THE WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER

Volume 27, Number 6 Promoting the exchange of voices and ideas in one-to-one teaching of writing February, 2003

...FROM THE EDITOR...

This month's newsletter invites us to look back in time, look around at other contexts for writing centers, and look out to writing centers in cyberspace. Neal Lerner's article sheds light on what writing centers were up to five or more decades ago, giving us a more informed sense of our history; Paula Gillespie and Harvey Kail let us travel with them to Europe as they met in workshops with writing center directors there; Tiffany Rousculp introduces us to a writing center out in the community, and Julie Story and Joe Dudley review the new *OWL Construction and Maintenance Guide*. And Rita Weinberg Tesler shares her insights on interpersonal relationships in tutorials.

Over the last few months we have included announcements about the 2002 IWCA intensive Summer Institute for writing center administrators. To keep the group workably small, the enrollment was limited. While this year's spaces are now filled, the IWCA will hold future summer institutes, and plans are already in the works for the 2004 Institute at MIT. In the meantime, the 2002 Coordinators, Brad Hughes and Paula Gillespie, are still accepting some names for a waiting list for this year.

• *Muriel Harris, editor*

...INSIDE...

Writing laboratories circa 1953

Consider some of these high (and low) lights from 1953:

- Elvis Presley graduates from high school.
- James Watson and Francis Crick publish "A Structure of DNA."
- Louisiana State University admits A. P. Tureaud, its first African-American student.
- Ethel and Julius Rosenburg are executed.
- The New York Yankees defeat the Brooklyn Dodgers to win the World Series.
- Claude F. Shouse completes his dissertation at the University of Southern California.

That last item might strike some as fairly obscure, but in the history of writing centers (and their precursors known as laboratories or clinics), Shouse's 1953 dissertation is a milestone. In *The Writing Laboratory in Colleges and Universities*, Shouse provides a detailed series of pictures of the writing center scene circa 1953. The 60 institutions who responded to his survey reveal a writing center history we're only beginning to uncover, one that runs contrary to notions that writing centers are fairly recent phenomena or that previous centers were primarily remedial sweatshops. In what

follows, I'll point out some of the more intriguing findings from Shouse's research and include a table of the 60 colleges and universities that constituted Shouse's data set. Overall, my vision is that writing center directors and tutors at those 60 institutions delve into their college and university archives and fill in what's missing about our histories. The Writing Centers Research Project at the University of Louisville is just beginning to amass pre-1985 original materials from our field, and the reports, pamphlets, and documents that might be in your university archives, in crammed filing cabinets or in dusty boxes forgotten in storage closets, can provide a valuable resource.

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Manuscripts: Recommended length for articles is approximately 2500 words, 1500 words for reviews and Tutors' Column essays. If possible, please send as attached files or as cut-and-paste in an e-mail to mjturley@ purdue.edu. Otherwise, send a 3 and 1/2 in. disk with the file, along with the paper copy. Please enclose a self-addressed envelope with return postage not pasted to the envelope. The deadline for announcements is 45 days prior to the month of issue (e.g. August 15 for October issue).

Surveying the field

It's a familiar story: Claude Shouse started the Writing Laboratory at San Diego State College (now University) in 1947 while working as an English instructor. That he would go on to a faculty position and then chair of the English Department is, perhaps, testament to how writing center directors have always managed to convince our institutions as to how valuable our services are. But Shouse must also have become intrigued by the possibilities for writing laboratories and set out in his dissertation research to gain an understanding of their presence and influence.

Shouse's method was first to contact the registrars of the 820 accredited American colleges and universities in existence in 1952. He received replies from 625 registrars (or 76%), and of these, 110 indicated that their institutions had writing laboratories or equivalent services (Shouse defined writing laboratories as "special services provided by the school to supplement or replace the regular composition course" [6-7]). To survey the field, Shouse developed a 19-page questionnaire covering topics such as "the integration of laboratories with their respective institutions," "staffing and equipment," "laboratory procedures" and "laboratory evaluation." Shouse then sent his questionnaire to the directors of these writing labs, as well as to another 31 institutions he had identified as possibly having tutorial support in writing. Of these 141 colleges, 119 replied, and of this total 60 writing laboratory directors completed Shouse's questionnaire in enough detail to be included in his study.

The 60 writing laboratories provide an intriguing picture of our field at the time. Some of his findings are as follows:

- The distribution between public and private institutions having writing laboratories was fairly even: 57.6% public and 43.3% private.
- The most prevalent type of writing laboratory (76% of total) was one that was "available, for the most part, to all students on a college-wide basis," and the least likely (6% of total) was a "remedial laboratory on sub-freshman level."
- The number of hours per week that these writing laboratories were open ranged from 1 to 50.
- The sixty colleges and universities reported 21 different names for their writing laboratories though 53 institutions used the words "laboratory" or "clinic" in those names. "The Writing Laboratory" was the most popular name, occurring 16 times.
- The founding dates for these writing laboratories ranged from 1932 (The University of Minnesota General College) to 1952 (Albion College in Michigan).
- Twenty-two or more than one-third of the laboratories were staffed by only one instructor. Nine more had only a two-person staff.
- Of the total 100 staff members from all writing laboratories, 48 held the rank of instructor and 43 held faculty rank.
- Of these total staff, 99 held M.A. or M.S. degrees and 28 also held a Ph.D. or Ed.D.
- In terms of instructional practices, Shouse notes that "frequent, continual use of actual writing is emphasized as a must by many laboratory instructors" (187) and that "discussion of writing problems is an important phase of laboratory procedures. Most often this discussion is individual between the instructor and his student" (187).

What we learn from Claude Shouse's research is that the idea of 1950s writing laboratories as little more than remedial

(cont. on page 5)

Claude Shouse's List of the College and University Writing Laboratories, circa 1953

1953 Institution	*2002 Institution*	*Year Started*	*Name*
Alabama			
Alabama College	Univ. of Montevallo	Prior to 1953	The English Laboratory
Jacksonville State Teachers College	Jacksonville State University	Prior to 1953	The English Laboratory
Troy State Teachers College	Troy State Univ.	Prior to 1953	The Communications Laboratory
California			
Chico State College	CSU, Chico	1948	The English Writing Clinic
Contra Costa Junior College	Contra Costa College	1950	The Writing Laboratory
Loyola University of Los Angeles	Loyola Marymount University	Prior to 1953	The English Writing Clinic
Mills College	Mills College	1944	English 1 c-d Workshop
Occidental College	Occidental College	1951	English Remand Course
Sacramento State College	CSU, Sacramento	1951	The Writer's Clinic
San Diego State College	San Diego State Univ.	1947	The Writing Laboratory
San Francisco State College	San Francisco State Univ.	1945	The Writing Laboratory
Stockton College	San Joaquin Delta Community College	1944	The English Laboratory
Los Angeles State College	CSU, Los Angeles	Prior to 1953	The Writing Laboratory
Colorado			
University of Denver	University of Denver	1945	The Writing Laboratory
Connecticut			
University of Bridgeport	University of Bridgeport	1947	The Universal English Laboratory
Florida			
Florida State Univ.	Florida State Univ.	1943	The English Clinic
University of Florida	University of Florida	1935	The Writing Laboratory
University of Miami	University of Miami	Prior to 1953	The Writing Clinic
Illinois			
University of Illinois	University of Illinois	1944	The English Writing Clinic
George Williams College	George Williams College of Aurora Univ.	Prior to 1953	Remedial English
Indiana			
Anderson College	Anderson University	1948	The English Clinic
Goshen College	Goshen College	Prior to 1953	The English Clinic
Iowa			
Central College	Central College	1947	The English Clinic
Iowa State College	Iowa State University	Prior to 1953	The Writing Clinic
Iowa State Teachers College	Univ. of Northern Iowa	1951	The Writing Clinic
State Univ. of Iowa	University of Iowa	1934	The Writing Laboratory
Kansas			
Saint Mary College	Saint Mary College	Prior to 1953	The Writing Laboratory
Bethany College	Bethany College	Prior to 1953	The Writing Laboratory
Massachusetts			
Wheelock College	Wheelock College	Prior to 1953	The Writer's Clinic
Michigan			
Albion College	Albion College	1937	English Tutorial
Michigan State College	Michigan State Univ.	1946	Writing Improvement Service

Wayne University	Wayne State Univ.	1950	The Composition Clinic
Western Michigan College of Education	Western Michigan Univ.	1947	The Writing Clinic
Minnesota			
General College, Univ. of Minnesota	Univ. of Minn. General College	1932	The Writing Laboratory
University of Minnesota, St. Paul	Univ. of Minn., Twin Cities	Prior to 1953	The Language Laboratory
Moorhead State Teachers College	Minnesota State Univ. Moorhead	1951	The Writing Laboratory
Missouri			
University of Missouri	University of Missouri	Prior to 1953	The Writing Clinic
Rockhurst College	Rockhurst Univ.	1951	The Writing Clinic
Stephens College	Stephens College	1948	The Writing Laboratory
Webster College	Webster Univ.	1948	The Writing Laboratory
New Hampshire			
Dartmouth College	Dartmouth College	1936	The Writing Clinic
New Jersey			
Montclair State Teachers College	Montclair State Univ.	1950	The Composition Clinic
New Mexico			
New Mexico Highlands University	New Mexico Highlands University	1945	The English Laboratory
New York			
Colgate University	Colgate University	1947	The Writing Laboratory
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	Hobart and William Smith Colleges	Prior to 1953	Committee on the Use of English
Oswego State Teachers College	SUNY, Oswego	1949	The Writing Laboratory
State Univ. Teachers College at Potsdam	SUNY, Potsdam	Prior to 1953	The Writing Clinic
North Carolina			
Duke University	Duke University	Prior to 1953	The Writing Laboratory
University of North Carolina	University of North Carolina	1934	The Composition Condition Laboratory
Ohio			
Ohio University	Ohio University	Prior to 1953	The English Clinic
Muskingum College	Muskingum College	Prior to 1953	The Communications Laboratory
Pennsylvania			
Seton Hill College	Seton Hill University	Prior to 1953	The Communications Clinic
Tennessee			
University of Tennessee	University of Tennessee	Prior to 1953	The English Writing Laboratory
Texas			
Southern Methodist University	Southern Methodist University	1949	The English Laboratory
University of Texas	University of Texas	Prior to 1953	The English Laboratory
Virginia			
Lynchburg College	Lynchburg College	Prior to 1953	The English Clinic
Washington			
Eastern Washington College of Education	Eastern Washington University	1940	The Writing Clinic

Wisconsin			
Lawrence College	Lawrence University	1946	Fundamentals of Written Exposition
Wisconsin State College, Milwaukee	Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee	1950	The Basic Clinics
Wisconsin State College, River Falls	Univ. of Wisconsin, River Falls	1949	The Communications Laboratory

holding cells isn't necessarily true. More than three-quarters of these laboratories were open to any student at the institution, and staffing (though limited) was just as likely to be from the professorate as from instructional staff. An important contrast with contemporary writing centers was the absence of peer tutors (with the exception of San Francisco State, which reported having 13 "student assistants" on staff).

Many of these findings are surprising given what we often assume to be true about writing center history—or, more precisely, our lack of knowledge about that history. For instance, in her 2001 survey of 107 writing center directors, Rachel Perkes found that only two reported origins back to the 1940s or 1950s. It is perhaps true that many of the writing laboratories responding to Shouse's survey might have folded shop or transformed themselves into something else entirely in the last 50 years. More likely, however, is that the perceived newness of writing centers is a function of the relative newness of our field as a viable academic discipline and profession. (See Carino and Boquet for descriptions of early writing centers.)

Back to the future

By and large many of the concerns, hopes, and goals of the writing center directors in 1953 mirror much of what we know today. In the conclusion to his dissertation, Shouse wrote, "The writing laboratory is needed and desirable in colleges and universities of any type or size. It has been shown in this study that teachers and students alike almost universally acclaim the writing laboratory as a place where the student frustrated by his composition course or by his inability to write well in other courses many find individualized help" (266). Almost thirty years later in 1982, Joyce Steward and Mary Croft explained that era's interest in writing labs by noting that "the number has increased rapidly because teachers and students alike are better pleased with the writing laboratory scene and method than they are with almost any other single way of delivering writing instruction" (1). And more recently Joyce Kinkead and Jeannette Harris' predicted in 2000 that "writing centers will no longer be viewed as support programs but will assume on many campuses a major role in the teaching of writing" (23). Thus, for at least 50 years, writing centers have been offered as the "answer" to many of the persistent and vital questions about teaching and learning in our institutions. Our colleges and universities, of course, haven't always seen that answer as clearly as we have, but our histories offer evidence that at many moments the "idea" of a writing center has taken hold. Uncovering the specifics of these moments is a key step in contextualizing our efforts, as well as a vital part of creating a collective memory for our field. My hope is that the list of institutions below might provide the impetus for historical research and that those histories (and their associated primary materials) find their way to the Writing Centers Research Project at the University of Louisville.

Our writing centers' past will surely teach us a great deal about our writing centers' future.

Neal Lerner
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Boston, MA

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Perkes, Rachel. "How Old Is Your Writing Center?" *The Writing Lab Newsletter* 26.4 (Dec. 2001): 15.

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Tutor training and writing centers in Europe:Extending the cross-cultural dialogue

This past summer we had one of the most exhilarating and rewarding experiences of our professional lives. We—Paula Gillespie and Harvey Kail—co-directed workshops in Germany, Hungary, and Greece on writing centers and peer tutor training. We led six different workshops in two weeks, meeting and working with colleagues representing sixteen universities or technical institutes from ten different European countries. In the course of these two action-packed weeks, we talked and talked and listened and listened on the subject of writing centers and peer tutoring in an international context. We ate breakfast with colleagues in Bielefeld, a university town along the wooded hills of the Teutoburg Forest in Germany, lunched with colleagues by the sea just down the dirt road from Aristotle's birthplace in Greece, and had dinner with colleagues in their favored restaurants in cosmopolitan Budapest. Like most travelers, we puzzled out train schedules and menus, determinedly counted out unfamiliar currency, and packed and unpacked the books and materials we had brought with us onto trains, subways, buses, airplanes, and boats. Along the way we found new perspectives from which to assess and evaluate our own practices, we revisited theoretical models of tutoring and tutor training from a transnational perspective, and we came to new understandings of the cultural assumptions we make when we discuss "tutoring" and "writing centers." We made new friends, had paprika with breakfast, and discovered Spargle and Schweineschmaltz and Amoliani.

The major focus of our visit was on peer tutoring and collaborative learning. Was there a useful place in European universities for systematically involving students in each other's writing development? To what use might our own practices with peer tutoring and collaborative learning be put in a European context? Andrea Frank and Stefanie Haacke at the University of Bielefeld were interested in the idea of establishing peer tutoring in the *Schreiblabor*, or writing center, at their own university and possibly at other German universities where writing centers were starting up. With the aid of a grant from the Koerber Foundation, which, among other projects, provides financial support for German businesses and educational facilities to study innovations from the US, they determined to bring us to Bielefeld for a series of workshops with faculty, students and with writing center staff from around Germany. At the same time, John Harbord, the Director of the Language Teaching Center at Central European University, generously undertook the task of building the staff and institutional support necessary to sponsor a morning and afternoon workshop in Budapest on tutoring theory and practice, inviting writing teachers from nearby universities to participate with his staff and with us. And Anna Challenger, with the enthusiastic support of her institution, the American College of Thessaloniki, invited her colleagues in the European Writing Centers Association and the European Association of Teachers of Academic Writing to join us for a two-day workshop on peer tutor training to be held on Amoliani Island off the Halikidiki peninsula in northern Greece. When the International Writing Centers Association agreed to help with the cost of some of our European travel, we had an itinerary that made us shake our heads in wonder.

We also had a lot of work to do, Paula from the Ott Memorial Writing Center in Milwaukee, Harvey from the Writing Center at the University of Maine in Orono. It was clear from all our negotiations that our visit was not to be construed as a one-way banking model of learning or of American expertise and experience being exported abroad. We agreed, rather, to enter into a cross-cultural dialogue with our hosts, educating ourselves (and we are still doing this) on the differences and similarities between European and American higher education, and particularly on how students develop as writers as they make the transition from secondary to university levels and find their way into the academic writing their disciplines demand of them. We had to build six workshops to take to Europe, each a self-contained, sequenced series of activities that would structure actual experiences in peer tutoring and collaborative learning with plenty of time for reflection built in. Each workshop required somewhat different preparation, different communication, and, ultimately, different structures because the needs, the time frames, interests, and experience levels of the participants were different. We logged in hours and hours of e-mail with colleagues in Bielefeld, Budapest, and Thessaloniki, learning about the conditions and expectations for tutoring writing in contexts much different from our own in Milwaukee and Orono.

We quickly became aware of the many assumptions we make about support for academic writing in American contexts. In fact, even the terms that describe education are different: "schools" and "colleges" in Europe generally refer to secondary rather than post-secondary institutions. "Faculty," can often mean the discipline, not the professorial staff. We learned that although writing does take place in the disciplines in traditional European uni-

versities, there are very few formal Writing Across the Curriculum or Writing in the Disciplines programs that help faculty develop their students' writing or promote the idea of writing to learn. Rather, with very few exceptions, we found institutions where a long tradition of extremely competitive entrance exams, many of them based on essay-writing ability, led to an elite student body that was expected to be able to write fluently and effectively from the start. University professors generally do not teach writing in the discipline and do not discuss their own writing processes with their students. Writing instruction and support, where they do exist in European higher education, often lack faculty interest and university resources of space and money to form programs with continuity. Writing centers that do exist are invariably housed outside of academic departments and tend to be staffed by professional staff rather than faculty members. Those who show interest in peer tutoring, and those who have begun programs, often do so with minimal administrative support.

In spite of these institutional barriers, we met colleagues around Europe who were well informed on writing center theories and issues and who were eager to engage us about our experience in relation to their own and how they might develop programs in writing instruction, peer tutoring, and writing centers. The energy that the workshops brought into focus a common interest in writing centers and tutoring was palpable for everyone. Our English language sessions must have been terribly demanding for some of those who work and teach and live in German or Greek, Swedish or Turkish, but those who braved our workshops were intrepid and open to the benefits both to tutors and to writers if writing centers could be established or supported. Although they often demurred at our high assessment of their grip on the English language, our European colleagues could converse in English with great facility and considerable panache. We became acutely aware of the power of English as a global language and of our own struggles to communicate in any other.

Our first workshops were at Bielefeld University. Founded in l969, it combines innovative programs and administrative structures with traditional academic expectations and standards. Classrooms, offices, research labs, libraries, and everything else that goes to make a modern university of 20,000 students are all housed together in one truly enormous yet oddly plausible building. Running from one end to the other and right down the middle of this huge expanse of poured concrete and glass is the Central Hall, an enclosed pedestrian thoroughfare along which one can find cafeterias, banks, natural food stores, restaurants, a bookstore, a swimming pool, a post-office. Students gather in small groups to eat, to talk, to smoke, to study. Faculty and staff move among them, most dressed in jeans. Just off the Central Hall is an alphanumeric grid of stairways, and elevators that lead to the lecture halls and classrooms, research facilities, faculty offices, the library. While the building and its succession of wings and connectors is awe-inspiring in its scale, even disconcertingly so, the design of the campus reflects a primary interest in building an intimate sense of contact among students, faculty, and staff, and judging by the jovial uproar and easygoing commotion in the Central Hall, it works. The University of Bielefeld seemed like a very good place to try out an innovation such as peer tutoring.

Out-of-town workshop participants came from Freiburg and Contantz in the south and Berlin and Hamburg in the north, from population centers such as Bochum and Mainz, and from a variety of technical institutes, colleges of education, and research universities—sixteen participants in all. We had only three precious days to spend with them, and we thought it was crucial for participants to experience the whole process of peer tutoring, from generating and producing a text for a deadline to reading aloud and giving and accepting peer critiques. So we asked for documents – letters, memos, or position papers—that addressed the question "What is the next step for writing instruction at your institution?" Harvey demonstrated the focus of his tutor training program by taking participants through some of the collaborative writing exercises of Kenneth Bruffee's *A Short Course in Writing*, as he does with his trainees at home. Paula introduced elements from her program and *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring* as they read aloud and asked questions of one another, entered into dialogue about writing and about the issues. Participants found in one another, over the course of their three days together, a group of supportive and like-minded peers. At the final session, "Next Steps," participants determined to meet again and draft a collective document on writing and collaborative learning that they could use at their own institutions and to help establish common ground for other German writing centers.

In Budapest the issues were different. Central European University, located in a beautifully converted building in the heart of downtown Budapest among the swank hotels and shops only a few blocks from the Danube, is focused entirely on graduate study in the humanities and social sciences. With support from the Open Society Institute, the university seeks through intensive post-graduate study to train future leaders from the former Soviet Union and from eastern and central Europe to take their places in newly democratic societies. Students rarely spend more than eighteen months on campus taking classes, researching and writing masters theses and Ph.D. dissertations. Peer tutoring does not seem an option under these unique circumstances, but support for the complex writing—all of it in English—that students must do is essential. The Language Teaching Center, CEU's equiva-

lent of a writing center, offers in-class instruction, workshops, and individual tutoring. We designed a workshop with them that engaged participants in a conversation that tested theories of tutoring in the U.S. against the conditions and expectations of student writing in central and eastern Europe. The professional staff of the Language Teaching Center brought a rich background in teaching English as a second language in countries all over Europe and Asia to bear on some of the problems and issues in tutoring that have become central in the American discourse on tutoring. It was a fascinating experience to work on tutoring theory and practice in an entirely new and different context, with colleagues whose main training has been in EFL.

In Greece, on an island resort and conference center, we met and worked with twenty-two faculty and staff from colleges and universities in Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Sweden, and the U.S. It was lovely on Amoliani Island, the whitewashed buildings of the Agionissi Resort juxtaposed against the deep blue of the fabled Aegean. On the opposite shore, along the Halkidiki peninsula, ancient orthodox monasteries, carved into the sides of mountains, suggested an entirely different style of learning than what we had come to explore. How, we wondered, would our workshop on peer tutoring in writing centers be experienced in such idyllic surroundings and in sight of such ancient learning? We didn't need to worry. The energy and the determination of the participants was constant and gratifying as peers found peers and as universities and colleges communicated and collaborated in ways that would facilitate the development of a regional support network for academic writing. The American-style universities represented at this workshop, such as the American College of Thessaloniki, the American University of Bulgaria, Deere College and LaVerne University in Athens, faced different material conditions and curricular expectations from those of the more traditional European universities we had been working with, and we were also fascinated to learn that two universities in Istanbul, Koc University and Sabanci University, have writing centers and are developing peer tutoring programs. Although we had only two days rather than three to work with, this workshop took the participants through a collaborative learning process whereby they drafted, critiqued, revised, and read aloud their position papers on taking the next step in writing instruction on their campus. Writing center peer tutoring was being practiced and discussed in what was once the center of the ancient world.

Back in the United States, we are still learning from our newfound friends and colleagues abroad and, we hope, they from us. The immediacy and global scope of Internet communication has taken on everyday and much valued meaning for us as we continue to e-mail and chat on-line with writing center friends across Europe. This spring, it will be our privilege to welcome some of these colleagues to New York where they will be participating with us in a panel session at CCCC on "Writing Centers in an International Context," discussing the similarities and differences among our writing centers. We eagerly await the next stages of this dialogue: news of new centers, new initiatives, and new ideas.

Paula Gillespie
Marquette University
Milwaukee, WI and
Harvey Kail
University of Maine
Orono, ME

Calendar for Writing Centers Associations

Feb. 13-15, 2003: Southeastern WCA, in Charlotte, NC
Contact: Deanna Rogers, Writing Resources Center, 220 Fretwell, 9201 University City Blvd., UNC Charlotte, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001. Phone: (704) 687-4226; fax: (704) 687 6988; e-mail: drrogers@email.uncc.edu. Conference Web site: <www.uncc.edu/writing/wrcindex.html>.

Feb. 20-22, 2003: South Central WCA, in Fayetteville, AR
Contact: Carole Lane and Karen Clark (writcent@uark.edu), Quality Writing Center, University of Arkansas, Kimpel 315, Fayetteville, AR 72701. Conference Web site: <http://www.uark.edu/campus-resources/qwrtcntr/scwca.htm>.

March 8, 2003: Northern California WCA, in Monterey, CA
Contact: Natasha Oehlman. E-mail: ncwca@csumb.edu; phone: 831-582-4614. Conference Web site: <http://www.asap.csumb.edu/ncwca>.

March 27-29, 2003: East Central WCA, in Marietta, OH
Contact: Tim Catalano (catalant@marietta.edu) Director of the Campus Writing Center, 215 Fifth Street, Marietta College, Marietta, OH 45750 <Catalant@marietta.edu>. Conference Web site: <http://www.marietta.edu/~mcwrite/eastcentral.html>.

April 5, 2003: Northeast WCA, in Nashua, NH
Contact: Al DeCiccio, Rivier College, 420 South Main St., Nashua, NH. Phone: (603)897-8284; e-mail: adeciccio@rivier.edu. Conference Web site: <http://web.bryant.edu/~ace/wrtctr/NEWCA.htm>.

April 5, 2003: Mid-Atlantic WCA, in Westminster, MD
Contact: Lisa Breslin, The Writing Center, McDaniel College, 2 College Hill, Westminster, MD 21157. Phone: 410-857-2420; e-mail (lbreslin@mcdaniel.edu). Conference Web site: <http://www2.mcdaniel.edu/mawca>.

October 23-25, 2003: International Writing Centers Conference and National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, in Hershey, PA
Contact: Ben Rafoth, brafoth@iup.edu. Conference Web site: <www.wc.iup.edu/2003conference>.

TUTORS' COLUMN

Tutoring as an interpersonal relationship

At New Jersey City University, peer tutors meet weekly to talk about what happens during tutoring sessions. Though discussion often centers around topics like organization or grammar, a surprising amount of time is spent on communication issues. Tutors explore ways to make tutees comfortable, set standards, clarify goals. But beyond that they share the frustrations and accomplishments which result from the intimacy that occurs in a tutorial. The most meaningful conversation in a tutee's day may be the review of his paper. For this reason it is worthwhile looking at a variety of dynamics that occur in the relationship and the ways in which they affect the tutoring process.

As in any relationship there are multiple subliminal and not so subliminal messages that pass between the tutor and tutee. Not surprisingly, differences in ethnicity, race, age, and gender underlie many interpersonal issues. The tutor, after all, is both a peer and an authority. So, an older man from a patriarchal culture challenges correction from a young woman. During a review of his paper, an American teenager, James, interrupts the tutor, a Nigerian, with a hostile question: "Do they have cars where you come from?" Sometimes the tutee tries to level the playing field with flirtation. Dylan avoids working on grammar by complimenting Erika on her hair. In a real life version of "Come up and see my etchings?" an art major tells the tutor, Michael, her paper might make sense if he views her paintings at home. Many workshop sessions become discussions of such exchanges, what to accept, challenge, or ignore.

No single approach works for every issue. Instead, situations are considered case by case. If tutor and tutee are from diverse backgrounds, an adviser is available to explain cultural differences. Sometimes I speak to a tutee who is being offensive. Generally, however, after examining the circumstances as a group, the tutors deal with problems in their own ways. Occasionally, they transfer a tutee to someone more compatible. In other instances, they confront him. Jeremiah, the Nigerian tutor, addresses the subtext in James' remark. They do have cars where he comes from; what's more, they are civilized, and their English is good. Erika tells Dylan firmly she is not there to discuss her appearance. When Michael decides to take his tutee at her word and sees her artwork, he understands her point. The best teaching occurs when teacher and student know how each hears and is heard by the other. In the tutoring situation, perhaps more than elsewhere, this process is clarified and modified, even used to turn the tutee's attention toward the subject at hand: his writing.

Once rapport is established it influences the outcome of the tutoring. It can change a student's approach to an assignment, even her orientation to writing itself. Often, she hears criticism/advice better from a tutor than from her professor. When one professor rejects a paper as "unacceptable," the tutor explains the difference between analysis and the summary the student has written in terms she understands. "Too much like a simple book report," he says. Lila steers a tutee away from plagiarism after reviewing his undocumented essay. "Perhaps you read a book on the subject," she suggests. Yes he has, he admits. Sometimes the self-confidence the tutee gains is more important than the remediation. Lourdes requests a tutor who knows Spanish, but only Fatima, a Jordanian, is available. They discover that they both immigrated from other countries, lost their fathers when they were young, and are struggling to raise children while attending school. "I made it; so will you," is Fatima's message, and, indeed, Lourdes' work improves. Charlotte tells her tutor, Arlette, that she feels stupid in Dr. H.'s class because she is unsure of his expectations. At Arlette's encouragement she arranges a conference with him and returns with a detailed outline of paper requirements. Her new assurance is reflected in the B she receives on the next assignment.

Even the acquisition of basic skills is aided by interaction in the tutoring relationship. Students often write poorly because when left to their own devices, they resist changing bad habits. For instance, many never read instructions; they settle on a single idea and repeat it. In tutoring they hope to get a "quick fix," a few suggestions or corrections. It is the tutor who helps them interpret the assignment and focuses their attention on details by breaking down the writing task into components: brainstorming, defining the theme, gathering supporting ideas, outlining, proofreading. Because the tutee is working with an active listener, he gets to live out the slow process of developing a paper which is coherent and error free.

In a departure from face-to-face tutoring we have a rudimentary computer based service for students off campus.

One tutor, Stephen, uses e-mail. Tutees send him papers, which he returns with comments, highlighting errors and asking for corrections. But the program is suitable only for a small group who manage to personalize the correspondence. They tell Stephen about their activities, and ask what his plans for vacation are. There are also informal exchanges about their writing. "Hey, Steve," writes Maurice. "My organization is improving, Right? Look this over and tell me what you think. I'll get back in an hour." From Carolyn: "Stephen, HELP! Dr. T. says I have comma splices, what the hell are comma splices?" Paradoxically, the moderate success of the on-line program underscores its limitations: tutoring works when students can interact with a "live" person.

Outside the classroom, remediation exists in various forms. Information is available on-line from handbooks, grammar hotlines, chat rooms and message boards. Generally, these cannot cajole or empathize, do not judge ideas and organization, or show the student how to evaluate information. Professors hold conferences. But even the most conscientious have no time to provide individual help on a regular basis. What's more, the professor's power over the student's grade circumscribes the relationship. The tutoring program therefore serves a special function. Because of its ongoing, interpersonal nature it provides the support most effective in motivating students and helping them improve their writing.

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Review of *The OWL Guide* (cont.)

(cont. from page 16)

gest a "facilitative pedagogy" for conducting online tutor-student contacts that incorporates "observations, reader reactions, and guiding questions." This strategy serves to prompt writers into dynamic discussions of their writing, placing "complete control of the revision process" in the writer's hands, and "allowing them to retain ownership of their drafts and their revisions" (More Talk, Less Fix). Such a discussion demonstrates Buck and Shumway's belief that, with sufficient planning, pedagogically sound tutoring sessions can take place online, while providing the added benefit of creating a tutorial transcript that can either be assembled by the student (Bergmann, "OWL Sessions at the Naval Academy") or e-mailed from the writing center when the session concludes (Rai, "Tutoring to the Transcript"). University of Illinois tutor Candice Rai observes that creating a transcript of the tutoring session for later student reference extends "the productiveness of an online tutorial . . . beyond the life of a fifty-minute session." This represents a significant benefit for OWL tutoring as such a reference text cannot be created in the same detail during face-to-face work.

The section covering OWL maintenance seems fairly light when compared to the first two sections, perhaps indicating that OWL practitioners still consider themselves new to the field of OWL development and are thus still concerned with the practical matters of making their online writing labs work on a daily basis. What is taking place at the moment, it appears, is consideration of methods for evaluation leading to further development and research. Karen D. Austin observes that "during the decade of the 1990s, the speed of applying online technology to sites of composition, such as electronic tutoring, outpaced the research" ("Making Praxis the Axis"), and indicates a need for theory to keep pace with technological development. She suggests that "inviting students to make meta-commentary on these tutorial sessions offers an opportunity for gathering information about student satisfaction" that may otherwise occur naturally as a part of the face-to-face session. Bryon L. Grigsy offers a four-pronged method of assessment that considers OWL usage numbers alongside professor, tutor, and student evaluations ("Assessing Asynchronous Electronic Tutoring"), and Inman, after offering a detailed checklist for OWL maintenance ("OWL Maintenance Checklist"), suggests various ways OWL research and conversation may be developed among writing center professionals ("OWLs and the Importance of Publishing"). Less useful are the considerations of instructing tutors in the elements of web site design and evaluation (Gillespie, "Training Tutors to Use HTML") and in the creation of electronic slide presentations (Lebduska, "Tutor Training in Visual Rhetoric"), as these discussions, while intriguing in their suggestions for tutor in-service training, seem to stray from the notion of OWL maintenance and into areas of core site design and administration.

"Online Writing Center Theory, Research, and Practice," by Sabrina Peters-Whitehead, is an extended annotated bibliography of OWL scholarship published primarily since 1996. Prepared with the serious OWL newcomer in mind, it offers "a brief synopsis of a wide range of sources for those interested in OWLs and OWL research" and is thus divided into several topic areas: "Administrative Issues," "Collaborative OWL Partnerships," "Descriptions of Online Tutoring Practice," "Ethics of Online Tutoring," "Historical Perspectives," "Online Tutor Training," "OWL Descriptions," "OWL Reviews," "Reference," "Research and Theory," and "Technology Reviews."

Into the city we go: Establishing the SLCC Community Writing Center

One year ago, Salt Lake Community College opened the SLCC Community Writing Center (CWC). It's 9:00a.m.—two hours before we open for the day. As I look out of our windows across to Salt Lake's homeless shelter, I remember the writing workshop we held there last year, just as the CWC was opening to the public. My colleague, Clint Gardner, who has directed the SLCC Student Writing Center for the past ten years, has encouraged me to write about the CWC for the *Writing Lab Newsletter*, but I'm not sure we're ready. I've made several presentations at conferences about the CWC, but to write for publication is a much more critical goal. Still, to mark this day of our anniversary, I will write.

First, a moment's explanation of what the Community Writing Center is. We are a fully functioning writing center, similar to the academic writing centers across the country. However, the CWC supports the writing goals of out-of-school adults, not students. We are located on the first floor of a neighborhood development complex—the Artspace Bridge Projects—in downtown Salt Lake City that, a handful of years ago, was almost abandoned to poverty and drugs. Inside there is a wall of donated books, a few tables and chairs, a couch, two loveseats, five computers and floor-to-ceiling windows that bring in the morning sun each day. Above the CWC are three floors of low-income rental housing; to the east is a gallery space; to the west, offices for two non-profit organizations; and to the north, four retail spaces. Our windows open to an ironic, though not uncommon, view: while homeless men and women line up at the shelters, they can look across the street at the new multi-million dollar retail behemoth known as the "Gateway," full of high-end clothing and food franchises. This complex socio-economy that the CWC resides in means that everyone is welcome here. The homeless mix with the trendy in the Community Writing Center.

Staffed by a tenured SLCC faculty member (myself), several part-time Writing Assistants (mostly students at SLCC and the University of Utah), and an emerging volunteer base, the CWC has been built upon pedagogical strategies familiar to campus writing centers. Just like peer tutors, our writing assistants work with adults on any writing task using collaborative, non-directive tutoring methods. We train with the SLCC Student Writing Center, and are continually trying to find ways to "share" tutors and to structurally merge the two centers into an institutionally-validated partnership.

Other community writing projects

While there are hundreds of service-learning-based community writing courses and single-focus projects across the country, there are only a handful of institutional outreach and partnership programs based on writing. Four years ago, when we began developing the CWC, Carnegie-Mellon's Community Literacy Center (CLC) stood out as the leader in such developments. The CLC, a collaboration between Pittsburgh's Community House and Carnegie-Mellon's Center for the Study of Writing, had been established by Linda Flower, Wayne Peck and Jennifer Flach. The CLC paved the way for university/community partnerships by establishing college student/community teen writing mentor-ships and by developing community problem-solving projects using writing.

As we continued to develop the CWC, we noticed the Institute for the Study of Literature, Literacy and Culture emerge at Temple University. Headed by Stephen Parks, the ISLLC is "devoted to furthering interdisciplinary studies both within and beyond the confines of the University" and is responsible for *Open City: a Journal of Community Arts and Culture* which publishes writing that emerges from the community of Philadelphia. Another program, the Lindy Boggs National Center for Community Literacy, opened at Loyola University, New Orleans "to [promote] adult literacy as a vehicle for personal, economic, and community empowerment."

Today, a preliminary Internet search using a combination of the terms "community," "writing," "literacy," and "writing center outreach," reveals a growing number of programs focusing on literacy and writing: the University of Illinois' Center for Youth and Society, the Community Literacy Program at the University of Washington, the Virginia Tech Community Literacy Corps, and outreach programs at the Ohio State University Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing, the Gayle Morris Sweetland Writing Center at the University of Michigan, and the University of Tennessee Knoxville Writing Center.

Different from the programs above, the CWC provides a physical space dedicated solely to writing and provides services only to people aged sixteen and older rather than providing tutoring services for K-12 students or in-service training for their teachers. Also, rather than graduate, upper-division or service-learning students, we rely on our part-time writing assistants,

our community volunteer base, and SLCC faculty who are willing to donate their time to our center and our projects. Hopefully, as we grow, we will be able to offer both internship and service-learning opportunities to students from local higher education institutions such as the University of Utah and Westminster College.

Rationale for the CWC

The CWC was developed to support the writing needs of individuals who tend to fall through the gaps found in adult educational opportunities here in Salt Lake City. Many community education programs focus on children and teens or, if they are targeting adults, teach only basic literacy skills (or English as a Foreign Language). However, there are tens of thousands of adults in Salt Lake who can read and write, but are not able to move effectively through a variety of rhetorical situations. Often, these individuals either cannot afford a college class, or do not have work/family schedules that would allow them to do so. Or, they may not see how attending a college class would help them meet their immediate writing goals. The CWC provides this flexible educational opportunity for the adults of Salt Lake.

Marketing itself as "the community's college," SLCC has become increasingly dedicated to working with the community, fully participating in the exploding growth of service-learning and community outreach programs across the country. Four years of negotiations with the college culminated in unprecedented support for the CWC. SLCC President H. Lynn Cundiff explains "For me, it was the opportunity to get outside of the box and teach in a non-traditional format. I think it is an opportunity to give back to the community in unique ways and to help a segment of our society who are often neglected, to say nothing of the opportunity for more traditional students to widen their horizons."

The first year: Individuals

Since we based the model of the Community Writing Center on campus writing centers, we assumed that individual assistance would constitute a significant portion of our work. While we anticipated that 200 writers would come to the CWC in the first year, 325 individuals officially "registered" with us.

The local Salt Lake Library system has referred many individuals to our center: up to 35-40% of our writers. (The library, while it has public Internet access, does not have word processing capabilities.) Most of these writers come to the CWC the first time for a pragmatic writing need: resumes. However, a significant number of these "have to" writers come back to the CWC after they have finished their necessary writing task. Many return for workshops, to talk to a writing assistant, to use our computers to write, print, or access email, or to work on other writing tasks that may not be so materially necessary to them. Writers work on poetry, on memoirs, and on letters to a variety of audiences. Like a campus writing center, we have our share of one-timers, but many individuals find the CWC a supportive space where they can come back again and again. These writers form a broad spectrum of ethnic, economic, and educational backgrounds.

Since we are in Salt Lake City, most writers are Caucasian. However, the proportion of ethnic minorities who use the CWC services is greater than that of Salt Lake County (33% compared to 14%) and far higher than that of the institutions in the Utah System of Higher Education. The CWC's diversity far exceeds that of SLCC (which has the most diverse student population in the state's higher education system): Hispanic, CWC-11%, SLCC-5.2%; Native American, CWC-5%, SLCC-1%; and African-American, CWC-8.2%, SLCC-.8%. Thus, our goal to break down some of the barriers that exist between ethnic minorities and higher education appears to be working.

Economically, the pragmatic need of writing emerges in our database. Nearly 50% of our writers indicate a yearly household income of under $6,000. (Hence, the importance of resume writing.) Outside of this group, the economic status of our writers closely reflects income levels in Salt Lake, with the majority earning approximately $12,000/year.

Educationally, most CWC writers have completed high school or have received their GED, but do not have post-secondary degrees. This reflects Salt Lake County, and was part of the rationale for the CWC. However, the next highest group of writers has their Bachelor's degrees, which ties in with another of our goals: challenging the myth that effective writing is a solitary act and something that is mastered while in college. People who consider themselves "educated" are coming to the CWC to share their writing, get feedback, and become a part of our emerging community of writers.

The first year: Organizations

Originally, we assumed that institutional collaborations would be secondary to the individual-focus of our center, but we have found that much of our work is in collaboration with organizations on writing projects, and in writing workshops for the general public or targeted groups. To date, we have collaborated with a dozen other organizations on at least twenty-five writing projects or workshops. Below, I will describe a few to give a brief picture of this part of the Community Writing Center.

Volunteers of America-Utah: During one of our cold-calls to organizations in our first months, a potential collaboration emerged with Volunteers of America-Utah, who work with people addicted to drugs or alcohol. The VoA uses writing in their recovery programs including letters to self and family/friends, autobiographies, and plans for staying sober. However, many clients struggled unnecessarily with these

writing assignments through fear of, or unfamiliarity with, writing. To address this need, we developed a repeatable writing workshop for clients who would soon be entering their year-long recovery program. After holding ten successful workshops, all with 100% "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" responses to evaluations, we are now transitioning the responsibility for the workshops to VoA.

Cancer Wellness House: The DiverseCity Writing Series is an ongoing community writing project that the CWC sponsors, in which we partner with a local organization in an eight-week writing workshop to explore themes of self and community, leading to a publication and a public reading event. Our fourth partnership was with the Cancer Wellness House. All of the writers in this group either had cancer, had survived it, or had been touched by it through a friend or relative. These writers made bold claims about the effect of writing on their sense of healing and identity. One woman undergoing chemotherapy said, "When I got cancer, I thought I had no more worth to my life. Since I discovered I can write and tell my story, I realize I am still worth something."

Department of Workforce Services: In April, the Utah Department of Workforce Services called us for assistance in their Labor Market Information office. A national move towards presenting labor market information in a "journalistic" manner was conflicting with their staff's academic economist rhetoric. Another SLCC English faculty member and I spent two months discussing their needs and expectations and met with the economists in a planning session. We will be spending the month of February 2003 in a four-week workshop that will generate additional funding for the CWC.

Looking to the future

It's 11:30a.m. We unlocked the doors a half-hour ago, and now a writing assistant is sitting across the room at a table with a homeless Native American man. He came in yesterday to work on a resume, and spent several hours "hunting and pecking" at one of our computer keyboards putting together a draft. Today, they are comparing what he has created to samples in some of our books, and are making decisions about revision. Two men who live upstairs just came down to check their e-mail. Our radio is filling the air with tunes and the sun is coming through the windows, warming away the autumn's morning chill.

Last year, the CWC felt like an explosion of activity and awareness, trying to get the word out about our new center. Now, people know we're here and our focus has become sustainability. We are writing grants to expand our programs and are working closely with organizations to create writing projects that they can take over after our involvement. Our Advisory Committee—made up of community members and SLCC faculty/staff—is working to make the CWC a lasting part of the community and to provide a model, or assistance, to other institutions that wish to establish off-campus sites. In fact, just a few days ago, I received the news that Weber State University, in Ogden, Utah (our neighbor to the north) had just opened its own community writing center based on our model. Perhaps this is a part of the future for writing centers—growing beyond campus borders into the possibilities of community.

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Information on other community outreach projects referred to in this article can be found at:

Center for Youth and Society—University of Illinois: <http://www.youthandsociety.org/about/>.

Community Literacy Program—University of Washington: <http://www.lib.washington.edu/curriculum/communityliteracy.html>.

Gayle Morris Sweetland Writing Center—University of Michigan: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/about/about.html>.

Ohio State University Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing: <http://cstw.ohio-state.edu/outreach/index.htm>.

University of Tennessee Knoxville Writing Center: <http://web.utk.edu/~english/community.htm>.

Virginia Tech Community Literacy Corps: <http://www.finaid.es.vt.edu/RT/litcorpsweb.html>.

Review

Inman, James, and Clinton Gardner, eds. *The OWL Construction and Maintenance Guide*. CD-ROM. Emmitsburg, MD: IWCA Press, 2002.
Order from IWCA Press, 16300 Old Emmitsburg Rd., Emmitsburg, MD 21727
$17 ($15 + $2 shipping/handling).

Reviewed by Julie A. Story (Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA)

The OWL Construction and Maintenance Guide is an extremely valuable tool for novices like ourselves trying to join tutoring writing with technology. Indeed, Inman and Gardner's CD-ROM evolved out of the many requests by colleagues who wanted to develop OWLs but felt "uncomfortable" and "unaware how to proceed" (Introduction). Their resource has been "built by OWL practitioners for OWL practitioners, veteran and new," to meet a variety of our goals, needs, and levels in an easily accessible CD-ROM format from which we can quickly adapt and use materials. The contributions range from brief to lengthy and informal to scholarly. While Inman and Gardner admit that their compilation lacks "uniformity, either in form or in focus," they also trust that we can "synthesize" and "draw connections" from the diverse representation of OWLs on our own.

Although the content is not uniform, its organization progresses logically. "Contemporary OWLS" begins with an historical and theoretical background and moves to an examination of various OWLs geared toward particular disciplines and educational levels. "OWL Construction" and the following "OWL Maintenance" present the most practical advice and materials on planning, funding, developing and maintaining an OWL, as well as tutor training and practice assessment. The annotated "OWL Bibliography" of current scholarship and "About the Authors and Editors" extend the usefulness of this source. Many authors—representing a diverse range of students and professionals—have included e-mail addresses to encourage further dialogue. Another advantage of this electronic publication, its editors remind us, is that it can change and grow as technology advances. Thus, Inman and Gardner expect to publish a new version every two years and welcome us to contribute to future editions.

The dynamic feature of the CD allows OWL beginners to quickly grasp the foundations and functions of OWLs within the context of American higher education. Three complementary articles introduce us to "Contemporary OWLs." Beth L. Hewett offers the most scholarly, comprehensive theoretical background "common to most OWLs as virtual writing centers, despite the variant natures of individual OWLs." Her close past-to-present examination traces the theoretical connections between traditional writing centers and OWLs, establishing Ken Bruffee's Social Constructivism as the most influential paradigm today. Moreover, Hewett demonstrates how "OWLs functionality as sites of learning support" derives from their theoretical bases. Her extension of these functions to learners, tutors, professionals, writing programs, educational institutions and outreach communities depicts a large picture from which we can start to envision our own OWLs.

The other articles take us even further into model OWL spaces. Based on categories of services, Josephine A. Koster describes several types of OWLs (informative, interactive, live) for consideration with links to key examples, while Muriel Harris reveals the evolution of the Purdue University OWL (http://owl.english.purdue.edu), its services and staff to the present, along with "BOAs ('bits of advice')." The rest of "Contemporary OWLs" covers a wide range of context-specific OWLs (secondary school, community college, military institution and graduate-only institution) and one in psychology. A larger sampling of discipline-specific OWLs would better illustrate their adaptability across the curriculum.

Heading into the substantial "OWL Construction," we find Inman's brief but very practical 10-12 month timeline for OWL creation. He states up front that it's "a substantial undertaking, then, one with many important stages. A very important concern is covered early in "OWL Construction"—funding. Barry M. Maid and Lisa Cahill share their collaborative venture, pose basic questions (how, why, what, where) and provide many internal and external grant sources, including some links to websites. Ben Rafoth delves more into grant writing, emphasizing we must match "the needs of the grantor and grantee" to enhance our chances. His description of a proposal's overall components, organization, and style persuade us that we can and should make grant writing a routine part of our OWL work.

Inman's modifiable chronology, centered on institutional, technological and tutoring programs, remains the touchstone for the majority of "OWL Construction"'s guidance. Using the principles of the Yale HTML Guide, Erin Karper effectively depicts web design and usability testing to ensure building user-friendly sites, and Elizabeth Coughlin shares the history of the DePaul University Writing Centers' OWL (http://www.depaul.edu/~writing) development, spotlighting their online linkup for faculty and classes: "a web interface they

built for documents and commentary, called the Annotations Environment" (AE). Coughlin's broad, scholarly discussion and extensive bibliography emphasize OWLs' significance as a showcase to meet the call for distance/online education and community outreach initiatives.

For assistance in choosing an e-tutoring program, Inman overviews the wide range of synchronous/asynchronous options, media, and technologies available. Within companion articles, Richard Godden and Bryon L. Grigsby detail establishing, implementing, and evaluating an asynchronous tutoring program, with an expanded discussion on "Administrative and Dispatching Concerns," while Nick Carbone asserts that email is the best—the most available and free—asynchronous mode for writers. Carbone acknowledges the problems of "the missing face" and the "no drop off policy," but his steps to effective "interface" planning, along with his discussion on training tutors and preparing paper submitters, show how we can make e-mail tutoring more effective. However, in "More Talk, Less Fix: Tutor Training in a Facilitative Online Response Pedagogy," Roberta R. Buck and David Shumway most persuasively demonstrate and document that through "observations, reader reactions, and guiding questions," we can "establish a dialogic give-and-take in asynchronous sessions" that "mirrors the face-to-face response."

Unfortunately, we don't find as many contributions exploring synchronous tutoring. To weigh the software possibilities, we can turn to Clinton Gardner's discussion of MUDs/MOOs (multi-user dimension), Java Chats, Instant Messaging and Conferencing Systems. In addition to a description of each type, its benefits and drawbacks, the newcomer can follow links to current samples of usage sites and resources. A compilation of five essays from Eva Bednarowicz, Margaret Gonzales, Candice S. Rai, and Rebecca de Wind Mattingly, all of the University of Illinois, Chicago, comprise the only considerations of how to tutor using synchronous software. Here, the theme of "the impersonality of the electronic conference" repeats, but Bednarowicz believes the synchronous mode can be successfully personal as long as tutors are mindful of talking to writers via texts and "balancing interactive questioning with supplemental directives." Moreover, she stresses that writers can learn more later through transcripts of their sessions. Not only do the essays discuss synchronous tutoring issues, such as "speaking to the transcript, " the uses of "visual silence," the necessity of emoting during sessions and tutoring grammar, some of them are demonstrated through an online discussion transcript.

Appropriately, "OWL Construction" ends with virtual tours of a few OWLs and their tutor training programs in real and virtual environments. Although we are given different approaches to OWL training, we are left to come to own conclusions. Most helpful is Michele Eodice's assignment to introduce new tutors to OWLs and online tutoring, but those of us incorporating online training for the first time would appreciate additional discussions.

Similarly, "OWL Maintenance" covers diverse concerns (research, assessment, in-service training and publishing); however, for the most part, its short discussions skim the surface of what we need to know to start maintaining an OWL effectively. Some present concrete information to help us measure and improve performance. For example, Inman provides a checklist of a three-stage process (data collection, analysis, and action) which he believes can be adapted to any context, and Godden and Grigsby's assessment questionnaires (presented earlier in the "Construction" section) can be used for general usage numbers, professors, students, and tutors. More in depth is Karen D. Austin's development of her thesis that "theorizing of online tutoring needs to take place while we practice, not before," to which she applies the term *praxis*. Professionals, she claims, can achieve *praxis* in the area of synchronous tutoring through researching patron surveys, tutors' self-evaluations, and online transcripts. Concerning in-service training, Paula Gillespie and Lisa Lebduska touch on how we can train tutors in HTML and visual rhetoric respectively, but their relevance and importance in the maintenance section are unclear.

Inman's final contribution to "OWL Maintenance" brings *The OWL Construction and Maintenance Guide* full circle with Inman and Gardner's resounding stance from the "Introduction": our publications are vital to the success of OWL initiatives—and the writing center profession. The sections on local and profession-wide publishing offer various goals, audiences and venues—including electronic—to pursue, as well as links to informational websites. Although beginning OWL practitioners might not feel ready to publish in the OWL Guide anytime soon, they can certainly answer its editors' invitation for feedback and new topic suggestions. Having relied heavily on this resource in the development of my own electronic-tutoring initiative, I am already looking forward to the next version!

Reviewed by Joseph M. Dudley (Kent State Univeristy, Kent, OH)

The OWL Construction and Maintenance Guide is a valuable reference for those who have been operating online writing labs for the last few semesters, and after gaining some experience with online tutoring, are exploring ways to further develop OWL services. Inman and Gardner address a wide variety of topics, "from advice about writing grants to fund OWLs, to reports on how to develop OWLs for specific student populations, and to information

about training tutors to work in OWL environments" (Introduction). This challenging range of materials is presented in a CD format that invites readers to both "read and interact with the OWL Guide" (Introduction), suggesting OWLs and the work they encourage are elements of a techno-literacy that prizes interaction and collaboration over computer skills.

What emerges from the consideration of contemporary OWLs is the sense that a number of writing centers are exploring ways they can use Internet technology to break the tyranny of paper by extending selected services directly to students at their point of need. For some, the synchronous tutoring offered by what Josephine A. Koster ("Bits, Bytes, and Baker's Dozens") terms "live OWLs" (such as the U. S. Naval Academy OWL) suits their needs, while for others the asynchronous tutoring environment of an "interactive OWL" (such as the Claremont Graduate University OWL) is more appropriate, and yet for others, access to online handouts and other information offered by an "information OWL" (such as the University of Washington Psychology OWL) is sufficient.

OWL construction is discussed in terms of the interdependent roles of technology and pedagogy. Since OWLs are initially conceptualized in terms of their web presence, the OWL web site must reflect a current, fully developed technological profile that will allow student clients to easily interact with online tutors and services. Inman suggests a four-step decision-making process for initial OWL construction: (1) whether online tutoring should be synchronous, asynchronous, or both; (2) which media (such as e-mail, chat, or discussion board) to use; (3) what specific programs (such as web-based e-mail, Windows-based programs, or UNIX-based programs) to use, and (4) how to incorporate regular evaluation to make sure the OWL is operating effectively ("E-tutoring Options"). This discussion suggests that OWL administrators must either be or employ the services of a savvy web designer to thoughtfully construct the OWL web site as a communications base from which the OWL service will operate. In addition, Inman suggests that OWL administrators must be willing and able to adjust the design and method of contact in response to student and tutor evaluation on a regular basis. The intention, clearly, is that OWL web pages reflect a flexible OWL administrative policy that adjusts to the needs of an always-changing student population.

Once users have moved through the web site and accessed the OWL staff, tutorials must reflect current writing center standards. To accomplish this, Roberta Buck and Dave Shumway sug-

(cont. on page 10)

THE WRITING LAB
NEWSLETTER

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