classes in the university that require writing.

The Writing Center also provides a Walk-in service. This is a service for students who come into the Center for assistance with their papers. The only requirement for Walk-in students is that they must come in at least twenty-four hours before the assignment is due. This requirement decreases student--and faculty--perception that Writing Center tutors point out student errors so that students can "fix" their papers before turning them in.

Many times students walk into the Center an hour before their paper is due to ask someone to proofread it for them. In some cases, students have contacted the Writing Center to find out if they could drop off a paper, have it "corrected," and pick it up later. These students are politely informed that tutors in the Writing Center will help them go over their own work, but that the function of the Center is not to pre-grade their papers.

The figures available from the Center show that, generally, the majority of students who walk in for assistance are enrolled in English classes. The Center has a smaller percentage of students enrolled in classes from other disciplines, including Philosophy, Biology, Nursing, History, Education, Leisure Systems Studies, Business, and the Allied Health fields.

Another statistic available shows that most Walk-in students are undergraduates. Over the past three years, Writing Center tutors have assisted over 1,500 Walk-in students.

The Referral program is aimed at students who require short-term instruction in writing. These students may be referred to the Center by any teacher in any course in the university. Typically, instructors send a note to the Director, Assistant Director, or secretary of the Writing Center to officially refer a student to the Center. The note also contains information about what kind(s) of assistance these students need with their writing. When the student makes an appointment with a tutor, the secretary sends confirmation to the instructor of the student's appointment.

The student then meets with a tutor to work on specifically identified problems. The decision of whether to make subsequent appointments is made jointly by the tutor and student. The tutor is also responsible for sending information to the referring instructor about what was covered in the session and whether the student will be re-turning.

For example, Sandi--a graduate student from the Biology Department--was referred to the Center and worked for three hours with a tutor. The tutor was slightly apprehensive about working with Sandi since he had limited knowledge of Sandi's research topic. The tutor's apprehension vanished when he realized that Sandi had the same problems as many of the freshman students he had tutored; she needed to work on her thesis and the organization of her paper.

Ray--a graduate student from the Education Department--worked with a tutor for about twelve hours. Ray was referred to the Center by a member of the graduate faculty because of his performance on his written comprehensive exam. Ray had written his responses to the exam questions in list form and, as a result, the instructor presumed that Ray could not write well enough to receive a graduate degree. Ray's tutor discovered that Ray could write well, but that Ray had not realized that he should not use a list form to communicate the large volume of information required by the examiner. Since Ray had not learned brainstorming or tree diagramming techniques, his tutor worked with him on these techniques so that he was able to organize his information more quickly so he could use more time for actual writing.

Statistics for the Referral program show that graduate students are referred to the Center from outside the English Department more often than undergraduate students. Since the fall of 1983, approximately 1,700 students have been referred to the Writing Center from outside the English Department.

The Writing Center is staffed--in addition to its Director, Assistant Director, and secretary--by graduate teaching assistants from the English Department. The teaching assistants are required to work three hours in the Center as well as to teach freshman composition as a part of their assistantships. These teaching assistants are also required to enroll in a course which teaches them how to run a successful one-on-one tutorial, how to run group workshops, and how to teach the two required composition courses. This training is also supported by periodic meetings during the semester in which graduate assistants discuss problems encountered in the Center and how to resolve those problems.

In a typical tutorial session, teaching assistants follow the conferencing strategy described by Stephen North in his article "Training Tutors to Talk About Writing." North says that "tutoring in writing is . . . intervention in the composing process" (434). He also says that to run a successful tutorial, tutors must discover where in the writing

process a student is and then run one of the following kinds of tutorials: Invention/Discovery, Revision, Editing, Evaluation or Meta-conference.

Another service the Writing Center provides in support of writing across the curriculum is a series of workshops. These workshops are conducted in conjunction with English 1200 (the second of two courses required of every student by the General College that is a WAC-based course focusing principally on research skills) during the Spring semester each year. Workshops are open to all students but are mainly attended by students in English 1200 who are writing research papers. The workshops are offered for two weeks and begin every hour and generally last 40 to 50 minutes.

The worksheets consist of two parts: first, an explanation of the activity the workshop covers and, second, two to three exercises that ask students to use the skill that each worksheet explains. The topics of the workshops are Writing A Summary; Writing A Critique; Writing A Synthesis; Choosing A Research Topic; and Preparing A Works Cited Page (which demonstrates MLA style). These workshops teach students skills that they use when they perform any kind of research activity.

The services offered by the Writing Center are designed to assist students in all university courses. The statistics from the Center demonstrate that students from all disciplines use the Center, and an increasing number of faculty members are aware of the functions of the Writing Center and are referring students for short-term assistance. Faculty members have also been made aware--through workshops given by the Director of the Writing Center--of how they may use writing in their classes to assist students in the learning process and where to refer students for assistance with the writing process.

Works Cited

North, Stephen M. "Training Tutors to Talk About Writing." *College Composition and Communication*. 33 (1982): 434-441.

"The Writing Center." Pamphlet prepared by the Department of English, East Carolina University, 1987.

Professional Development in the Writing Center: Investigating Reader Response Criticism

Carol Burke & Mary Howland, U.S. Naval Academy

The modern writing center, the heir of the writing lab of twenty years ago, is no longer simply a remedial service, a hospital where sick writers are nursed back to health; it has become an institution, one that every year gains more and more respect within the profession. Writing centers are no longer experiments; they have proven their worth in universities, colleges, and high schools throughout the country. As writing center administrators, filled with missionary zeal, we have worked hard to spread the word that poor writers can be born again as sophisticated writers and that faculty in all disciplines can join us in our cause. We have been asked over and over to defend ourselves, and we have done this extremely well, with the fervor and conviction that what we do is some of the most exciting and innovative teaching at our colleges and universities. But how do we adjust when administrations, student bodies, and other departments start believing us? What happens when a fledgling program grows into a successful and stable institution: the mature writing center? Once we have secured continuing funding, won tenure-track positions for writing center faculty and adequately compensated those dedicated part-timers whose work we boast of, once we have "word processed" the world and have persuaded all (or at least, most) skeptics that we deserve to exist, how do we enjoy that existence?

One choice we face is further expansion, and many writing centers have opted for this choice. They have extended services to students and faculty in departments as diverse as agriculture, aerospace, forestry, child development, nursing, in the pure as well as the applied sciences through writing across the curriculum programs designed to respond to the particular needs of writing in each discipline. Some centers are now answering the need for writing or word processing workshops from the administrative and clerical staffs of their universities and colleges. The logical outcome of this empire-building model of expansion is the eventual extension of writing center services beyond the walls of academia into the community, providing consultants for business and industry.

But the danger in the centrifugal movement of writing centers in recent years is that we may lose sight of what ensures our success: the instructors, peer tutors, and community members who staff our centers. In our zest to serve increasingly diverse constituencies, we sometimes forget that we and our staffs need incentives and rewards as well. Before we take on new and more varied tasks within our institutions, we must ask ourselves in what ways these projects encourage our growth as teachers and scholars.

As we consider the radical changes writing centers have made in the teaching of writing and chart the directions of our futures, we need to answer the following:

What are the strengths of those who work in our writing centers?

What can our writing centers do to develop those talents and foster new ones?

How can we learn from each other?

In the last four years our writing center has sponsored several faculty programs and workshops in which we have discussed all aspects of writing with those in the sciences as well as the humanities. Though these efforts have been very successful and have won us friends throughout the Academy, what we are going to discuss today is a new endeavor undertaken for ourselves. With a stable group of veteran tutors, we have outgrown the need for weekly staff meetings and have decided this semester to use that meeting time more productively. Each tutor has agreed to define a scholarly project and present to colleagues ongoing research or new pedagogical techniques. (Though most of our tutors are full-time faculty members, this model of teaching one another might well serve a staff of peer tutors, the veteran tutor teaming up with the novice.) Topics for our workshops this semester include:

-the Myers Briggs Personality Test and its implications for the writing process

-The Garrison method of teaching writing

-where tutoring ends and counseling begins

-the differences between the academic writing

required of our midshipmen and the professional writing demands placed on our graduates as junior officers

-evaluating the tutoring session

-Reader Response Criticism in the classroom and the writing center

These workshops encourage individual tutors to prepare and present new reading and teaching techniques and to rehearse, in their preliminary stages, findings that may develop into conference papers or journal articles. In addition, these presentations enrich us all by encouraging a careful look at what we do in the classroom and the Writing Center. The discussion of reader response criticism that follows is a more formal version of one such presentation. Though the techniques outlined here were used in freshman English at the Naval Academy, a two-semester introduction to literature course, we hope their applicability to other courses and to tutoring will be evident.

Reader Responses in the Classroom

In his essay, "Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics," Stanley Fish admits that his "ideal reader" is a construct. He goes on to describe the skills and strategies that this reader has. Fish's reader is a competent speaker of the language of the text, one who is in full possession of "the semantic knowledge that a mature . . . listener brings to his task of comprehension" (86). In addition, Fish's reader has "literary competence." He or she is sufficiently experienced to have internalized the properties of literary discourse, from figures of speech to whole genres. Fish concludes: "The reader, of whose responses I speak, then, is this informed reader, neither an abstraction, nor an actual living reader, but a hybrid--a real reader (me) who does everything within his power to make himself informed" (87).

Although Fish has a set of requirements the reader must meet in order to satisfactorily engage the text, and no doubt write critical articles to be published in professional journals, I find reader response criticism a useful pedagogical tool, working as we do, with less sophisticated readers who are still learning to read, readers whose experience with genre and conventions is not sufficient to qualify them as Fish's "ideal readers." However, the questions my students ask and the multiple ways they discover to engage the text help them frame their understandings and misunderstandings, to name them and begin a dialogue with the text and with me.

When I encountered reader response criticism, I decided that reader responses might well produce interesting writing in a freshman course that included literature. Last fall I assigned two short reader responses (a page to a page and a half) a week, using the handout of questions you have, to show students the approach I encouraged them to take with the text. A regular flurry of paper made its way back and forth between us. On a normal day, I collected a new set of responses right after returning the previous ones to their authors. Within a few weeks, I noticed that my students were turning in some of the most thoughtful papers I had ever read.

I have long known that students grappling with a difficult text feel inadequate. Searching for help, they turn to Cliffs Notes, Monarch Notes and even--in the case of the more dedicated students--to the work of critics. Because they are not familiar with the vocabulary of literary criticism, student writers borrow words and phrases and use them inappropriately. They seem especially prone to falling in love with symbols and themes. They borrow ideas that appeal and cram as many as they can into essays of their own devising; their essays become a muddle of undigested phrases and general statements that are enough to depress the most stoic English teacher. Unfamiliar words, unfamiliar ground: their writing deteriorates. Students move further and further from the text and real encounter becomes impossible. The text withdraws into the shadows of memory, no longer *theirs*, but the property of the "experts," those profound minds whose work the students have appropriated without understanding. What to

do? Bring them back to the text, assure them that their own questions and difficulties can provide a way into the novel. Reader response criticism provides one method.

Take the novel my classes have just completed, Faulkner's *Light in August*. We began with questions. What does *Light in August* demand of the reader? What requirements do you have of the novel in general, of this novel, of a novel by Faulkner? Does Faulkner expect you to have to slow down to read those long adjective-filled sentences that endlessly trail clauses and phrases? Is some familiarity with the American South of the early 1930's required? Why does Faulkner tell the story out of chronological order? What does he gain by risking disgruntled readers? Why does Faulkner often provide a narrator, such as Byron Bunch, who tells a story to Hightower that is clearly hearsay--information he has picked up from various people of Jefferson--instead of himself telling the story of the events surrounding the discovery of Joanna Burden's body in her burning house?

The questions change and multiply depending on the text in question, but there is always an abundance of them, and students soon catch on to the habit of mind that leads to productive areas of inquiry. When it comes time to write a short response to what they have read, they need only examine one small area, since I limit their responses to a single page (making some allowances for students who just must write a page and a half).

Asking the questions of reader response criticism helps students point to an area of the text they find compelling, either because they want to work to understand it or because they are hopelessly confused. Even confusion--or, I think, especially confusion--can point the student in a direction for further investigation. By questioning the text and their own responses to it, students learn to participate actively as readers, thus gaining confidence in their own ability to make sense of what they read, or at least to point with conviction to those sections they find obscure and to articulate the reasons for their confusion. They discover that they have plenty to say and write about. They have made the text their own.

I also use my students' responses to determine what sense they are making of the text and to determine where students are losing the trail of clues in the text. One of my students this semester, Tony Kotarski, for example, wrote a very interesting and well-articulated response on Joanna Burden. It was also completely wrong-headed for a number of reasons, not least of which was Tony's unfamiliarity with the South and specifically with the South of the early 1930's. Tony claimed that Joanna Burden is a completely "unrealistic" character because she does not panic when she finds Joe Christmas in her kitchen late one night, eating her left-over food. "Find me a single, middle-aged woman," he writes, "who would act similarly today if a ragged man having Joe's appearance showed his face in her kitchen. Mrs. Burden's actions just do no make any sense. If there is a burglar in your house, you either shoot him, get out, or call the police."

Tony's failure to consider that there might have been a time when a woman did not feel her life was at stake just because a hungry person entered her house in search of food led him to conclude that Joanna's behavior makes her an unrealistic character. Tony's response was clear and well thought out, and it provided the basis for two interesting class discussions during which southern students (and students who had other information about these times) explained to Tony and his supporters why Joanna's behavior is not unbelievable at all.

One more example from *Light in August* will serve to show how reader responses help me to help my students read more carefully. I did not know how many students had missed Percy Grimm's castration of Joe Christmas, had simply not figured out why the other deputy turned away to vomit after seeing what Percy was doing, until some of their responses indicated their failure to see the sadistic streak that runs just below the surface of Grimm's extreme patriotism and love of law and order. Once the student shows me what he or she has missed, I know where to begin to teach.

In writing their responses, students learn the valuable lesson that it is O.K. to misread, or to miss something in the text, that the acceptance of error may serve to indicate the direction in which to move. I believe that in order to succeed, one must constantly risk failure. If nothing is at stake, nothing in the student's writing will have ten-

tion. Fearing failure, students too often stay away from the difficulties in a text--the parts they have trouble with and, if truth be admitted, the parts they are also most attracted to. Playing it safe, they stick to the parts they understand, content to deal with what they already "know." Goodbye to zest and excitement, not to mention any authentic attempt to grapple with the text, to face its difficulty head on. However, once students discover there is no penalty for misreading, so long as they provide their footprints so I can follow the track they have taken--they take risks. They try to make sense of the part of the reading that contains a gap, and wonderful breakthroughs occur. By courageously asking questions and trying to provide answers, they learn much of what thinking entails.

The greatest reward is mine. I no longer dread reading what my students write. I catch problems in short papers before they grow into long papers, and I have the pleasure of writing positive comments as I respond to their responses. Because so much paper flows back and forth between us, I never feel compelled to attack all the problems on any one response. I set priorities, stressing first the importance of focus, next the importance of providing evidence, then how to introduce that evidence. Once the student has accepted the limits of a one page response and has learned to provide a clear focus in the opening sentence, I look at sentence structure, hitting the major sentence problems early and then moving on to other matters.

Reader Response Questions in the Writing Center

In addition to teaching two classes, I work as a tutor in the Academy's writing center. Reader response criticism has given me new techniques for working with the midshipmen we serve, not only those with literature essays but also those who come in with history papers that require analysis. When I am working with a student who has an assignment that involves analysis of a text, I often employ reader response questions to focus our discussion.

A few weeks ago a midshipman came to the writing center with a graded paper on Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night*, a novel I have not read in a number of years. The paper had received an F, partially because the instructor had not been able to locate the thesis and partially because the paper appeared to be mostly plot summary instead of analysis. Once the student had pointed out the embryonic thesis--that as Nicole grows stronger, Dick Diver becomes weaker and the balance of their relationship is upset--I asked the student at what point he had become aware of this change in the balance of power in the Divers' marriage. He said that the story is not told chronologically, that what we get in the different parts of the novel are different points of view. I pointed out to him that he had made no mention in his introductory paragraph of point of view.

We talked for some time about the difficulties of point of view in the novel and how the changing point of view contributes to the reader's understanding of the Divers' relationship. By the time the session ended, the student had a much clearer understanding of how to link the two pieces of information when he rewrote the thesis sentence. By using typical reader response questions, I was able to help this student talk specifically about a novel which I could barely remember.

Works Cited

- Fish, Stanley E. "Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics." *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism*. Ed. Jane P. Tompkins. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980. 70-100.
- McCormick, Kathleen. "Theory in the Reader: Bleich, Holland, and Beyond." *College English* 47 (1985): 836-850.

Questions to Get You Started on Your Reader Response

1. What is the Predominant Effect of the Text on You?

Confusion, suspense, identification with the characters, interest, amusement, disbelief, pleasure, terror? Does the text make you think of other things you have read? In your response, refer specifically to the text.

2. Why Do You Think the Text Had That Effect?

To answer this question, you should examine:

a. The nature of the text: subject matter, language, structure, use of familiar/unfamiliar conventions, organization, social norms, characters, themes, gaps or blanks in the structure or the story that the reader has to fill in.

b. The nature of the reader: Did you have prior knowledge or expectations about the text, the subject matter, the author, or about literature in general? Did you have difficulty following the way the story was told? Did you have knowledge/lack of knowledge about particular literary or social conventions? Did you have knowledge/lack of knowledge about the historical period in which the text was written or to which the text refers?

3. What Does Your Response Tell You About Yourself?

About your style of reading, about your values, about assumptions you hold regarding literature, our society, our codes of behavior your notion of what is "normal," "conventional," "real"?

[Questions adapted from Kathleen McCormick, "Theory in the Reader: Bleich, Holland, and Beyond," *College English* 47 (December 1985), 838.]

The questions for reader response criticism can be reduced to two very general ones:

What does the text demand of you?
What demands do you have of the text?

Writing Communities Vs. Writing Classrooms: Computer Conferencing in Freshman Composition

Cheryl M. Cassidy, The University of Michigan

Most writing courses at the University of Michigan stress the notion of a community of writers and readers. Typically, in writing courses, discussions are used to generate ideas for writing, and to formulate critical responses to student papers and to publish prose. The English department's emphasis on critical thinking through an adapted version of Britton's writing 'across the curriculum,' coupled with the advantages of word processing in a writing community, has encouraged the departmental experiment with computer conferencing. A computer conference entails the development of a class-directed conference where discussion topics are located at ITEMS which all participants, students and teacher alike, respond to and initiate whenever convenient or necessary. There is also a message system which participants can access twenty-four hours a day.

The use of computer conferencing (Confer) in Freshman Composition classes at the University of Michigan has fostered much debate among faculty and staff as to the effectiveness of this type of communicative tool. For its adherents, Confer is considered an important supplement to peer revision and collaborative writing. Yet, when writing classes and writing labs incorporate computer conferencing, this technology changes the nature of the composing process. When computer CONFERENCEing is utilized in writing labs, there is a qualitative and quantitative difference in peer collaborations, pre-writing strategies, topic discussions and in the broad variety of class interactions. Rather than fostering a face-to-face interactive collaboration, Confer constructs a different kind of social communication among students and teachers.

Does computer conferencing reinforce the development of an interactive community in writing classes? I posit that the collaborative nature of Confer is a constructive process in which readers and writers engage in formulating meaning within a social context. It is the importance of the social context, the interplay of ideas between peers, that provides for the negotiation of meaning between reader and writer and leads to the formation of a writing community. This presentation will focus on my recent experience incorporating computer conferencing in freshman composition and on how this incorporation can foster a sense of community as well as alter our notion of how a writing class is constructed.

Confer: How Computer Conferencing is Used

The University of Michigan's English Department's implementation of CONFER in Freshman Composition the past three years was designed to supplement discussion in the college classroom. Computer conferencing centered around teacher or student initiated ITEMS which addressed topics related to papers, sentence or paragraph level problems within papers or opened discussions on unrelated, yet timely issues such as music, sports and a class-developed novel. Apart from the message system, which allowed students and teachers to send and receive messages on an around-the-clock basis, CONFER provided a discussion forum which encouraged students to take time to organize their thoughts before composing.

Because students could sign on to CONFER at any time, participants could contribute ideas when and where they found it convenient. The conference allowed students and teachers to send rapid responses on a particular topic, to obtain responses from conference participants, and, of course, to view responses to responses. Ideally, the shy student who responded more comfortably outside a typical class discussion was provided access to discussion without penalty, and the incidence of a particular student dominating class discussion was lessened. Furthermore, the instructor and students could discuss multiple topics with all members of the groups and, yet, communicate privately with particular individuals at the same time. The use of Britton's model of 'writing-across-the-curriculum' could be employed more fully as text production became part of a wider process of composing to respond to various conference inspired ITEMS;

e.g. items on film and filmmaking, performances past and present, chemistry lab abstract assignments, psychology term papers and even a class-developed novel.

Initially, students were coached in computer conferencing during a two-day workshop designed and implemented by the University's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT). During this workshop, students were encouraged to become familiar with the procedures inherent in computer conferencing: the message system and responding to and initiating ITEMS. While some students approached computers with trepidation, by the end of the workshop, most students had mastered basic commands and were able to take part in Confer without additional tutoring.

Confer: Role of the Teacher in Class Discussion

Because the English department has encouraged its teaching assistants to emphasize 'writing across the curriculum' based on peer collaboration and revision, freshman composition classes are ideally non-teacher directed. The students are encouraged to work in peer groups of two or three, analyzing and discussing each other's papers and to assist each other in creating concepts. Topics for papers are teacher-initiated, and generally, each paper is discussed as a class before the students write drafts for peer evaluation. Often, a paper topic will involve attending a workshop/lecture at the Art Museum or observing a social activity which will evolve into an ethnographic paper. Students are encouraged to view themselves as "apprentice-writers" and to rely upon each other for validation and evaluation (Lunsford 257). Yet, because the instructor ultimately does evaluate and grade papers, her role as a mediator of class discussion gains importance. While students are encouraged to critique each other's papers, most students are reluctant to offer suggestions on a peer's paper and prefer that the teacher provide insights into ideas and generate topics for the students. Although the English department encourages peer evaluation and class discussion, the role of the teacher as authority figure is maintained with the power of grading.

CONFER can provide for both teacher and students a method of usurping the hierarchical nature of the classroom and fostering discussion and peer evaluation. As computer conferencing was incorporated in Freshman composition, the teacher's authoritative role, which can sometimes overpower or influence student text production, diminished and the teacher became a guide or source of knowledge rather than an evaluator. In a computer conference, all voices sound much alike and the teacher's voice often receded to give precedent to student voices.

In most cases, CONFER encouraged a fuller class discussion and a more profound reader-writer interaction than a typical writing class discussion provided. My experience with computer conferencing appears to indicate that there is a sense of anonymity in computer conferencing that is not apparent in face-to-face class discussion. Although students' names are included in every text submission in CONFER, students often do not attach names to faces. This masking of identity, partial though it is, allows for freer, more critical comments. Because students are more adept, and often more comfortable, verbally transmitting ideas, I found that CONFER provided a combination of verbal and written communication that encouraged students to address ideas and concepts freely, accept criticism and respond more comfortably than they might in a face-to-face encounter. Finally, as students responded to subject ITEMS and responses, the teacher's role as authority figure diminished. Rather than becoming the focal point of discussion, the instructor's comments became one of many responses to a given topic. Since many of the ITEMS in the computer conference are student-generated, the teacher's role as discussion leader recedes, and students become initiators of ideas. This seems to indicate that introducing CONFER to freshman composition classes alters the formal nature of the class and promotes a sense of community among its members.

Peer Writing and Revision: Audience and the Formation of Purpose

The task of writing alone can be formidable. Because the blank screen is often akin to the blank page, the possibilities for interactive writing increase with computer access. Computer conferencing can create what Margaret Riel calls a "new social organization for [making] writing possible"(61). Pre-writing strategies are made explicit and

paper ideas are often developed within ITEMS before putting pencil to paper. This allows students to test ideas in an open forum where notions of audience are immediate and purposeful. It is the emphasis on the collaborative nature of writing that transforms the writing task, whether with computers or with pencil and paper.

When students and teachers discuss topics via computer conferencing, a variety of interactions takes place. The students compose on CONFER when they respond to ITEMS initiated by them or by the instructor. This act of composing often provides the pre-writing techniques needed to formulate ideas for papers. Furthermore, by composing and then reading peers' comments on student-generated texts, participating students clarify and refine their ideas and often expand their topics. Thus, the computer becomes the medium through which ideas become solidified. The development of audience and the rhetorical stance of the writer, becomes something that can be negotiated within the peer group. In one instance, before students were confronted with Nathaniel Hawthorne's story, "Young Goodman Brown," they were introduced in class discussion and on Confer to the notion of how fairy tales and allegories often reflect a culture's underlying perception of itself. ITEMS entitled "Young Goodman Brown Meets Hansel and Gretel" and "Young Goodman Brown--Negotiating Interpretations" served to clarify concepts and provided an avenue for students to explore how to organize their papers. By providing students with a forum through which they might test their ideas, CONFER provided many of the same avenues for formulating texts that entail what Linda Flower calls "reader-based prose" (268). In more typical writing classes, students would discuss drafts of papers in their peer groups focusing on sentence and paragraph structure. Students rarely discussed ideas before attempting a draft. Moreover, how the paper was organized and how the ideas were presented was rarely attempted in peer discussions. Students were encouraged to formulate ideas alone and to write these ideas in a solitary manner. In writing classes without computer conferencing, the disparity between the written stance and the oral explanation of the paper topic was often evident. In such a decontextualized setting, writers can experience difficulty in mastering rhetorical strategies and providing for audience understanding.

However, CONFER, offered students pre-writing techniques by initiating ideas via ITEMS before text production. When writers collaborate, audience and argument become part of the construction of text. The social interaction between collaborators involves a negotiation of what the text must address, how concepts can be expressed, and how ideas should be organized. This interactive endeavor requires the writer to form a constant notion of audience, consistent checking and rechecking to see if meanings are clear to readers and writers. Interactive writing provides social contexts for writing not found in the solitary writer's decontextualized setting. When argumentative topics were entered as ITEMS in CONFER, students enthusiastically participated in arguing for their particular stance and attempted to diminish opposing views. Students were encouraged to respond to ITEMS which directly addressed the paper topic and which provided an avenue for clarification and refinement of topics. Rather than writing alone, students were encouraged to write together either on or off the computer and to share portions of their texts on and off the computer. In this instance, the organization of topics and the ensuing production of papers was dependent upon the development of audience. As peer groups responded to and initiated ITEMS on various argumentative or expository topics, they engaged in a process of negotiating and formulating meaning for themselves and for their readers which promoted a collaborative aspect to the writing process.

CONFER then, enhanced the writer's notion of audience, forcing the writer to engage with the readers' points of view. Not only did the writer become aware of the needs of his audience, but self-editing was facilitated as the writer perceived disparities between what he wished to say and what was apparent in his prose.⁴

Proximity and Distance: Confer and Revision

The University of Michigan's incorporation of CONFER in freshman composition classes has provided a forum where second-language students whose verbal skills are not as highly developed as their writing can be fully contributing members of a writing class without anxiety. Most freshman composition classes contain one or more foreign

language students who benefit from increased participation in class discussion. Furthermore, Confer and word processing appear to provide students with distance and proximity to their prose. Writing on a word processor and communicating textually via computer conferencing increases the distance between writer and text and this distance appears to allow the student to revise more efficiently. Utilizing CONFER, students appear to be less invested in their texts and more willing to change words, sentences, organization, and even at times, to relinquish a concept in favor of a new, more profound insight. Conversely, students experience a sense of proximity to their texts which promotes a variety of critical thinking skills. What I am seeing in my classrooms are student whose papers are composed of literacy skills that synthesize ideas, that share with the writer's audience the production of insights, and that generate texts which contain a more profound, complex syntax, style and voice.

Closing Thoughts

Incorporating technology--whether word processing or computer conferencing--alters our notions of what a writing class is and can be. At the University of Michigan, as we incorporate computer conferencing, our writing classes shift to writing communities. Students are encouraged to engage in new and deeper ways to formulate prose. However, we must remember that as we incorporate computer technology we do change our classes. They become more writing centered, more individualized, with less group discussion. At times, my students express dismay that "all the good discussions are on CONFER" rather than in the classroom as a group. As our introduction of technology fosters new ways of communicating, thinking and composing, we need to ascertain more clearly what we value in our writing and in our assignments. Computers and computer conferencing will change our classrooms if we simply add them to our courses. We need to talk about our goals as teachers, especially as teachers of writing, and then we need to try to figure out how we can use this technology to facilitate those goals.

Works Cited

- Lunsford, Andrea. "Cognitive Development and the Basic Writer." In *The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook*, edited by Gary Tate and Edward P.J. Corbett, New York: Oxford University Press, 1981, p. 257.
- Riel, Margaret. "Education and Ecstasy: Computer Chronicles of Students Writing Together." *LCHC*, July, 1983, vol. 5, 3, p. 61.
- Flower, Linda. "Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing." In *The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook*, edited by Gary Tate and Edward P.J. Corbett. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981, p. 268.
- Daiute, Colette. "Issues in Using Computers to Socialize the Writing Process." In *Educational Communications and Technology Journal (ECTJ)*. 33 (1985) 1: 41-50.

An LD Student Discovers the Computer

Loretta Cobb and Traci Jerman, University of Montevallo

Like many writing center directors and tutors, we have had no formal training in teaching learning-disabled students, and five years ago our understanding of the problem was very limited. With limited funds and staff, but a fierce determination, we feel we have learned a lesson worthy of reporting. Our intent in this paper is not to claim expertise in learning disabilities and/or computers, but to share with other writing center personnel one student's struggle with dyslexia and our attempts to help him. Though he has given us permission to publish the papers included in our appendix and to use his full name, we will simply refer to him as Stu. Stu has been instrumental in making us more aware of our needs and helping us overcome some mistaken ideas about the abilities of learning-disabled students.

Stu first came to the Harbert Writing Center during the second semester of his freshman year. He was referred to us by his English 101 teacher because he was failing the course. Through the usual conference with his instructor, we learned that Stu was having such problems with his writing assignments that, out of necessity, he finally informed her that he was dyslexic. The news came as quite a surprise to her, and she asked him why he had not told her at the beginning of the semester. We were even more surprised when we learned that he had already taken English 101 the previous semester with another instructor and had failed it. He never told that instructor about his dyslexia, though she is one of our finest teachers and would have been willing to work with him individually. Again, we asked, "Why?"

Stu explained that he did not want to be called handicapped and most certainly did not want to be treated differently in a classroom. He and many like him would risk failing rather than put themselves in a position of being odd or different or being objects of pity. We were indebted to Stu for telling us that, and as we learned more about this sophisticated young man, we found that we had just begun to discover how much he could teach us.

Five years ago, when Stu first came to the Writing Center, it was obvious that he did not have much faith in our ability to help him, and we sensed that his expectations were for us to fix his errors and leave him alone. He was pleasant and polite, but his attention span was very short. This baffled some of the tutors who did not know how to work with him because he seemed so inattentive; the frustration level was high, and he was initially defensive. He, in fact, intimidated some of the tutors with his confident, almost belligerent attitude.

Nevertheless, we knew we had to figure out how we could most effectively work with him, so we began trying some things we had heard about. First, since Stu was an art major, we tried to appeal to his dominant right hemisphere and help him learn to spell through kinesthetic exercises. We wrote his spelling words in big colorful letters on large sheets of paper and had him trace over them with his finger. He was impatient. He told us later in a taped interview that those exercises, though they might appeal to some students, had been a total waste of time--they simply had not helped him at all. Indeed, that should have been evident to us because his spelling was not improving. We encouraged him to use the dictionary more; although every time we suggested it, he looked as if he might cry. It took a professional workshop from the Alabama Council of Teachers of English conducted by Tom Brennan, a professor at the University of South Alabama, to make us aware of something that should have been so apparent to us. Brennan explained how useless a dictionary could be to someone with dyslexia because many of the words might look reversed. Later, in the interview, Stu told us that asking him to use the dictionary was the worst possible thing we could have done because words were what he feared the most. When he looked in the dictionary, he only saw pages of letters that, to him, looked all the same--particularly when he grew tired when working on a long assignment. It was very difficult for us to empathize with him.

Nevertheless, we tried and somehow got through that semester. We feel we helped him somewhat--he did pass English 101 with a "D". However, our warning was clear:

This young man needed more help than we, at that time, were able to give, and we knew we were morally obligated to learn all we could to help him.

The next semester found us still trying to match Stu with a suitable tutor. We felt relieved when our only male tutor, a creative individualist who admired Stu's thinking and enjoyed his insights, took over the task as Stu's primary tutor. Also, our graduate tutor loved talking art with Stu because she had been an art major as an undergraduate. This "chemistry" worked so well that we tested them with the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and discovered that they both had similar personalities and work styles; in addition, she could share his enthusiasm for his major and his approach to projects involving writing.

We were more confident now and more relaxed with Stu. In fact, we were growing to like and respect him tremendously the better we became acquainted. Consequently, our job seemed easier although Stu was still struggling with writing assignments in his English class, and now, in an art history class. We had to do more. We began reading any material we could find on the subject for answers, and it seemed obvious that giving Stu access to the writing center's only computer was the best solution.

A look at the current literature, with its predictions about students and computers in general, reminds us that what is true for the average student may be much more true for the student with dyslexia. According to Lynne Veach Sadler, students who would be very much turned off with CAI (Computer Assisted Instruction) might be more than enthusiastic about CAC (Computer Assisted Composition) (28). This was truly the case when we introduced Stu to cute, gimmicky spelling programs with gremlins, etc. He was amused for a short time, but he ultimately felt that they were a drain on his time. However, when he discovered a spell-checker, it was like a miracle. No longer did we have to do the drudgery of trying to "draw on the right brain." A whole new world of learning and teaching opened up to us. Stu learned to use the computer as a tool for writing. Now with the computer and tutors to assist, the whole writing process was becoming much clearer to Stu. He would type his paper on the word processor, then use the spell checker to catch his misspelled words. We retaught the phonics he had in grade school, and now, without frustration, it all began to make sense. We explained short and long vowel sounds, hard and soft consonants and silent e's. Instead of depending on the awesome dictionary, Stu could now sound out a word and "ask" the computer if it was correct. He could then fix the misspelled words and print another draft, whereas before, in recopying drafts, he would make new errors.

Using the word processor and spell checker for three different papers of equal length, we found that on the first one Stu had misspelled 120 words, on the second -- 62 words and on the third -- only 27 words. He estimated that he saved approximately 75% of his writing time working with the computer as opposed to writing each draft by hand.

Being able to print a neat clean copy was added incentive. As John Bean has pointed out, a student who has never been accustomed to neat, clean copy will surely have a much better attitude toward an attractive copy, and this was especially true of Stu, the art major (146).

Now Stu has reached a point where he can do some major revising of his papers. We pointed out to him that Carol Holder, a recent consultant at our school from California State Polytechnic University at Pomona, has observed that basic writers view revision as filling in commas and changing a few words while superior writers write the first time to see what they want to say. Revision means more to them than fixing errors. They are more likely to move whole sentences or "chunks" of their work. The computer makes this kind of revision so much easier, and Stu is doing much more sophisticated revision each time he writes now.

Not only has Stu gained confidence in his ability as a writer, but he has also excelled as an artist. He was able to compose, correct, print, and send out his own letter to an art gallery asking for an opportunity to submit some of his prints for a photography show. At last he can come to us with his own work, first written by hand, then typed and spell-checked so that we can operate with him on the level that we work with others who are not handicapped. At last, he can shake loose the shackles and ask questions about style, word order, etc., and the mind that was always there can speak

about the great works of art that he loves. That love, as well as his innate talent, won for him the Outstanding Art Major Award in his senior year. He is now able to write at the operational level of those students who are not learning-disabled. He talks with ease about the importance of manipulating and arranging his writing the way he does his art. Certainly, it would have been an injustice to deny Stu the opportunity to receive a college education because of his verbal problems when he can distinguish himself in such a way.

The time we have spent with Stu has been most rewarding. We watched the tutor/tutee/computer relationship become a threesome, with the computer becoming the catalyst. As Pamela Farrell and her tutors reported in the *Writing Center Journal*, it works to the tutee's advantage to sit facing the monitor while being asked questions about a text (30). Stu eagerly assumed the role of "person in charge" with a tutor guiding him carefully, just to the left of the monitor, helping lead him to a world of mystery where words can be used to discuss great works of art.

It seems as if Stu has, in fact, reversed the role and become our guide. He has been the ideal student to help us define more clearly the role of the writing center. We have had to put basic writer generalizations aside and learn to cope with extremely sensitive, intelligent students who have learning disabilities. We have had to investigate the literature concerning new technological advances that can be of immense value to the handicapped. We have had the opportunity to work with a student from Stu's confused state as a student in freshman English all the way through to his senior year as an art major, incorporating all that we have learned about writing across the curriculum as well. He started with simple, choppy sentences and moved to complex sentences which eventually included verbal modifiers and more and more sophisticated language usage. (See Appendix.) It is, indeed, a pleasure to watch an alert mind flow from such essays as "Why I Chose this College" to interpretations of Yeats' "Sailing to Byzantium" to an explication of *St. Lucy's Altar Piece*. It is our hope that the next young man with similar needs will step into a much more knowledgeable milieu.

Works Cited

- Bean, John C. "Computerized Word-Processing as an Aid to Revisions." *College Composition and Communication* (1983): 146-48.
- Brennan, Tom. "Program for Learning Disabled Students." ACTE Workshop (September 9, 1986).
- Farrell, Pamela. "Writer, Peer, Tutor and Computer: A Unique Relationship." *The Writing Center Journal* (1987): 29-33.
- Sadler, Lynn Veach. "The Computers and Effective Writing Movement: Computer Assisted Composition." *ADE Bulletin* (1987): 24-27.

Tutors on Tutoring: A Survey of Problems, Techniques, and Effects

Bonnie Devet, University of South Carolina

One of the most important activities of any writing center is, of course, the training of new tutors. In recent years many informative articles on tutor training have appeared, including those collected by Muriel Harris in *Tutoring Writing* (86-126), the advice found in Joyce S. Steward and Mary K. Croft's *The Writing Laboratory* (32-6), and *The Writing Center Journal* article "Training Teachers for the Writing Lab" by Ronald Adams, Robert Child, Muriel Harris, and Kathleen Henrott. Gary A. Olson's *Writing Centers Theory and Administration* contains articles on specific problems like the professional role of a tutor in a writing lab (Simard 197-205) and working with particular types of clients like international students (Friedlander 206-14) or business and technical writers (Fearing and Sparrow 215-26). However, these articles have been primarily anecdotal accounts.

A more thorough foundation for training the novice tutor could be laid if one were to ask many experienced tutors what they have encountered. From a list of tutors who had worked in the Writing Center at the University of South Carolina over the last four years, I was able to locate fifty to whom I sent a questionnaire. With a 62% return rate, I learned about the problems, techniques, and effects of being a tutor. Of course, it might be argued that the findings for one writing center are not applicable to all others. It might also be said that these tutors were teaching assistants, not "peer" tutors. In spite of these qualifications, these past masters of tutoring provided valuable information for the training of new tutors, and I believe their comments will not only confirm what is already being done with new tutors but perhaps open up new areas for training.

Having been a trainer of new tutors, I know that the novices usually ask what difficulties arise in a tutorial. So naturally, the first question I asked the experienced tutors was, "What problems have you encountered most frequently during a tutorial?" This question was deliberately ambiguous so that the respondents could interpret it as either problems which the tutor had as a tutor or problems which the clients brought with them. Either interpretation elicited much material. Ranked from the most often mentioned to the least, the problems which the tutors cited were the following:

1. the clients' attitudes;
2. the clients' assignments or the teachers' comments on graded papers;
3. the clients' lack of skills;
4. the handling of international students;
5. the limitations of time;
6. the temptation to edit.

Fifty percent of the tutors said the clients' attitudes made tutorials difficult. For example, some clients were said to be indifferent toward their writing, possibly as "a result of the isolated nature of the appointments" (Gordon Van Ness). Other clients were reluctant to think, exhibiting what one tutor called "boneheadedness, i.e. the inability or the unwillingness to think independently" (Jim Givant). Some clients did not want to change patterns in their writing (Alice Cabaniss), to revise, or to be helped, expressing "hostility to constructive criticism" (Bhaskaran Nayyar). Other clients, however, wanted help but lacked confidence; as a result, they became too dependent on the tutor. "With the long-term clients the problem is one of dependency--the tutee tends to look first to the tutors before examining a subject" (Jim Givant). The clients' misperceptions also caused attitude problems. Some clients misunderstood the role of the writing center, seeing it as a place to have a paper proofread. As one tutor wrote, "(they) see the Writing Center (as) a service station, rather than an information bureau. *Fix my paper*" (Marc Demarest). Another misperception also arose. A client would think his writing had one problem when a tutor discovered that another, perhaps far more serious one, existed: "The student may want to focus on commas when I realize that other, more important problems--such as organization--need work" (Sally Plowden).

The next greatest problem, cited by 40% of the tutors, was how to handle the assignments and graded papers which clients brought to tutorials. Of course, part of the

role of being a tutor is knowing that you walk in the shadow of another, the shadow of the clients' teachers. Hence, inherent in the process of tutoring is having to decipher the assignment. Unfortunately, this process is often far from easy. As one tutor answered on the questionnaire,

sometimes, I found the student had no understanding of what was happening in the classroom, did not understand the teacher's directions for a particular paper, and saw the Writing Center as the place to go to help "figure out what the teacher wants" (Jim Givand).

Ironically, the result is a role reversal, with the tutors relying on the clients. The graded papers also posed problems. Sometimes the teachers' comments were too "cryptic" or "scarce" (Kay Dillard) to help either the tutor or the client so the tutor felt "as confused as the student was about exactly what the teacher wanted" (Kay Dillard). As one tutor wrote, "Instructors sometimes don't indicate the problems they want solved in revision assignments. I have to guess" (Charles Whipple). So, it may be seen that tutors felt vulnerable.

The next greatest problem cited by 20% of the tutors was the clients' skills. I had expected the clients' lack of ability to appear higher in the list of problems. Obviously, the tutors realized that a key function of a writing center is to improve those skills. Hence, there was no need to complain about a lack of ability. What skills did the tutors cite as most lacking in the clients? The ability to focus, organize, and revise. Since a writing center or lab is more than a comma clinic, I was pleased that these were the skills the tutors listed. Apparently, they realized that a key "mission" of the center is not only to correct grammar but also to work on every part of the writing process.

Another problem encountered by the tutors arose from their dealing with international students. Sixteen percent of the tutors expressed their frustration at not being able to help different nationalities. Since few of our tutors had had ESL training, it is no wonder that they felt less than adequate in tutoring internationals. Such frustration was expressed by the following tutor, whose words succinctly convey what the tutors had experienced:

I feel frustrated by their (international students') limited vocabulary and usage knowledge and often end up "telling" them rather than having them work out their problems (Nancy Lutten).

As might be expected, a lack of time was also cited as a problem. Sixteen percent of the respondents said they wished they had more time with clients. One tutor lamented how clients would come with a paper due in only two hours while three other tutors mentioned the pressure of trying to diagnose on the spot. As one tutor said, I have found my most difficult and frequent problem to be making a rapid assessment of a paper a student has brought in and then finding the most effective way to help the student evaluate and improve it (Anne Little).

The last, most frequently mentioned problem may be called "tutors' temptations." Ten percent of the tutors replied that they had to fight to keep from editing the paper themselves rather than helping the clients revise their own writing. After all, it is all too easy for the tutor to pick up a pencil, start scratching out, and writing in. As one tutor confessed,

[My most frequently occurring problem was] resisting the impulse to tell a student how to improve an essay rather [than] leading that student to a solution to his problem through questions (Susie Johnson).

My questionnaire to the tutors did not focus exclusively on problems. I also wanted to examine how the tutors worked with specific types of clients. To this end, I asked the tutors: "Do you change your tutorial techniques when you work with an undergraduate and graduate student? If so, how?" Although 10% had never worked with graduate students and 20% confessed that they did not change their methods, 70% responded that they did alter their approaches. First, the tutors showed that there are different psychological factors at work when handling graduate versus undergraduate students. As one tutor said,

I have found that graduate students are usually more insecure in the WTC than the undergraduate. Most graduate students have used the

WTC when they do not feel comfortable with their writing ability, and they tend to compensate by showing how knowledgeable they are in their study area. . . . (Rosa Costa).

Recognizing that the graduate students' attitudes are different, what do the tutors do in response? One technique is to assume the graduates has a greater knowledge of their topic than does the undergraduate: "When graduate students have an opportunity to show their knowledge in their areas of study, communication is easy" (Rosa Costa). Another tutor said she assumed a "peer relationship," not an "authoritative one" (Susan Gunter) while another tutor said he "offers" advice but lets the graduate student "judge": "(These students are) more motivated and . . . have more specific problems. . . . I found it best to offer grad students my opinion and expertise quickly, and let them judge whether to buy it or not" (Haywood Moxley).

These comments are general. What specific techniques or methods did the tutors employ? The methods varied, of course, depending on how receptive was the client. Four tutors said they liked to ask questions, with one tutor saying that she asked different types of questions than when working with undergraduates. Whereas the undergrads might be asked "skill-oriented questions," the graduates are asked about their purpose (Alice Cabaniss). Three tutors said they stressed audience and pointed out specific problems rather than merely "error patterns" as was done with undergraduates. Two tutors said the graduate student needed work with style (especially sentences and paragraphs), while the undergraduate needed work with invention and arrangement (Charles Whipple).

Besides methods for handling graduates and undergraduates, I wanted to learn about other techniques. I have found the training of new tutors easier if I can show them the differences between being a teacher and a tutor. To help make this leap from classroom to tutorial, I asked the experienced tutors the following: "What similarities and differences have you noticed between a tutorial session in the Writing Center and a teacher/student conference with your own students in your office?" Fourteen tutors listed the obvious advantages of a student-teacher conference over a tutorial. The teacher, unlike the tutor, knows the student longer so the teacher is cognizant of the student's work through several assignments and is aware of the student's classroom behavior. However, even as the experienced tutors acknowledged these advantages, they also cited the disadvantages of a conference. Too much background on a student (such as his behavior in class) could bias a teacher. Besides, the teacher is the grader, and the grade burden always comes between teacher and student in a conference where part of the session is usually devoted to administrative drudge like due-dates for paper and grades in the course.

Although the tutor may not have the background on a client, a tutorial does offer distinct advantages over a teacher-student conference. A tutorial can have the "luxury" (Ken Autry) of focusing on only one area if necessary (like comma splices or organization), or a tutorial can be wide-ranging, depending on the clients' preferences. Moreover, the absence of "the grade burden" (so apparent in teacher-student conferences) usually means a tutorial is more relaxed, personal, and open so that the session becomes a time for emotional release. In effect, tutorials are "safety valves" for students--safe and constructive places to blow off steam" (Harriet McDuffie). Although a tutorial cannot (and should not) replace a teacher-student conference, it does offer spontaneity, voluntary intimacy, and "team spirit" which teacher-student sessions lack.

So far, the tutors have provided insight into the problems they encountered and the techniques they have adopted. But my gathering of information would not have been complete unless I could predict for the new tutors how being a tutor would affect their own writing. After all, intimate contact with the writing of graduates and undergraduates should have some impact on the tutors. So, I asked the experienced tutors, "How has being a tutor affected your writing process?" Approximately 23% said it had had no effect; approximately 16% said they were not sure how it had affected them; 3% said it had been unfavorable, making them focus more on mechanics and grammar than they usually did (Larry Bagwell). But the majority of the tutors (58%) said it had affected them favorably.

The first way conducting tutorials affected the writing process was to alter the tutors' attitudes toward writing. As one respondent wrote, "Tutoring has made me more aware of some of the stickier problems in writing and solutions to those problems. I value the rethinking which tutoring requires" (Bob Askins). Two other tutors said they had become more conscious of the stages in their writing process, and two others said they themselves were more willing to seek help since they had worked as tutors. As one wrote,

Before tutoring, I had a tendency to revere my written word. Now I realize that 'my voice' needs to change and mature. I'm not so self-satisfied. . . . If I had not been a tutor, I doubt if I would have ever been willing to be a tutee (Stephanie Morris).

Another effect of tutoring was to increase the tutors' confidence in themselves as writers. As one tutor wrote,

I learned from my tutees. Most of all, I learned confidence as a writer. Whenever I find obstacles in my writing, I can conceptualize them and help myself by staging the tutor-tutee dialogue in my mind (Rosa Costa).

The tutoring also increased the tutor's writing efficiency. "I can evaluate my own writing more objectively, and I can save more time for revising and editing" (Sally Plowden). One tutor specifically mentioned how her writing "has become more fluent" (Sheila Tombe). Another said, "After tutoring students and teaching composition, I became more aware of how I write and how I might do so more efficiently" (Anne Little).

Other benefits were also cited by the tutors. They said tutorials taught them to revise more, organize better, and alter their own styles. One tutor, for example, confessed to being a one-draft writer, but not any more.

I am now more willing to write drafts. Yes--it's true--I was a final, perfect draft writer--one night, one draft. I polished and perfected, sentence by sentence, as I went. Now I draft. I'm much easier on myself. I've also learned through allowing myself to draft, that writing is discovery (Susie Johnson).

These sentiments were echoed by another tutor who said, "Being a tutor . . . has helped me to continue to revise even after I can't bear to look at the paper" (Donna Romein). Revising the whole paper was not the only effect of tutoring. One experienced tutor said she was ". . . better at revising theses and topic sentences" (Susan Gunter).

Three other facets of the tutors' writing were influenced, and all three of these factors are principles straight from classical rhetoric. Conducting a tutorial seems to have improved the tutors' ability to arrange or organize material. "Having played with so many subjects, I find that my own focus and organization skills are sharper" (Jim Giwant). Another classical principle, style, was also affected, with two tutors saying that tutoring helped to change their sentences and diction:

Working with younger people from various ethnic origins has reinforced my shift from Latinate construction to Anglo-Saxon although that process had been underway for several years prior to this experience (Alice Cabannis).

Another tutor wrote,

through contact with clients as well as co-workers at the center and through the materials there . . . I have begun to make a dent in learning how to revise out the 'is' + noun + prep + NP Latinate 'official' style which has always plagued my own writing (Charles Whipple).

And like good classical rhetors, the tutors also said that they had become more aware of their audience.

I believe (tutoring) has made me view writing as a genuine communication's medium. I am more conscious of being an audience when I read and, in contrast, also when I write (Harriet McDuffie).

In evaluating how tutoring has affected their writing, the tutors did more than cite generalities; they also listed specific techniques which they had adopted. Better proofreading skills was one such improvement and especially being able to proofread for

particular problems like "reference and other coherence gaps" (Marion Sousa). Pulling back from the small particulars of proofreading, another tutor said she was "better able to see papers as a whole and note necessary revisions" (Susan Gunter). Another benefit to tutoring was an elimination of fuzziness. From working with clients, two tutors learned terminology and rules. "It (tutoring) has clarified my terminology and made me keener on knowing why something was incorrect (or that you'd be improved)" (Ken Benoit). Another wrote: "I learned a lot of 'grammar rules' I never knew before..." (Sheila Tombe). Obviously, the Writing Center experience had worked its magic on the tutors.

After having examined the tutors' responses to the questionnaire, I can say that a wide range of areas need to be covered when training new tutors, areas such as problems that will arise, techniques which tutors might adopt, and the effects on the tutors' own writing. Examining the tutors' responses also revealed that they felt vulnerable, dependent on the clients' knowledge of the assignments. They also showed that they were not second-class citizens, lagging behind the clients' teachers. Instead, the tutors saw themselves as complementing and supplementing the teachers and enjoying the "intimacy" of a tutorial, valuing its individual contact and variety of clients. All of these points could be stressed to any new tutor who ventures into a writing center for the first time.

WORKS CITED

- Adams, Ronald, Robert Child, Muriel Harris, and Kathleen Hancock. "Training Teachers for the Writing Lab: A Multidimensional Perspective." *The Writing Center Journal* 7-2 (1987): 3-19.
- Fearing, Bertie E. and W. Keats Sparrow. "Tutoring Business and Technical Writing Students in the Writing Center." *Writing Centers Theory and Administration*. Gary A. Olson, Ed. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1984. 215-26.
- Friedlander, Alexander. "Meeting the Needs of Foreign Students in the Writing Center." *Writing Centers Theory and Administration*. Gary L. Olson, Ed. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1982. 206-14.
- Harris, Muriel. *Tutoring Writing A Sourcebook for Writing Labs*. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, 1982.
- Simard, Rodney. "Assessing a New Professional Role: The Writing Center Tutor." *Writing Centers Theory and Administration*. Ed. Gary A. Olson. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1984. 197-205.
- Steward, Joyce S. and Mary K. Crost. *The Writing Laboratory Organization, Management and Methods*. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, 1982.

APPENDIX

The following is the questionnaire which the tutors filled out:

1. What problems have you encountered most frequently during a tutorial?
2. Do you change your tutorial techniques when you work with an undergraduate and with a graduate student in the Writing Center? If so, how?
3. How has being a tutor affected your writing process?
4. What similarities and differences have you noticed between a tutorial session in the Writing Center and a teacher-student conference with your own students in your office?

The Three P's: Politics, Public Relations and Peer Tutoring in the Writing Center

Mary H. Dickson, Trinity College of Vermont

Whether we like it or not, politics and public relations are inherent in peer tutoring. And, when the Writing Center is added, the combination becomes even more complicated. Anyone in charge of a Writing Center needs to always keep three constituencies in mind: the Administration, Faculty, and students. Today, I want to touch on some of the issues connected with the three P's. Although, time constraints preclude an examination of all of the issues, I would like to address those which, in my experience, have become major issues in the successful operation of a Writing Center.

First, the politics connected with peer tutoring include funding, the responsibility for the Writing Center, the chain of command, and the standards to be set in the Writing Center. Funding, unless an institution has a large endowment or the administration is 100% in support of the Writing Center, will always present a problem. At Trinity, the funding for the Writing Center comes from the interdisciplinary Humanities Department of which I am a member. The Department originated the idea for a writing center and has made a concerted effort to have one of its faculty serve as the Writing Center Coordinator since the establishment of the Center. This year, however, I have noticed more supervision of the Writing Center by the Associate Academic Dean's office. This can be partially explained by the introduction of our new General Education program, which includes a Writing Competency requirement on two levels - basic and advanced.

A third political issue for a Writing Center requires an assessment of the administrative power structure. This will, of course, vary from institution to institution and need periodic review and revision. Because Trinity is so small, the formal power structure is relatively simple. As an Associate Professor in the Department of Humanities, I report to a Department Chair, who in turn reports to the Academic Dean. The Dean in turn reports to the President of the College. With the introduction of a new Associate Academic Dean, who has responsibility for the General Education Program, this structure has become more complicated. While I still report to the Department Chair, my released time to coordinate the Writing Center comes from the Academic Dean. He has recently instituted a program which requires a weekly report from me. In addition, I also work closely with the Associate Academic Dean in the writing competency area. Thus, the chain of command no longer is as straightforward as it previously had been. In fact, at times, I have wondered just who my boss is. This confusion or complication of the chain of command has resulted in lessened efficiency in the coordination of the Writing Center since four people are now involved in its administration.

In addition, the standards for evaluating student writing do seem to be changing, again a result of the General Education program. Students who entered prior to the fall of 1987 had to pass the Writing Competency requirement through examination. Students who could not pass the exam were provided an alternate route where instructors attested to the fact that writing assignments completed outside of class demonstrated "competency in writing." Recently, however, with the passage of our new General Education Programs, the options have multiplied. Students may meet this requirement by passing Expository Writing or Business Communications with a grade of C or better, by voucher in courses which have a writing component or by exam. I suggest that this multiplicity of ways to pass the competency, while benefiting the student, may indeed create a wide variation in standards. A possible solution for this variation consists of workshops for faculty and a greater emphasis on training evaluators of writing.

Second, public relations provides another area where it becomes essential to understand the power structure. It is absolutely necessary to make the administration, faculty, and students very much aware of the existence of the Writing Center and the services it provides. To this end, one of the tactics I have adopted this year is the use of a logo on all publicity materials coming from the Writing Center. Other public relations approaches I have found successful include speaking about Writing Center activities to classes in the different disciplines and informal talks with faculty members. In addition, I also send referral sheets to all faculty asking them to identify the student's prob-

lems and make recommendations to the tutors. I also ask tutors to notify the faculty member reporting what has been worked on and indicating plans for future meetings.

Two other public relations activities which I consider very important are holding an open house during the orientation period for our three student populations: Traditional/PACE, Weekend College and Evening Degree, and making sure the admissions office includes the Writing Center on tours for prospective students.

Other writing centers with which I am familiar make sure they have comfortable chairs, reading materials, and pots of coffee available. These inducements transform austere Writing Centers into comfortable and relaxed places to visit and faculty members often stop in to chat. This can be a bonus for students since they see faculty making use of the Writing Center.

Word of mouth has been my most effective tool in publicizing the writing center. With expanded hours this year, we are having our most successful year ever for drop-ins and repeat visitors. Just having the door open for more hours has attracted more students.

Two closely connected issues which fall under both public relations and politics are location and the necessity of not confining the Writing Center to remedial work only. After having been located in the westernmost building on campus which contained only one classroom and a few faculty offices, in the office of one of our small dorms which room building where the Writing Center shares space with the language lab, I speak from experience when I say location makes a big difference in Writing Center Usage. Our current location has played a major role in the increased use of the Center. Keeping the Writing Center in its present central location is one of my priorities. Once students have located the Center, they are more apt to use it. The second issue involves broadening the Writing Center's purview beyond remedial work. To avoid this, I have usually tutored developmental students in my office, so that other students do not get the idea that writing center services are available only for remedial work. This year with an assistant in the Writing Center, this has not always been possible. Fortunately, the Center is now well enough established that doing developmental work there has not proved a drawback. If, however, you are just establishing a Center, I think it very important to quickly attract a broad mix of students from various disciplines and of varying abilities.

To sum up the area of public relations: Try anything and everything you can think of. Keep track of what works in your particular situation and use them in the most creative ways possible.

The third issue I want to address is that of Peer Tutoring in the Writing Center. Although many of us do not need convincing that peer tutoring works, other colleagues even including those who teach English and composition still need convincing. These faculty find peer tutoring suspect since they see peer tutoring as the tutor writing the paper for the student. Faculty, therefore need education about the role of peer tutors, what they do and what they do not do. Over the years I have held workshops for teachers where I have explained the role of tutors and have had them tutor each other. In training faculty about the role of tutors and indeed in training peer tutors, I rely heavily on Ken Bruffee's approach as illustrated in the third edition of his *A Short Course in Writing* (1985). Having gone through a shortened version of this process at the 1980 Brooklyn College Institute in Training Peer Tutors directed by Ken, I know from experience that this can work. In training tutors, I make specific suggestions about the role they should play. These suggestions include the concentration on higher level concerns first such as organization and content, while leaving lower level concerns such as spelling until the proofreading process. This is true, even though tutees may insist that their biggest problem is spelling. In addition, tutors help tutees in every stage of the writing process from coming up with a topic, generating ideas about that topic, selecting and using prewriting methods that work for them and that have become their favorites, drafting and moving to another section of the paper if they become stuck, revising and final proofreading. Training often becomes the key to enlisting faculty support.

Although other faculty may not always be aware of these, ethical issues in peer tutoring also need to be addressed. Tutors and Writing Center coordinators both need

to be very much aware of these issues. Some of these issues include how much assistance is enough and how much is too much; bribery; sexual issues; and how to avoid the appearance of plagiarism. Tutors, obviously should not simply rewrite a paper for a tutee. Instead, by using questions the tutor should try to engage the student in dialogue to find out what the student wanted to say and how the student thinks it can best be said. Since all of us who write share our materials with colleagues, I openly encourage students to help each other, both in the classroom and in a tutoring situation. Elaine Maimon in the text, *Writing in the Arts and Sciences*, (1981), suggests that students write acknowledgement pages indicating all sources of assistance. I have found that this works very well and students are creative in acknowledging their sources. In the acknowledgements, although there is no set format, I ask students to use some logical order, usually either from the least to the most important or the reverse. The bribery issue, on the other hand, has probably more serious implications. This bribery tends to take two forms. Fortunately, this has not been an issue I have had to deal with, but colleagues at other institutions have reported incidents where tutors have been offered monetary bribes to write students' papers including additional money if the grade for the paper is an A. Tutors, therefore, need to be aware of this possibility. Still another ethical issue occurs in the area of sex. Again, I have not personally dealt with this, but have heard reports of tutors seducing tutees (and the other way around) and also once a sexual relationship has been established, blackmail can occur. All of us concerned with Writing Centers need to be very much aware that these are problems that can arise, and we need to prepare our tutors to cope with these problems.

In closing, The Three P's: Politics, Public Relations and Peer Tutoring are intertwined in the Writing Center. Besides being intertwined, they are also overlapping and do not always separate easily into discrete categories. They are, however, extremely important in the successful operation of a Writing Center. In looking back over what I have said, I recognize that I may have raised more issues rather than presented solutions. These are areas that demand more attention. I do, however, have one final suggestion, which while not a solution may make coordination of a Writing Center easier. As you know, the CCCC has in the past few years added a fifth C - Computers. In keeping with that, I would like to suggest a fourth and fifth P which are also needed in Coordinating a Writing Center: Patience and Perseverance.

Works Cited

- Bruffee, Kenneth A. *A Short Course in Writing*, 3rd ed. Little, and Company, Boston, 1985.
- Maimon, Elaine, et. al., *Writing in the Arts and Sciences*, Winthrop, Cambridge, MA, 1981.

Freedom of Form: Structure as a Liberating Influence on Student Writers

Janet M. Fisher, Jacksonville University

Joseph Harris, in his analysis of the Roland Barthes and William Coles approaches to writing, concludes that, for Coles at least, the aim of the writer is no longer the Clarity and Simplicity of composition textbooks, but the creating of a text that suggests something of the complexity of its author (161).

Encouraging in this statement is the notion that writing does allow the individual to explore and to reveal the complexity of his ideas, his thought processes, his peculiar (that is, unique) perspective. Largely as a result of the work of writing theoreticians whom Maxine Hairston and Richard Coe, among others, refer to as Expressionists, teachers of writing have directed their efforts more and more intensively toward helping students search for the sources of meaning within themselves. The selves they identify can be mirrored in their writings. One should learn as one writes; as a writer articulates, he becomes familiar with what he thinks, what he believes and rejects, what confuses or frightens or edifies him.

On the other hand, disturbing about Harris's statement is the apparent rejection of "Clarity and Simplicity." Many of us have heard the same charge repeated--sometimes with scorn--and find it troublesome. We are uncomfortable with a suggestion that there is something unworthy or undesirable about Clarity, often capitalized as in Harris's article (no doubt his point in doing so). "Simplicity" is usually not defined, but the implication is that teachers who write these books or who teach from them fail to recognize either the complexity of the writing process or the complexity of writers. In most cases, such a charge distorts what most teachers do in their teaching and suggests that they lack a basic comprehension of the very process they try to help others understand.

An area of concern these days seems to be whether it is either appropriate to teach or useful to the students to learn rhetorical modes, strategies, form. Actually, in a way, teaching any of these is teaching form. And, although we may explore new ways of teaching writing and pursue new insights into the process, ultimately the nature of the writing process will dictate that we must help students learn to shape their writing. To do this, we must teach form.

As Maxine Hairston points out, "the process of writing" should not be taken to mean the same thing as "the writing process" (442). We must teach both, and most of us try to do so. Richard Coe reminds us that there are different approaches to teaching form. Some teachers still tend to ignore content and teach only form even though most of us now vehemently decri such activity. Others try to teach writing in a way that "enables content, allowing form to develop organically" (Coe, 16). Enabling is fine--indeed, essential. However, is form really likely to grow organically? Do we want to view form as an enemy of content? In fact, for most, if not all, writers, form is necessary to content. For virtually all readers, form is a key to the content.

Opposition to "form" seems to derive from two sources. First, such opposition comes from a reaction against a traditional approach to teaching writing by focusing on the grammatical and stylistic errors or anomalies in a piece of writing. We need to continue to oppose this one--reducing the teaching of writing to a search for errors (what we could call the "Big Brother" technique). On the other hand, opposition to form seems to derive from some of the theoreticians who argue that writing is creating, not communicating. If writing is essentially creating, then it is basically an art form such as painting. As such, it allows one to learn about himself and about the world and others. It allows him to explore and discover knowledge. When one writes with such goals in mind, then perhaps form is irrelevant at worst and part and parcel of content at best. However, most of the time, we do not write to learn.

Writing is usually a social act. Therefore, while some of us sometimes write to learn, many of us never really do so. We write to communicate. Therefore, we may try to teach people how to write to learn, but we must teach people to learn to write. To do so, we need to teach form, which, if taught properly, can be liberating rather than re-

strictive. As Coe suggests, form can be generative. It can shape the material so that we can communicate. In fact, can we even think of an idea unless the form is already available to us? Coe argues that "knowing a form with which an idea can be articulated improves the likelihood of thinking of that idea" (25).

As Maxine Hairston points out, the vast majority of what we write falls into what she calls the "message" and the "self-limiting" categories. Only a small portion is "reflective," that is, "writing in which the writer discovers much of his or her thought during the writing process" (443-45). Most of the time, a writer is trying to communicate what he knows to a specific reader or readers or he is trying to persuade a specific reader or readers. As Stanley Fish says,

we try to persuade others to our beliefs because if they believe what we believe, they will, as a consequence of those beliefs, see what we see; and the facts to which we point in order to support our interpretations will be as obvious to them as they are to us (365).

This is precisely the point Jeffrey Porter addresses when he says, "The most difficult problem for any reader facing a text may, in fact, involve the question of the writer's purpose" (333). The form of the text can help the reader decode that purpose by conveying the ideas to the reader, allowing him to experience the writer's message. Referring to Kenneth Burke, Porter reminds us that "to understand something is to be affected by it" (333). If, as Coe says, "form is cultural," form helps ensure the effect (20). In speaking of effect, we need to make a distinction between communication and stimulus-response. In reviewing Peter Elbow's *Writing with Power*, Irwin Hashimoto objects to Elbow's "behaviorist view of language" in which writing equates with words, so good writing is stimulating words (210). Without form (paragraphing, sentence structure, introduction-development-conclusion format, rhetorical modes, and so on), a writer cannot plug in to the shared cultural legacy between himself and his reader. The writing teacher must provide access to that shared legacy, must try to demystify the process of using it. As Joseph Harris reminds us,

As teachers of writing . . . we are concerned with the frames and margins of discourse--with what makes sense and what doesn't, with what is good writing and what isn't. Why does this argument fall apart while this one doesn't? Why is the meaning I construct from this text so unlike that intended by its author? Or why is it so difficult to make some texts mean much of anything at all? (159).

For that matter, the elements of form can provide the crutches that most students need to help them write to learn even when they set out to write to communicate. Lynn Quitman Troyka in discussing the "low tolerance for uncertainty" exhibited by most non-traditional students, but shared by most traditional students, suggests that concrete aids rather than words of reassurance provide the relief from uncertainty that they seek and need (259). To students, form represents the secret formula. (Notice the equivalent word base.) They write because of social need; thus, they need to learn the codes used by society--in the same way that learning the rules, which are easy, and the proper techniques, which look easy but are difficult to duplicate, not only facilitate learning a sport, but are indispensable. One cannot set out to teach or learn a sport and go straight to game strategy, for instance, trusting that knowledge of the rules and technical expertise will grow organically in the process of simply doing the procedures over and over.

Learn to write by writing. Yes, let students discover the appropriate forms. Well, some students might discover them. Many others will give up in frustration. But maybe we can combine methods and achieve a better result than we would by using one or the other approach. Most of us yearn for direction and for a sense of control. In *Writing with Power*, Elbow suggests that we "choose what is alive and discard what is dead; polish the good pieces and figure out how they want to arrange themselves" (153). Commenting on Elbow's idea, Hashimoto complains that such a method appears to me unnecessarily passive. I'm not sure students gain "power" by simply figuring out how ideas want to arrange themselves. Furthermore, I am not convinced that students

can adequately apply such a method to organize ideas in specific disciplines--disciplines with their own terminology, research designs, and explanatory models (210-11).

Stanley Fish reminds us that "the act of recognizing literature . . . proceeds from a collective decision as to what will count as literature, a decision that will be in force only so long as a community of readers or believers continues to abide by it" (11). This is true of almost all writing. There is a communal agreement on the appropriate form of, for example, a comparison-contrast essay. The student knows that the history teacher who requires such an essay does not care about the process the student goes through to arrive at an answer or how much he learns in the course of writing the essay. The teacher cares about the form and the scope of the answer. Both the teacher and the student expect writing instructors to teach the social conventions of a standard comparison-contrast essay. What does it look like? How is it organized? If the student is already comfortable with the format and expectations of the reader, he is freer to focus on the depth, the complexity of his analysis and articulation of the subject at hand.

As he discusses the reading process, Jeffrey Porter comments that meaning is a reciprocal phenomenon, brought about by the interaction of a text and a reader. "As the reader passes through the various perspectives offered by the text," writes Wolfgang Iser, "and relates the different views and patterns to one another he sets the work in motion and so sets himself in motion as well" (332).

The same is true of the writing process. It is a contract between the writer and the reader and, thus, dependent upon the interplay between the two. The form of the text creates a common ground on which writer and reader can meet as they attempt to communicate.

Most teachers acknowledge this relationship. Donald Murray, in *Write to Learn*, certainly does as he asserts that "the form of a piece of writing, in a way, is the meaning of a piece of writing" (133). Those who oppose any focus on form tend to reject such a notion. It seems, though, that teachers who think that teaching the aspects of form is distracting, irrelevant, trivial, stifling, or outmoded tend to be teachers who assign mostly narrative topics. However, in most other classes and in professional work, few students will ever do much narrative writing. As Hairston notes, we write mostly memos, letters, reports, and so forth. We relay information or we persuade. Most academic and professional writing has specific content and format requirements. The audience wants predictability, clarity, and simplicity. The reader expects the sense of ease that masterful, controlled writing provides--much like the appearance of ease, clarity, and simplicity of movement exhibited by a proficient athlete. Achieving a comfortable facility with form can liberate students to focus on meaning, to examine the complexity of their subjects. At the same time, it can provide a security blanket, a degree of predictability and stability. As Harris notes,

In a freshman writing class the instability of meaning is a fact of life, not a point of critical debate. Nowhere else is the importance of a reader's expectations, of interpretive codes, shown more clearly.

Where we look for analysis, our students often appeal to emotion; where we expect example, they call on popular sentiment, what everybody knows. The problem is not that our students are dumb, but that they're not yet members of the club--they don't know the sorts of things we as academics look for when we read (158).

Perhaps one's response to this plea for some degree of attention to form is that form is minor; it can be taught in fifteen minutes. The rest of the time should be spent on more important issues. However, if that were true, teachers would not need to cover grammar rules every year, only to find that students continue to have trouble. We would not teach the structures of discourse repeatedly and still find that students fail to handle routine assignments with ease. Students would find the structure of the paragraph less daunting, and on and on.

Of course, we are doing a much better job now of demystifying the writing process by treating a written work as a whole rather than focusing on the elements, and the

surface elements at that, in such a way that the integrity of the whole is neglected. Many teachers are simply not going to quit drawing the student's attention to the grammar and usage elements that are incorrect, the organization flaws, the standard patterns expected by readers. Nor should they have to apologize or defend themselves. They can often do the best job of focusing on content, of allowing the students to find out more about themselves and what they want and need to say by freeing them from the restrictions of uncertainty. The rules of the road free the driver to be on his way; the rules of discourse must be allowed to free the writer to think to learn, and to communicate. Peter Elbow's argument for ignoring audience notwithstanding, eventually a writer must move from generation of ideas to production of a finished document that meets reader expectations in most respects. Indeed, familiarity and, ultimately, expertise with the forms of discourse even help provide the tools for creating ideas. There are times when ignoring audience is appropriate, but most of the time audience is the very reason we are writing. We do, indeed, write to learn, but we must also learn to write.

Works Cited

- Coe, Richard M. "An Apology for Form; or, Who Took the Form Out of the Process?" *College English* 49 (January 1987): 13-28.
- Elbow, Peter. "Closing My Eyes As I Speak: An Argument for Ignoring Audience." *College English* 49 (January 1987): 5069.
- , *Writing with Power: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process*. New York: Oxford UP, 1981.
- Fish, Stanley. *Is There a Text in this Class?: The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. Cambridge, MS: Harvard UP, 1980.
- Hairston, Maxine. "Different Products, Different Processes: A Theory About Writing." *College Composition and Communication* 39 (December 1986): 442-451.
- Harris, Joseph. "The Plural Text/The Plural Self: Roland Barthes and William Coles." *College English* 49 (February 1987): 158-170.
- Hashimoto, Irwin. *Rev. of Writing with Power: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process*, by Peter Elbow. *College Composition and Communication* 33 (May 1982): 209-12.
- Murray, Donald M. *Write to Learn*. 2nd ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1987.
- Porter, Jeffrey. "The Reasonable Reader: Knowledge and Inquiry in Freshman English." *College English* 49 (March 1987): 332-344.
- Troyka, Lynn Q. "Perspectives on Legacies and Literacy in the 1980's." *College Composition and Communication* 33 (October 1982): 252-262.

Fitting the Writing Center to the School

Sylvia H. Gamboa, College of Charleston

Because schools and student bodies differ dramatically, the methods of writing centers to accomplish their goals must reflect this diversity.

This diversity is strongly reflected in the writing labs at The Citadel and the College of Charleston, two colleges located in Charleston, S.C. A little background information about these two institutions should prove helpful.

The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina, claims about 2,000 full-time male students who reside on campus; about 550 are freshmen. Except for a non-credit English course offered to incoming freshmen who show a deficiency in the subject, no basic English courses are offered. As cadets at a military school, these students lead regimented lives and follow a strict, quasi-military existence.

The College of Charleston is a liberal arts college with about 4,100 day students, many of whom hold on-campus or off-campus jobs, positions necessary for these students to remain in school. Approximately 60% are commuters and about 70% are female.

The staff at the Citadel Writing Center is composed of professional tutors who occasionally come from the English faculty, graduate students who come from a variety of academic backgrounds, and peer tutors. The College of Charleston draws all its professional tutors from the English Department faculty and also employs peer tutors, again from a variety of academic backgrounds. Because the administrative heads of both writing labs are also teaching faculty members, a clear channel of communication exists between the writing centers and the faculty of the English department.

At both institutions, faculty refer students to the writing center for extra help and frequently students seek tutoring on their own initiative. In addition, at The Citadel, an academic officer (an upperclassman who oversees a company of cadets) may refer a student to the lab. The student will then make an appointment to see a specific tutor or tutor feels the meetings should be stopped. Sometimes tutees will lose their time slots for failure to keep their regular appointments, but usually the tutee will remain with his tutor for the semester. Occasionally, a tutee will forget his appointment, but a phone call to the dorm or a note sent to the tutee and his academic officer reminding the student that he has missed his appointment will reinforce the importance of attending the tutoring sessions and bring the tutee quickly back to the writing lab.

As a liberal arts college with large numbers of students commuting to school, living off campus, and working, the College of Charleston lacks the control necessary for scheduled appointments. Thus the college's lab uses a more informal, walk-in system. Except on exceptionally busy days, any student can find help in this lab when he seeks it. Many of the students frequenting the lab will be students enrolled in basic English classes (especially during the fall semester) who would certainly profit from a weekly appointment, but who are often juggling work, school, commuting, and visits to the math and writing labs. These students often opt to see a particular tutor on each visit to the lab, but an equal number will solicit help from any tutor in the lab. Because the number of students in the lab in any one time can vary a great deal, the lab maintains an extensive file of grammar exercises and several answer keys, thus allowing the students to work on their own, check their answers, and seek help for certain problem areas.

Although neither lab was set up to edit or proofread essays both labs differ in their attitudes towards papers in progress. The Citadel has a very strict honor system; thus a typical tutoring session would be devoted to asking open-ended questions, going over specific grammar rules and exercises, or discussing corrected essays. The College of Charleston, too, has a clear honor system; some professors, however, are more lenient than others in allowing a tutor to discuss something such as a thesis statement or the meaning of a literary work. To accommodate this diversity among the English faculty,

the lab sends a form to each member of the English department asking what can and cannot be discussed during a tutoring session.

Evaluating the success of both labs is necessary and important. At The Citadel, meticulous record keeping of essay grades before and after tutoring has proven the positive value of the writing center. Tutors are also evaluated by their tutees. More intangible evidence demonstrates the value of the College of Charleston writing lab: the willingness of professors to refer students to the lab and the return of students who have received help in the past.

But amidst the diversity of these two labs, there exist five common elements that make them successful:

- 1 - A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ENGLISH FACULTY: A lab will ideally have a faculty member or an administrator who can act as a liaison between the English faculty and lab. Without support from this department, a lab cannot be successful.
- 2 - CAREFUL SELECTION OF PERSONNEL: Both students and faculty must feel confidence in the tutors in the lab. Unless this confidence exists, there will be few, if any, students to tutor.
- 3 - A STRONG INITIAL TRAINING OF TUTORS: A week's training session at the beginning of the fall semester will help prepare the novice tutor to meet his new responsibilities and make him comfortable with the returning tutors. Periodic training sessions during the semester (a weekly or biweekly meeting, for example) will improve his skills.
- 4 - POSITIVE BUT REALISTIC REINFORCEMENT OF BOTH TUTOR AND TUTEES: Sometimes progress for a tutee means making a D- instead of an F. Sometimes progress is barely measurable, but both tutor and tutees need to know when a student's work is improving and deserve to be complimented. Everyone needs stroking.
- 5 - CAMARADERIE: Almost any kind of work can be pleasant when the people involved enjoy being together and sharing ideas and experiences. Part of this feeling of camaraderie is a result of having a leader who can direct and inspire, who can elicit the best work from the tutors.

So although a writing center must accommodate the diversity in a school and its student body, the real strength depends on its ability to select and train good tutors, to inspire its tutors and tutees, and to provide a congenial atmosphere for its personnel.

Personality and the Writer

Barry Mait, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a standard psychological personality profile used by many colleges and universities for a variety of purposes. Yet, because the MBTI reports personality differences and helps to explain those differences with regard to behavior (e.g. learning styles), users of the MBTI are more likely to be found in an institution's student affairs division than in an academic discipline. However, those of us who work with the development of an individual student's skills, such as writing, can find type theory a powerful tool in helping us be more effective teachers. Anyone seriously interested in the relationship of type to an individual's writing process should first consult "Personality and Individual Writing Processes" (*College Composition and Communication*, Oct. 1984) written by George H. Jensen and John K. DiTiberio. Much of what follows is drawn, not only from that groundbreaking article, but also from numerous conversations with Jensen and DiTiberio. Teachers and researchers interested in the relationship between personality and writing owe a debt to them for their pioneering work.

The MBTI is based on four bipolar oppositions. These polarities are drawn from Jungian psychological types. The oppositions are

Extraversion/Introversion
Sensing/Intuition
Thinking/Feeling
Judging/Perceiving.

Extraversion/Introversion

The first opposition Extraversion/Introversion (researchers who work with type theory always keep Jung's spelling of extraversion) describes where we get energy. This needs to be kept in mind. The terms will be used here as Jungian terms not as commonly used. What people discover once they become sensitive to type is that both extraverts and introverts can like people and can like interacting with people. This opposition has nothing to do with how people interact with others but rather where people get energy. Extraverts draw energy from other people; introverts get energy from within themselves and are drained by others. The important concept to remember here is the energy level.

In terms of the writing process, extraverts and introverts go through the process very differently. For example, introverts go through the writing process very slowly and deliberately; they're thoughtful writers. They like composing. They like quiet. If they stop during their writing process, it's most likely that they're just thinking and are not necessarily blocked. Writing for introverts is very often a process of thoughtful introspection. Extraverts, on the other hand, like lots of action. Movement can be very important for them. When they actually write, they tend to write very quickly. I happen to be an extravert and I can see this tendency at work in my own writing process. As one of my introvert colleagues has observed about my process, when I write, I dump text faster than anything he's ever seen. This apparent ease with which extraverts can produce words can be deceiving. What my observant colleague doesn't realize is that it can take me days to reach that point.

We can see this in action by noting the observation of another one of my colleagues with regard to my extraverted writing process as opposed to the processes of introvert writers. She has noted that when the introverts in our department need to write they go into their offices and close the door. They then very thoughtfully sit down with pen and paper or typewriter or word processor. On the other hand, when I need to write, I flit from office to office and, to use her phrase, "vampirishly suck energy" from all my colleagues. Before I go to drain my colleagues of their energy, however, I've already turned on my word processor and opened a new file. Once I reach the point when I feel ready to begin composing, I then return to my own office, sit down, and all of a sudden words just start to pour out. That's extravert writing.

All of this has tremendous implications on writing pedagogy. For some of the assumptions that we as writing teachers or writing tutors have about how people are supposed to behave when they sit down and start writing come into question. Some people will, indeed, be able to sit and thoughtfully plan. Others may need to get up and move around mainly to talk to other individuals before they're ready to start composing.

Sensing/Intuition

The second opposition describes how we get information. It's what Jung calls Sensing versus Intuition. Sensing types see details. They like concrete details and tend to be very procedural about those details. Intuitives on the other hand, see the whole picture. Intuitives are more comfortable dealing with theories and abstractions. An easy way to look at this difference between sensing and intuition is to rely on an old adage. The sensing types can't see the forest for the trees. They will look out and say, "That's a gorgeous red maple." or "Look at that white oak." Then they'll back off and say, "Forest? Oh, they're beautiful trees, but forest?" Meanwhile, the intuitive on the other hand is likely to say, "What a gorgeous forest. An oak tree? Is there really that big a difference between an oak tree and a maple tree?" This difference in perception is important in writing. What we look for in finished writing--revised writing--is that writers need to draw on both sides of this preference. Even though people may have a sensing preference or an intuitive preference, they need to use both sensing and intuition (both details and generalizations) in order to effectively communicate their ideas in writing. As a result, part of what we do is to encourage students to go with their preference in the early drafting phase. It makes it easier for them to get work out initially. Then, knowing their preference, knowing the opposition and what that means in terms of revision, they can then work on developing that opposition. Effective written communication needs to draw on both sides of the sensing/ intuitive opposition.

Thinking/Feeling

The Thinking/Feeling opposition describes how people make decisions. For thinkers fairness is of prime concern. Feelers, on the other hand, tend to adopt harmony as their credo. They like it when people feel good, and things work out while thinkers might forego a little harmony just so long as a decision appears to be right and fair. In terms of the writing process, feelers tend to have a better initial sense of audience than thinking types. What that means when looking at drafts of student writing is that feeling types will probably need to revise less in terms of audience than will thinking types. Thinking types on the other hand, tend to have problems with audience in their initial drafts. Rather than focus on whom they're writing to, thinking types tend to be more concerned about getting their ideas out, and usually getting the ideas out in a logical fashion. As a result, when working with thinking type writers, one of the major points of focus in developing revision strategies is to help those writers in terms of understanding the needs of their particular audience.

Thinking types also tend to have an internal sense of structure in their writing. Feeling types, however, appear to benefit from external structure. That usually means they need more formal organization ahead of time. While some thinking types like to address organization in the prewrite stage, others don't. In any event, thinking types are less likely to need external patterns early in the process. However, early attention to structure--whether outlines, trees, or whatever--is important to feeling types.

Judging/Perceiving

The final opposition, Judging/Perceiving describes how we tend to organize our world. Once again, we find ourselves in the world of Jungian terminology, and we need to be cautious in our usage. Just as extraversion as it is used here does not refer to people who are outgoing and introversion does not refer to people who are antisocial, being a judge does not mean that one is judgmental. All of us, perceivers and judges alike, make judgments. The quality that marks judging types is that they like structure. They are the list-makers of the world. They try to plan things out ahead of time. They are also very goal-oriented. Perceivers, on the other hand, love contingencies. They live in a world full of spontaneity.

Judgers and perceivers also tend to structure their writing differently. Judgers go through a process which is closer to what might remind us of a more traditional way of looking at the writing process. Judgers are much more likely to know where they're going with their piece of writing from the beginning. As a result, judgers tend to be more comfortable with a process which involves beginning with a thesis statement. Perceivers, on the other hand, are more likely to write and write without a clear sense of direction. It's not unusual for perceivers to sit and write until they reach their last paragraph. Finally reaching the end of the draft, a perceiver might look up and say, "That's what I've been trying to say in this paper." Letting the writing lead the writer is perceiver writing.

The writing processes of perceivers apparently force them to go through all of their material before coming to a conclusion. Part of what goes in the perceiver's process is that once they know where they're going, they feel that they have already done the work. As a result, it can be counterproductive to force perceivers to come to a conclusion too early. They may then get bored with the assignment and want to do something else. From a pedagogical perspective what this means is that perceivers may need to write even if they don't have a clear sense of direction. However, after the initial draft, they very often must, in word-processor terms, block and move their ending to the beginning so that readers can have a sense of what will follow.

Implications

Having seen how personality type as determined by the MBTI can affect an individual's writing process, writing instructors need to ask how this information might affect pedagogy. A legitimate question is: "What does all of this mean to me as a teacher of writing?" First of all, it means that all of us tend to see the world differently. It also means that just because we go through a writing process one way, or that we've been trained to teach a writing process one way, not all of our students will go through the writing process that way. Then we need to accept that those differences are legitimate. In fact as teachers, one of the things it's important for us to understand is if we see a student who goes through the writing process in a way that seems totally alien to us, as long as that student gets to where he or she needs to go, that's fine. By using the MBTI what we've discovered is by better understanding the sixteen possible types, we can better understand both our own type and the way we see the writing process. In addition, we may be better able to understand why our students aren't going through the process exactly the way we think they're supposed to.

One way of looking at how this knowledge can be put into practical use in working with student writers can be seen by viewing my own experience. Since I started using the MBTI in my own classrooms, I now give writing assignments in at least two different ways. My natural inclination is to give a broad, general assignment. I'm an intuitive. What I've discovered is my sensing students never completely understood what I was talking about. My intuitive students responded well to the sweeping, unfocused assignments, but my sensing types (75% of the general population happens to be sensing types) needed more detail. As a result, I've started structuring writing assignments not only in the same general fashion that I'm comfortable with, meeting the needs of my intuitive students, but I now am also taking that same assignment and defining it more carefully, putting it in more concrete terms. This enables my sensing students to more likely to understand what I'm asking for in my assignments. As a result, they're better able to respond to the assignments that I'm giving. While this is just one example, it does demonstrate a situation where instructors or tutors can better understand what their students are going through. Ultimately, we can hope that when we are willing to accept that our students may be successful in employing processes different from our own, we will then be able to modify our methods in order to more effectively meet the needs of our individual students.

Network Resources For Computer-Assisted Writing: Advice For Small Colleges

Felicia Mitchell, Emory and Henry College

While working on the Ph.D. at a large university, I took the proliferation of micro-computer facilities for granted. I only had to walk up one flight of stairs--or to take the escalator--to introduce students to the wonders of the word processing. Additional help via tutors and credit or non-credit courses abounded across campus. Some instructors took advantage of interactive programs which allowed them to look at students work on line; others referred students to remedial labs where they reviewed grammar via programmed instruction; still others simply reminded students of the tremendous help work processing could give. The students which I worked with took the resources for granted, and their attitudes toward writing and revision seemed to benefit accordingly. Just seeing the excitement of a student learning a new tool for easing or enhancing written expression was a thrill.

Consequently, my arrival at a small, privately-funded liberal arts college, in the initial stages of the microcomputer mania which hit larger schools with larger budgets some years back, could have been heralded with frustration--but it was not. It is true that The Writing Center was initially microcomputerless, but it is also true that since arriving I have found across campus a wide network of resources for including computer-assisted writing in my list of priorities for students in English and the content areas. This network includes facilities, computer hardware and software, individualized training, faculty, staff, and students. The Writing Center is no longer solely a room: Its resources are campus-wide.

I hope that, as I anecdotally relate my experiences with computer-assisted writing at Emory and Henry through a series of hypothetical questions and answers based on real-life experience, writing center personnel at other small colleges will realize that they do not need to tread water until the grant comes through. Although many of us are at the ground level in equipping writing centers, our students need not remain computer illiterate. With our help and a little maneuvering, a writing center can serve as a base of operation or referral for campus-wide computer-assisted writing.

Is it a fad?

Computers are firmly established in the work-a-day world. I knew that at least one component of computer-assisted writing instruction--word processing--had finally arrived on the classroom scene when a review copy of Brock Dethier's *Resources for Writing With a Purpose* crossed my desk. Dethier writes, "Writing on a computer after typing all your life is like changing from a bicycle to a car. You don't want to forget how to ride the bike, but when you want to go far or fast, you take the car" (6). The computer certainly can take one farther and faster. To carry Dethier's metaphor along, I might also say that, with word processing, the road is not as bumpy and one is not as likely to fall by the side of the road.

The computer is an excellent vehicle for students who are learning that revision and editing are natural parts of a recursive writing process in which thought and word can interact as fast as their fingers: "The ease of correcting mistakes, of creating multiple drafts, of accomplishing complex structural revisions--all of these contribute to making the word processor a versatile tool for writers" (Lacy 37). Often, once a paper is typed the old-fashioned way, students are reluctant to revise and retype. With word processing resources at their finger tips, they face many more options and are much more likely to turn in polished writing which can--after teachers comment--be polished even more. In fact, the medium may allow students to publish their words within the classroom or college community and thereby make writing activities more purposeful (see, for example, Rodrigues and Rodrigues). Since my colleagues and I know how invaluable a driver's license can be, we are beginning to publicize the advantages of word processing.

How can we get started?

The easiest way to utilize computer assistance in writing is to research the availability of microcomputers in other departments, the library, and dormitories; advertising their availability will have an immediate effect on writing across the campus, and instructional or interactive programs can easily wait. After my composition students first expressed their frustration at finding microcomputers to practice on, I decided to go exploring. I knew that the library housed a microcomputer room and that there was a microcomputer facility for Computer Science students, and I wondered about how accessible these microcomputers might be to students in general. In the halls of the building housing the Computer Science Department, a physics professor asked me if I were lost. I said, "No, I'm looking for the computers." He spent the next half hour explaining to me the facilities downstairs and weighing the pros and cons asking the folks in Computer Science to help with a session on the microcomputer versus the mainframe. The Computer Science and library personnel were just as helpful and said that they would welcome any visitors.

These resources, though tempting, left many students wondering about software expenses. The solution to that was to encourage them to ask friends for copies of shareware software, if they could not afford the copyrighted packages available at the campus bookstore, or to use friends' software. The Writing Center would in time, we promised, purchase software and make it more readily available.

Where do we find the money?

Money can come from a variety of sources. For the time being, look into your library budget, your division's potential college-based grants, and your academic dean's discretionary budget; then let the development office apprise you of sources for future funding and expansion. Knowing that The Writing Center would expand eventually and offer microcomputer facilities within one common room, I inquired about the interim possibility of purchasing software for The Writing Center through English Department's library budget for library use and was given the go-ahead to review both instructional and word-processing software. The Humanities Division, aware of The Writing Center's commitment to computer-assisted instruction, surprised us with a sum of money designated as a seed grant for hardware which we are now in the process of negotiating for at the administrative level--and I imagine we will purchase a PC sometime in the near future.

What if you want to instruct students in word processing?

Some students need that extra push only a formal instructor can give. If we wait for them to ask a friend to help them learn word processing, or point them in the direction of the closest microcomputer lab, they might never make it. If you have a compatible word processor in your office and do not mind sharing it with students, you can use it to instruct. Better yet is the serendipitous gift or loan from a surprising source. One day after I had been at Emory and Henry for a few months, I got a phone call from the director of the Computer Sciences Center. "We just got in a new shipment, and we have an extra IBM PS on hand," he said. "I know you're interested in computers, so I want you to keep this in your office--if you want it."

Within a few days, my office was housing a computer I myself did not know how to operate since I am an Apple Macintosh aficionado. So I had to learn a word processing program, and while I was learning it I found that one of the tutors in The Writing Center was a master of that particular program, PC-Write, and would be willing to help instruct students in my office during Writing Center hours. She and I began instructing a few students from English Composition classes, and the other peer tutors themselves took paid time to learn, through my initial introduction and their own trials and errors, enough to help get others started.

For each student whom we teach word processing, I imagine many more students will benefit since students tend to share their expertise with one another at Emory and Henry. Thus far we have targeted students in English Composition, but we know that English Composition students have to write in other classes as well and that our efforts will pay off across campus. In fact, now that we have discovered that we can follow the

program of tutoring in the one room and run down to my office when a student wants help on the microcomputer, The Writing Center is expanding its parameters from the Center to my office to across campus.

What if there are not enough to go around?

Shirlee Lindemann and Jeannette Willert ("Word Processing in High School Writing Classes"), as well as Cindy Selfe ("The Electronic Pen: Computers and the Composing Process"), have noted that sharing, with its subsequent effect on collaborative learning, is one of the first lessons students using the microcomputer will experience. My first week at Emory and Henry, I talked about the advantages of word processing and encouraged English composition students to use it even though I knew very little about campus resources. Many of them did, usually sharing a roommate's word processor or bringing one from home. Others, as I discovered campus resources and mentioned them in class, ventured into computer labs and sought help from students working diligently away at what appeared to be a complicated task. When I polled the students at the end of the term, I discovered that most of them had learned word processing from a friend--or made a friend while learning--and that many of them had taught others to use microcomputers or would be willing to. In addition to sharing expertise, students also learn to share time and hardware. I have noticed on my visits to the library's microcomputer room that students seem to have developed a ballistic system for taking turns at the terminals or PCs.

Although we wonder if we are creating a monster by teaching word processing while we still have limited facilities, we know that it is a monster worth taming since it will serve as a reminder that computer-assisted writing should be a priority.

How do we know what software to purchase?

After a writing center has word processing facilities at hand, what next? Students need software. It is probably obvious that my bias, for the small college, involved word processing. I tend to agree with Sandra J. Balkema, who states, "Right now I think the biggest disservice we could do our students would be to turn computers into teaching machines: to buy micros for our English classrooms and writing centers and buy a bunch of programs to teach spelling, sentence recognition, or whatever. This is why I hesitate to encourage use of such software: drill exercises are rarely appropriate or effective pedagogy. Attached to a computer they may hold our students' interest for a while longer, but their worth isn't likely to increase" (22). Let humans do what humans do best, and let microcomputers serve their function as machines which can help students create and manipulate text.

Standards for word processing and related instructional software exist and can offer serviceable guidelines; see, for example, Michael Spitzer's advice in "Selecting Word Processing Software" and James Strickland's "Prewriting and Computing." Students also can help. Find out what students use in the dorms and query them. I have found that students respond well to *PC-Write*, because of its functional help component, *Bank Street Writer*, and *WordStar*. Now I am also starting to see word processing programs that combine word processing capabilities with embedded grammar rules come in for review. These sound interesting, because if a student has a question about grammar, he or she can look it up right at that point when the information is needed and connect the rule with an individual need--and thus be more likely to remember it.

Some students, however, will respond to the old-fashioned grammar or spelling drills, and many instructors still value them. Consequently, if you are directed to purchase instructional software, the main guideline is that the programs meet the highest expectations for instructional integrity that we take into account when reviewing potential textbooks. Next, after being satisfied with content, look at the relative ease of a program. Can someone who knows nothing about a computer, for example, take an instructional package and follow it from beginning to end with only the most basic of instructions on inserting the disk properly? My most frustrating experience to date has involved spending hours with some instructional software which the library was thinking of purchasing and--despite my bias--being impressed with its variety of activities--cloze tests, multiple choice, revision prompts, and so on--only to find that the grammar

Judgers and perceivers also tend to structure their writing differently. Judgers go through a process which is closer to what might remind us of a more traditional way of looking at the writing process. Judgers are much more likely to know where they're going with their piece of writing from the beginning. As a result, Judgers tend to be more comfortable with a process which involves beginning with a thesis statement. Perceivers, on the other hand, are more likely to write and write without a clear sense of direction. It's not unusual for perceivers to sit and write until they reach their last paragraph. Finally reaching the end of the draft, a perceiver might look up and say, "That's what I've been trying to say in this paper." Letting the writing lead the writer is perceiver writing.

The writing processes of perceivers apparently force them to go through all of their material before coming to a conclusion. Part of what goes in the perceiver's process is that once they know where they're going, they feel that they have already done the work. As a result, it can be counterproductive to force perceivers to come to a conclusion too early. They may then get bored with the assignment and want to do something else. From a pedagogical perspective what this means is that perceivers may need to write even if they don't have a clear sense of direction. However, after the initial draft, they very often must, in word-processor terms, block and move their ending to the beginning so that readers can have a sense of what will follow.

Implications

Having seen how personality type as determined by the MBTI can affect an individual's writing process, writing instructors need to ask how this information might affect pedagogy. A legitimate question is: "What does all of this mean to me as a teacher of writing?" First of all, it means that all of us tend to see the world differently. It also means that just because we go through a writing process one way, or that we've been trained to teach a writing process one way, not all of our students will go through the writing process that way. Then we need to accept that those differences are legitimate. In fact as teachers, one of the things it's important for us to understand is if we see a student who goes through the writing process in a way that seems totally alien to us, as long as that student gets to where he or she needs to go, that's fine. By using the MBTI what we've discovered is by better understanding the sixteen possible types, we can better understand both our own type and the way we see the writing process. In addition, we may be better able to understand why our students aren't going through the process exactly the way we think they're supposed to.

One way of looking at how this knowledge can be put into practical use in working with student writers can be seen by viewing my own experience. Since I started using the MBTI in my own classrooms, I now give writing assignments in at least two different ways. My natural inclination is to give a broad, general assignment. I'm an intuitive. What I've discovered is my sensing students never completely understood what I was talking about. My intuitive students responded well to the sweeping, unfocused assignments, but my sensing types (75% of the general population happens to be sensing types) needed more detail. As a result, I've started structuring writing assignments not only in the same general fashion that I'm comfortable with, meeting the needs of my intuitive students, but I now am also taking that same assignment and defining it more carefully, putting it in more concrete terms. This enables my sensing students to more likely to understand what I'm asking for in my assignments. As a result, they're better able to respond to the assignments that I'm giving. While this is just one example, it does demonstrate a situation where instructors or tutors can better understand what their students are going through. Ultimately, we can hope that when we are willing to accept that our students may be successful in employing processes different from our own, we will then be able to modify our methods in order to more effectively meet the needs of our individual students.

Network Resources For Computer-Assisted Writing: Advice For Small Colleges

Felicia Mitchell, Emory and Henry College

While working on the Ph.D. at a large university, I took the proliferation of micro-computer facilities for granted. I only had to walk up one flight of stairs--or to take the escalator--to introduce students to the wonders of the word processing. Additional help via tutors and credit or non-credit courses abounded across campus. Some instructors took advantage of interactive programs which allowed them to look at students work on line; others referred students to remedial labs where they reviewed grammar via programmed instruction; still others simply reminded students of the tremendous help work processing could give. The students which I worked with took the resources for granted, and their attitudes toward writing and revision seemed to benefit accordingly. Just seeing the excitement of a student learning a new tool for easing or enhancing written expression was a thrill.

Consequently, my arrival at a small, privately-funded liberal arts college, in the initial stages of the microcomputer mania which hit larger schools with larger budgets some years back, could have been heralded with frustration--but it was not. It is true that The Writing Center was initially microcomputerless, but it is also true that since arriving I have found across campus a wide network of resources for including computer-assisted writing in my list of priorities for students in English and the content areas. This network includes facilities, computer hardware and software, individualized training, faculty, staff, and students. The Writing Center is no longer solely a room: its resources are campus-wide.

I hope that, as I anecdotally relate my experiences with computer-assisted writing at Emory and Henry through a series of hypothetical questions and answers based on real-life experience, writing center personnel at other small colleges will realize that they do not need to tread water until the grant comes through. Although many of us are at the ground level in equipping writing centers, our students need not remain computer illiterate. With our help and a little maneuvering, a writing center can serve as a base of operation or referral for campus-wide computer-assisted writing.

Is it a fad?

Computers are firmly established in the work-a-day world. I knew that at least one component of computer-assisted writing instruction--word processing--had finally arrived on the classroom scene when a review copy of Brock Dethier's *Resources for Writing With a Purpose* crossed my desk. Dethier writes, "Writing on a computer after typing all your life is like changing from a bicycle to a car. You don't want to forget how to ride the bike, but when you want to go far or fast, you take the car"(6). The computer certainly can take one farther and faster. To carry Dethier's metaphor along, I might also say that, with word processing, the road is not as bumpy and one is not as likely to fall by the side of the road.

The computer is an excellent vehicle for students who are learning that revision and editing are natural parts of a recursive writing process in which thought and word can interact as fast as their fingers: "The ease of correcting mistakes, of creating multiple drafts, of accomplishing complex structural revisions--all of these contribute to making the word processor a versatile tool for writers" (Lacy 37). Often, once a paper is typed the old-fashioned way, students are reluctant to revise and retype. With word processing resources at their finger tips, they face many more options and are much more likely to turn in polished writing which can--after teachers comment--be polished even more. In fact, the medium may allow students to publish their words within the classroom or college community and thereby make writing activities more purposeful (see, for example, Rodrigues and Rodrigues). Since my colleagues and I know how invaluable a driver's license can be, we are beginning to publicize the advantages of word processing.

FOCUSES

A Journal Linking Composition Programs to Writing Center Practice

William C. Wolff, editor

Research and planning for writing centers are often separated from other composition research. Because the Southeastern Writing Center Association (SWCA) sees a need for a forum in which the gap between composition theory and writing center practice is closed, they have decided to publish *Focuses*. The articles selected for publication should be of special interest not only to writing center specialists, but also to directors of writing programs and instructors who include writing as a method of learning in their courses. The target audience of *Focuses*, therefore, includes those who direct and participate in college writing programs; directors of writing centers, writing-across-the-campus specialists and participants; directors of writing centers, writing teachers, and teachers of writing on the computer.

Focuses' articles address writing programs, research on the process of composing, on logic in writing, on writing about literature, in short, on any of the varied interests of writing specialists. All articles, however, ought to include a section on the links between their broad theses and writing centers, or they may focus on writing centers themselves. In this way, the editors will present scholarship which continues the examination of writing programs, but which includes the writing center as an integral part of those programs.

Subscriptions:

Individuals
Members
Institutions

\$10 a year
\$ 8 a year
\$15 a year

William C. Wolff, editor

Focuses

Department of English
Appalachian State University
Boone, NC 28608