Back to the Future— Back to the Tutor

SWCA: The Carolinas

conference schedule at a glance

Friday, February 5th

3:00-8:00 – Registration

4:00-4:45 – Opening Session: Step into the DeLorean
5:00-5:30 – Session A
5:40-6:10 – Session B
6:15-7:30 – Social

Saturday, February 6th

The Hampton Inn provides a complimentary hot breakfast in the lobby from 6:00 am-10:00 am.

8:00-4:00 – Registration

9:00-10:00 – Session C
10:15 - 11:15 – Session D
11:30-12:30 – Session E

12:30-2:15 – Lunch and Activity: Flux your Capacitor

2:30-3:30 – Session F
3:45-4:30 – Closing Section: Roads? Where We're Going, We Don't Need Roads

Friday, February 5th

3:00-8:00 – Registration

4:00-4:45 – Opening Session: **Step into the DeLorean**

> Kerri Flinchbaugh and Phil Adams
> *East Carolina University*
>
> Think, pair and share the goal(s) you aim to accomplish while attending this conference. Figure out what you want to walk away with.

5:00-5:30 – Session A

A1
Hill Valley
High School

Tutoring Across the Disciplines Without a WAC Program: Benefits of Faculty Involvement in the Writing Center

Alexandria Matheny
Winthrop University

The Writing-Across-the-Curriculum (WAC) program has an emphasis on discipline-specific writing and faculty collaboration that enables writing centers to modify their methodology in order to cater to writing in various disciplines. It encourages faculty involvement and helps to bring a more diverse population of students and tutors into the Writing Center. However, Winthrop University does not have a WAC program, and this creates a problem in our tutors' efforts to address discipline-specific writing. In "A Writing Center without a WAC Program: The De Facto WAC Center/Writing Center," Muriel Harris discusses problems with addressing discipline-specific writing and encouraging faculty involvement in the Writing Center at Purdue University. Using an interview with Dr. Amy Gerald, the Chair of Winthrop's Writing Intensive Committee, this paper explores the difficulties Winthrop's Writing Center faces on a campus without a WAC Program. Interviews with Writing Center tutors suggest that our staff has managed to cater to discipline-specific writing despite these limitations, but also indicate that the Center has room to improve its methodology. This paper proposes ways in which the Writing Center can incorporate faculty collaboration in order to progress our tutors' efforts to address discipline-specific writing without a WAC Program.

A2
Doc Brown's
Laboratory

Translating Tech-Spe@k Into and Out Of College Writing

Alessandra DiMona
Duke University

Participants, working in pairs, will be provided with "writing samples" from two college freshmen. The first writing sample, from Student A, will be riddled with the careless typos and informal stylings of an email, text message, or other form of digital communication. The participants will each assume a role (one will play the student and one will play the tutor) and they will spend some time going through the sample, sentence by sentence. The student will first try to divine some meaning from the text, and the tutor will respond with suggestions for revision. Then, with a PowerPoint, the group will go through the sample collectively and share their ideas and solutions.

Switching up the roles, participants will turn to the writing sample from Student B, a wordy and overwrought formal piece with lofty intentions and a distant, "scholarly" tone. The ridiculous verbiage, participants may note, is just as unsuccessful as Student A's. Going through the sample, the participants will be challenged to shorten sentences as if they were Twitter posts (in 140 characters or less), or make other revisions using different techniques from digital communication. Again, the group will review the writing together, hopefully concluding that the influence of tech-speak isn't only detrimental.

5:40-6:10 – Session B

B1
Doc Brown's
Laboratory

The Work of Tutoring

Beth Carroll
Appalachian State University

Although the work of tutoring is usually defined by the one-to-one sessions in which tutors meet with writers to work on their writing, tutoring often involves more than simply meeting with writers and responding to their texts. In addition to the one-to-one sessions, tutors labor in other ways as part of their jobs in the writing center: they participate in and lead staff development workshops, develop promotional materials, participate in program assessment, and numerous other tasks directly and indirectly related to tutoring. However, how tutors are prepared and compensated for this work is given little attention in the scholarly literature and textbooks on tutor education and supervision. This presentation will examine the labor of tutoring – particularly concerning issues of equity, fairness, and compensation – and argue that a focus on labor issues in writing center staff preparation, development, and compensation is essential to creating an equitable workplace based on fair labor practices.

B2
Hill Valley
High School

Non-Lyrical Music as a Potential Cure for Anxiety in the Writing Center

Amy Rivers
Winthrop University

Anxiety, especially in the form of writing apprehension, is prevalent in college students visiting writing centers. This anxiety can impede the effectiveness of tutorials and discourage clients from coming to the Center. Previous biopsychosocial research indicates that music can decrease the physiological and psychological symptoms of anxiety in classrooms, hospitals, and homes. This research can be applied to writing centers and lower anxiety in the clients served. Non-lyrical music should be incorporated into the Winthrop University Writing Center to create a more welcoming image of the Center and to decrease anxiety in clients and writing consultants. Concerns with implementing music include: the potential for distraction, especially with volume and genres of music, and cost efficiency; however, there are several solutions to these problems. Interviews with writing consultants and the results of surveys reveal that the integration of non-lyrical music in the Writing Center is a simple and virtually unobtrusive change that can potentially create extensive benefits in the Center without compromising the structure and procedures of the Center.

6:15-7:30 – Social

Saturday, February 6th

The Hampton Inn provides a complimentary hot breakfast in the lobby from 6:00am-10:00am.

8:00-5:00 – Registration

9:00-10:00 – Session C

C1
Doc Brown's
Laboratory

Where Do We Go From Here? Remembering the Past to Plan for the Future of Writing Center

Dr. Karen Keaton Jackson (Chair), LaKela Atkinson, Kenali Battle, Joslyn Bloomfield, Amanda Chambers, Ahnna Ledbetter, Kimberly McCall, Eddie Moore, Ashley Witherspoon and Karen Bethea
North Carolina Central University

When we consider the history of writing centers, we realize that much has changed in terms of how they are perceived, created, and structured on various campuses. More writing centers are becoming increasingly prominent and connections are being made between academic tutorials and student retention. In addition, more focus is on those who work in writing centers and their roles in fostering student success.

Using works from Beth Boquet and Stephen North, our speakers argue that it is only through an exploration of writing centers pasts and present that we can truly realize the critical role tutors play in not only developing students as academic writers, but even into successful college students, particularly for those who come from more non-traditional backgrounds, including students of color and first-generation college students.

C2
Hill Valley
High School

Collaborative Research in the Writing Center

Teagan Decker, Chase Whisenhunt, Ryan Wise, Wesley Inderbitzen and Wellington Howard
University of North Carolina at Pembroke

In this workshop we will investigate collaborative, tutor led approaches to writing center research and assessment. Our current research project uses focus groups as well as surveys to identify the writing practices and writing support needs of non-traditional students in our writing center. We arrived at this topic by first conducting an open discussion among our staff about what we might productively research in our center. We then worked collaboratively to identify research directions, research

methods, and research questions. The tutors brainstormed until settling on our particular project. After a series of meetings and informal discussions, we crafted a protocol to submit to our campus' IRB for review. In February we will be in the midst of data collection.

We would like to briefly present our research project as well as our collaborative process of arriving at this project, and then conduct a workshop on collaborative approaches to research in writing centers. We will break the audience into groups and each of us will lead a collaborative brainstorming session on possible research directions. We will reconvene and share the results of our sessions with the larger group. If others have past, present or future collaborative research projects to share, they will be welcomed to do so.

10:15 - 11:15 – Session D

D1
Hill Valley
High School

Back to the Tutor from the Professor via the Writer:
Tutoring Students on Papers with Instructor Comments

Jill Frey and Rachel Genrich
Presbyterian College

Tutors often work with students on drafts with comments from professors. On one hand, instructors' comments provide a welcome focus for a writing conference; on the other, they challenge our position in the middle, relating both to the writer and indirectly to the professor. We have our principles and priorities to consider. End comments vs. marginal comments may translate to higher order concerns vs. lower (or later) order concerns. How can we keep our priorities as tutors straight in such conferences? Are there ways to work with faculty on commenting? Our interactive session will explore how to make these conferences learning experiences for the writers. We will involve the audience in responding to scenarios from tutorials we have experienced and in role playing writing conferences using sample papers with teacher comments.

D2
Doc Brown's
Laboratory

Tweet Tweet: Learning to Use Social Media in the Writing Center

Holly Ryan and Vicki Russell
Duke University

In this interactive workshop, the presenters will give a brief overview of some of the uses and limits of these new technologies along with examples of how writing centers have been using them. Then, in the rest of the time, participants will sketch/create/plan/organize their own blogs, Facebook pages, tweets, etc. At the end

of the session, participants can share their work and receive feedback from the presenters and other session participants.

11:30-12:30 – Session E

E1	**Creating Tutorials with Screen-Capturing Software**
Doc Brown's	
Laboratory	

Mary Noggle
Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute

The session will demonstrate the use of multimedia in CCC&TI's Online Writing Center. Participants will be shown how to create a tutorial using Jing and Camtasia software. The session will show the process of planning, creating, and editing screen-captured tutorials. Time will be devoted to sharing free resources for creating the projects and for giving advice on getting started, including topic selection and planning tips. Location

E2	**Creative Consulting: Equipping Tutors to Assist Creative Writers**
Hill Valley	
High School	

Sally Parlier, Kyle Blochl, Laura Tabor and Denise Sawyer
Appalachian State University

This workshop will seek to open discussions of creative writing in the University Writing Center. We will address how tutors can shift focuses when working with creative writers who may be working outside of some academic writing wisdom. We will talk about the benefits and drawbacks of a directive approach to creative writing and the elements of plot, characterization, style, etc. We will also share some guidelines for approaching sessions with creative writers. Time for the sharing of strategies will be included, as well as the experiences of the panel, all of which are both UWC tutors and are pursuing Creative Writing concentrations within Appalachian State's English program. Finally, small groups will work together to workshop a piece of creative writing, learning from each other's approaches and implementing lessons learned throughout the workshop. Use this session to tackle your uncertainty with poetry, creative non-fiction, and short fiction, and discover ways that writing tutors can indeed help with this unconventional field.

12:30-2:15 – Lunch and Activity: **Flux your Capacitor**

Kerri Flinchbaugh and Phil Adams
East Carolina University

We know how these characters react to being blasted into the past, but how would they survive as a writing consultant? Perform a make-over on a *Back to the Future* character to create an ideal writing consultant.

2:30-3:30 – Session F

F1
Doc Brown's
Laboratory

Consultants' Roles in Internal Writing Center Assessment

Tonya Hassell**,** Ryan Jenkins and Tara Moore
Appalachian State University

As assessment drives the organizational structure of individual units on university campuses, administrators have been charged with the task of organizing, implementing, and reporting direct and indirect measures for assessing the effectiveness of their units. The writing center is not immune. Although writing center assessment is often placed in the hands of directors and assistant directors, consultants have a vital role to play in creating and administering assessment methods in order to develop new initiatives for writing center practices. At Appalachian State, for example, consultants participate in the process of conducting needs-based surveys, observing and evaluating peer consultations, and interpreting results for both internal and external assessment methods. This approach has many benefits. It encourages consultants to contribute to the fulfillment of their organization's mission, as well as to influence its direction; it balances authority among administrators and consultants, honoring the voice of all writing center workers; and it engages consultants in the task of evaluating components of the writing center beyond the consultation. This panel invites participants to learn about our initiatives to promote consultant involvement in writing center assessment, and we will discuss both the strengths and the challenges we have faced in the process. Audience members will reflect on their own centers and contribute to a generative conversation about the role of consultants in writing center assessment.

F2
Hill Valley
High School

(Ab) Normal Tutoring Sessions

Hannah Barbee, Samantha Bare and Charity Smith
Wingate University

As tutors, specifically "writing" tutors, we have become painfully aware that there is no "tutoring session template" in our line of work—each session is different and should be treated as such. Therefore, it is difficult to consider what a "normal" tutoring session

should look like. This discussion will utilize the personal tutoring experiences from three experienced writing tutors from the Wingate University Writing Center. Each tutor will describe a specific tutoring session, or series of tutoring sessions, which they considered to be "abnormal." These tutoring experiences range from working with certain individuals on long-term and large scale research papers to serving as grammatical experts for semester-long Business and Marketing projects. The tutors will discuss the specific techniques they used during these sessions as well as provide advice for novice tutors on how to deal with "abnormal" tutoring experiences. Time for questions and answers will be provided at the end of the panel discussion.

F3
Court House
Clock Tower

Writing Tutors Even Johnny B. Goode Would Love

Judy H. Bello, Brittany Buckner, Shanna Smith, Becky McKay and Jasmine Williams
Lander University

Writing tutors learn early on that some tutees are a lot like Chuck Berry's Johnny B. Goode "who never learned to read or write." Professors have come to expect the wide disparity of preparation for college within the freshman class, but for writing tutors it can be a surprising and sometimes shocking revelation. And, the first lesson they have to master as tutors.

Surface errors—mechanical and grammatical mistakes—can seem rudimentary for the tutor, who mastered them in elementary school. It would be very easy to be dismissive and even judgmental of the tutee's abilities based on these errors.

How can tutors meet the writer where he is without discouraging words? How do tutors avoid the trap of doing Johnny's thinking for him? What are five keys to a successful tutoring session? How do you know when you've "rung a bell" in Johnny B. Goode's head?

3:30-4:00 – Closing Session: **Roads? Where We're Going, We Don't Need Roads**

Kerri Flinchbaugh and Phil Adams
East Carolina University

You tried to predict the future by setting your goals for this conference, and now you will see what it is you can take back to your writing center and apply. Share some of your unexpected discoveries from the last two days.