THE WRITING LAB

...FROM THE EDITOR...

We've had some problems with the *Writing Lab Newsletter*'s subscription list, and, as many of you recognized, two articles in the March issue were repeated in the April issue. Our Managing Editor left the job, and Mary Jo Turley, whom many of you know because of her years of superbly managing the business end of *WLN*, has graciously stepped out of retirement to take over until the job is filled again. Please contact Mary Jo at wln@purdue.edu if you still have concerns about your subscription.

In this month's issue you'll find Ben Crosby's arguments for a credit-bearing tutor training course, and Kirsten Komara recommends mock tutorials as a valuable mode of training. Brian Fallon and Moira Ozias look back at last summer's IWCA Summer Institute and why it was such a valuable experience for them. And we have voices of two tutors here too. Our poet laureate, John Blazina, offers another of his ungrammatical verses while Puja Sahney describes her growth as a tutor.

On the back page of this month's issue, you'll also see a call for proposals for a *WLN* issue next spring, for our 30th anniversary, to be guest edited by Kathy Gillis. She looks forward to receiving many first-rate submissions.

• Muriel Harris, editor

...INSIDE...

The benefits of a for-credit training course in starting and running a university writing center

Introduction

Some questions about writing center theory and praxis never seem to change: how do we prepare for our clientele? How do we engage them? What questions should we ask? When should we direct them? And when should we encourage them to direct us? The list goes on. Fortunately, we consider it a virtue that we continue interrogating the same issues. As students of rhetoric, we realize that the answers to these questions often depend on the contexts in which they are asked. Thus, we give ourselves over to principles of adaptability. Instead of establishing rigid, universal rules that do not change regardless of student temperaments, professor expectations, language distinctions, writer proficiency levels, cultural variations, and other random variables, we allow ourselves the freedom to make occasional adjustments according to comparatively unpredictable discursive situa-

tions. Accordingly, writing center scholarship in the last few years has begun to acknowledge the remarkably sophisticated nature of the tutor's "role." Terese Thonus, for example, argues that effective writing center tutoring can be realized only through a complex "triangulated" view of the institutional variables involved, and that such a view uncovers the oversimplifications with which we have so far approached writing center identities (Thonus).

With these principles (and difficulties) in mind, the mission of the typical writing center must have something to do with practical versatility. How do we create centers that respond quickly and effectively to needs that are, in many ways, complicated and inconstant? More to the point, how do we prepare our tutors (and, in turn, our patrons) to feel comfortable with the necessary adjustments? I believe these questions underlie many of the general anxieties we experience when we face the mandate—implicit or explicit—to improve student writing across campuses. While I am sure there are many effective approaches to this issue, I intend to discuss one way we have successfully dealt with it here at the University of Utah. Because we were a group made up of new tutors and administrators who were building a new center that is meant to serve a new and large population, our anxieties with respect to the above questions have been particularly acute.

Background

When we finally got the opportunity to start a writing center at our university last year, we realized the work had just begun. After months of researching and proposing scenarios for a physical lab, we found ourselves somewhat unprepared when the administration finally said "Yes!" How would we do it? Who would be involved? Whom would we hire? And how would we find them? And more importantly, how would we train them? To make matters even more in-

teresting, we discovered during the hiring period that none of the prospective tutors had any writing center experience at all. Additionally, the presumptive director had never been a full director; and the presumptive assistant director (me) had never been more than a supervisor. We were all newcomers to our respective positions. Accordingly, we all shared similar anxieties and needs. To put it simply, we all wondered whether or not we were "doing it right." Our answer came in the form of a mandatory, for-credit course in which tutors and administrators met three times a week, away from the writing center itself. The course, which the director and assistant director designed and administered, was established to expose new tutors to the literature of the field and to provide a forum in which our own application of writing center theory and practice could be discussed and re-evaluated. So although none of us had substantial experience in our individual roles, we had regular access to helpful guidelines and peer/administrative feedback. Below, I briefly discuss three fundamental ways the tutoring course served our needs as new tutors and administrators who were facing largely unpredictable responsibilities.

Structured readings

Our experience
Two of the three weekly meetings were spent discussing current writing center research, which we had read a few days in advance each week. For this part of the course, we spent most of our time discussing Barnett and Blummer's *Writing Center Theory and Practice* and Gillespie and Lerner's *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring*. These texts appropriately reflect the division we wanted to emphasize in our discussions. The Barnett and Blummer book provided excellent referential material on the history of writing centers and writing center theory. The *Allyn and Bacon Guide*, which was especially designed for new tutors, provided a tremendously

thoughtful and organized handbook on contemporary tutoring practices. As we occasionally encountered situations that required further research and elaboration, we read selected journal articles that were not found in either of our primary texts. We gradually became familiar with such authors as Patricia Bizzell and Linda Flower, whose work on writing theory and process helped us to grasp essential notions of cognition and audience. This kind of exposure helped us to understand the situations we would encounter as unique to the participants. We learned that each writer would bring an original cognitive approach to his/her text, and that our job was not to teach, necessarily, but largely to learn and discuss. More generally, the overriding factor in selecting these readings was our own ongoing experience in the writing center. While we adhered loosely to a schedule of readings, we left open the possibility that certain needs would oblige us to substitute readings with others that had become more relevant as the semester continued. By referring regularly to all of the texts, our confidence as new tutors and administrators increased dramatically. It is important to emphasize that we felt free to alter our reading list as our experiences and needs in the writing center evolved.

Note: I suspect that many writing centers divide a staff's training time from its tutoring time, meaning a tutor gets a short crash course in peer tutoring theory and practice immediately before beginning his/her employment. This approach seems to suggest that ongoing, concurrent training is either unnecessary or accounted for in the "hands on" experience a tutor gets "on the job." Such methods fail to acknowledge the breadth of available writing center research and leave tutors with the false impression that writing center theory and practice are largely static—that is, that the whole theoretical essence of the field can be captured in an abbreviated pre-seminar on the actual work of tutoring. This approach

to training may also lead tutors to believe that there are just some concerns that have not been and will not be addressed by experts in the writing center community. They may think, for instance, that if a specific issue was not covered in the initial training, then they are on their own to "figure it out" in their application and practice. Furthermore, although writing center administrators may suggest additional reading beyond the duration of formal training (in order to address emerging issues and concerns), such reading may often be regarded as superfluous because it was not included in the core preparation period. It is important that tutors understand training as something perpetual. By establishing a semester-long class in which regular readings are assigned based on practical relevance, administrators affirm that tutoring is not just a job but also an ongoing, formal, academic pursuit.

Consultant visits

Our experience

There were times we felt we needed even more help than our own experience and selected readings could yield. For instance, although we had done substantial reading on ESL tutoring, we were not prepared for the volume of non-native English speakers who came to rely on the writing center. We were also surprised by the number of business writers who sought our help. Having regular course meetings allowed us to address these issues as soon as we realized additional help was required. For example, we invited one of our university's chief linguists and ESL experts to visit our class and help contextualize some of the unique challenges non-native speakers encounter when writing English. He then offered a number of helpful tips on how to engage a non-native speaker in a productive dialogue. His suggestions and helpful handout supplemented our various readings, and the experience gave us the opportunity to have an informal question and answer period with a known expert. Likewise, we in-

vited one of the UWP experts on professional writing to visit our class and discuss ways of analyzing effective and ineffective professional/business writing texts. She, like the ESL expert, engaged us in productive discussion, invited us to participate in new exercises, and assigned additional reading. The class increasingly became a dynamic forum for ongoing training—a place and situation that progressively acknowledged the pliability of tutoring expertise and the complexity of student needs. Our course and training were further enriched when our coordinator heard that the Center for Disability Services had a new director. By inviting the director into our class to discuss the unique needs and styles of disabled students, we learned considerably more information than we found in the class texts. We also soon began to see a higher volume of disabled students come to the center for assistance, presumably because they had become aware of our efforts to accommodate them. Thus, the course became a tool for internal training as well as outreach. We unanimously found all of these professional interactions not only helpful but also unique to a classroom experience.

Note: Because our training was regularly scheduled and ongoing, we were able to address immediate concerns that were specific to our new writing center. I suspect that a number of writing centers are established by designing a framework that may fail to leave room to address the ongoing or simply less predictable needs unique to their individual colleges/universities. A regular class meeting allows ample opportunity for emerging concerns to be voiced and addressed so that adjustments can be made straightaway with group input and theoretical backing—before a minor concern turns into a practical catastrophe. I specifically remember one of our tutors asking a consultant a question regarding the writers we were getting from the business college. The consultant readily shared some insights into the unique institu-

tional character and policies of our university's business college and suggested that these things may be contributing to the attitude of many of its student writers. Once we learned this information, our approach to our business writers became far more productive, because we adjusted our attitudes accordingly. Significantly, the consultant visits would have been more difficult to arrange had we been obliged to accommodate the schedules of all of the tutors, administrators, and visitors. A regular class meeting establishes time and space for regular learning.

Staff meeting

Our experience

Many of the concerns we experienced as a staff and class were raised during each week's third meeting, which we used as a forum for informal staff dialogue. No readings were assigned for this particular meeting, and the tutors were primarily in charge of raising issues for discussion. I recall one meeting in which Pam, one of our best tutors, expressed concern about "tutor dependency." She explained that a number of her "tutees" seemed to feel unable to improve without the step-by-step help she was providing. In response to this concern, we found a helpful article that we all read and discussed the following week (Kristin Walker's "Difficult Clients and Tutor Dependency: Helping Overly Dependent Clients Become More Independent Writers"). Additionally, as tutors and instructors, we all shared similar experiences, offered advice, and encouraged patience. In this way, the course provided a round-table for questions, concerns, complaints, advice, resolutions, and even small talk. The point is, we maintained a discussion that was removed from the regular stresses of the writing center itself and provided a place to learn, chat, and blow off steam. Complaining was indeed allowed, but the point was to address complaints—not exacerbate them. Tutors were free to bring food

and drinks to these meetings and to offer their own input with respect to writing center practices and policies. We adjusted a number of our policies for the better based on the insights offered in these Friday get-togethers.

Note: I suspect that in many writing centers, tutors have only impromptu or infrequent opportunities to voice questions or concerns comfortably in an environment where both administrators and tutors are available and at ease. I recall my first writing center experience. I was a new tutor, a sophomore English major, and scarcely finished with a two-week crash course in tutoring. Without the benefit of a regularly scheduled discussion forum, I found myself expressing a number of concerns quietly and cautiously to fellow individual tutors when they did not seem "too busy" or "bothered." The nature of my responsibilities seemed to suggest that I was expected to understand the issues about which I had questions. Even though my administrator told me to relax and just do my best, I still felt a little out of place in admitting my lack of knowledge and experience. It is important (especially in a beginning writing center) that a climate of openness be fostered and maintained. A regular, for-credit class, which includes an informal weekly staff meeting, will eliminate the need for hard-to-schedule, mid-semester get-togethers that are generally only necessary after certain concerns have become embedded as problems.

Indirect advantages/conclusion

We want our writing centers to be communities of open discourse, where strangers become interlocutors and vulnerability is acknowledged and addressed. But generally speaking, most of our efforts in this regard are focused on the writers we are trained to serve. I wonder if we fail to establish more effective writing center environments because we do not fully acknowledge and

address the vulnerabilities, anxieties, and needs of our own tutors. Needs are like weather patterns; they change according to certain rotations and degrees of pressure. And these things cannot always be effectively predicted. Therefore, it seems necessary that we create centers that account for the likelihood of unexpected variations. By providing situations of open and ongoing professional discourse, we create shelters in which these vulnerabilities can be transformed into productive learning opportunities. Our tutors need to consult and teach one another just as they consult and teach the patrons that sit timidly in front of them. And they need to know that their administrators are available for the same kind of consultation—that, in reality, the administrators have the same kinds of concerns they do. Tutors are not able to reach comfortably beyond their limitations unless administrators foster an environment where such development is not only encouraged, but facilitated and expected through invitations and incentives.

Some past suggestions for tutor training have acknowledged the need for ongoing education and engagement and have encouraged tutors to become involved in the writing center through independent research, clerical duties, and workshops (Poesy). I have found such approaches to be enormously helpful. But there are additional benefits to be had by re-situating the way we keep tutors engaged in their work. For example, Rodis acknowledges in her article, "Mending the Damaged Path: How to Avoid Conflict of Expectation When Setting up a Writing Center," that one of the great sources of anxiety for writing center administrators is the way departments, colleges, and universities perceive them. It is widely admitted, after all, that writing centers are often perceived as places for remedial, clerical, and rote-based workshop instruction. A for-credit class places the writing center and its personnel in an institutional, academic,

and theory-based context—a context, moreover, that acknowledges tutor needs in real time and sets the stage for a more effective writing center environment. A course, then, serves both the practical and theoretical needs of a writing center as it lends academic equanimity to our cause.

Finally, I should note that we established the course as for-credit not because we were eager to dole out grades, but because it gave the tutors an institutional reason to join the important discussions relevant to their work. I applaud centers that promote ongoing training and regular meetings beyond the center itself; but, now from experience, I would also encourage administrators to give these situations the same academic weight as other courses on campus. I think they will find the tutors to be more intellectually, theo-

retically, and socially engaged. When and if tutors can become thus engaged, I believe administrators will find them to be more comfortable and informed when faced with the various challenges of writing center work.

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Writing Center ESL Specialist
UNC-Chapel Hill

The Writing Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill invites applications for the position of English as a Second Language Specialist. This is a full-time, non-tenure track position in an innovative, busy center that offers both onsite and online service (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb>).

Qualifications
Minimum qualifications include a Master's degree in English, Linguistics, or a related field (Ph.D. preferred), ESL teaching experience at the college level or equivalent. Writing center experience an advantage. Demonstrated skill teaching English for academic purposes a plus.

Salary and benefits
This is a 12 month, full-time position with a $38,000-42,000 salary range. Position carries good NC state benefits of health insurance, annual leave, sick leave, and retirement plan. The University of North Carolina is an equal opportunity employer and is strongly committed to the diversity of our faculty and staff.

Deadline for applications
Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Proposed start date is July 1, 2006 or as soon as possible.

To apply
E-mail or send a letter of application, curriculum vitae, and the names and contact information for three references. Teaching portfolios, Web work, or other materials that demonstrate ability are welcomed.

Kimberly Town Abels, Ph.D.
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CB#5137 Phillips Annex
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599-5137
Or e-mail applications to: kabels@email.unc.edu

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

For a more complete description of duties, etc., contact Kimberly Abels.

Top 10 reasons summer institute is like summer camp (or "toward a higher risk, higher yield model of camp WC")

It is spring now, starting to warm up here in Kansas and Pennsylvania where we are writing, but as we each plan for the coming summer we're reminded of last summer, specifically the 2005 IWCA Summer Institute (SI). We've begun to use materials and ideas gathered from the Institute in our staff education meetings, and we often find ourselves revisiting conversations and discussions as we reach out to new parts of our universities and speak with higher administrators. Those are the "practical" things. Just as important are the relationships we built at the Institute, and the encouragement we're still feeding off of nearly eight months later.

As we remember our experiences during that week in July, we're reminded of just how much like summer camp the week seemed to be. We should explain that we were only marginally involved as participants at the SI since we were both working as assistants to the SI's local host chairperson. While participants attended receptions and plenary sessions with a group of ten leaders, the two of us spent the better part of the week behind the scenes acting as "non-participatory participants." Our task that week was to make sure things were running smoothly, yet we took every opportunity to join the SI goers during their plenary discussions in between our other duties. From shuttling leaders from and to the airport to running around campus to pick up materials, we became familiar faces while maintaining perspectives as observers of the conversations happening at the Institute. From our view as "gofers," hosts, and organizers, the week seemed to us uncannily like summer camp—here are our top 10 reasons why:

10. Everyone wore a lanyard and for arts, and crafts we made posters of our writing centers.
9. It never stopped. Lunches, bus rides, dinners, and drink dates were all chances to continue conversations. Time compressed and expanded throughout the week as if we were living in science fictional reality.
8. Quiet time really wasn't quiet.
7. It was a rite of passage into a new world of talk punctuated by personal experiences and friendly chitchat.
6. We'll have a new set of pen pals for at least the next year (and beyond).
5. Like graduating sixteen-year-olds too old for the camp experience, we lamented the fact we wouldn't be doing it again next year.
4. A few brave souls dared to show their talents as poets, on stage, while the rest of us admired their gumption.
3. The leaders were like counselors who led us into a new world of (professional) maturity.
2. Higher level administrators at home couldn't dream of the subversive acts we were planning upon our return home.
1. For at least one week out of the year we dreamt the impossible (like getting better spaces, more consultants, and more funding) really was possible.

For both of us, the Summer Institute was just the summer experience we needed at this point in our professional lives. We needed the intense moments of reflection and challenging conversation the Summer Institute offered. This was high-risk/high-yield camping at its best. Toward the end of that week, we and the rest of the participants got noisier, interrupting, risking ourselves and our ideas in discussions, forgetting (some of) the conventions of polite conversation.

The leaders came to Lawrence, KS from a variety of regions across the country, from Research I universities, small private schools, community colleges, and regional state colleges. Working behind the scenes presented moments that would have us reconsider and revise our interests in the writing center field. Driving to and from the airport with the leaders granted us some one-to-one time that exposed us to years (and years) of experience. The leaders engaged us in conversations about tutoring, writing, and the academy that offered some moments of clarity (and sometimes disparity) in considering our own decisions as scholars, teachers, and professionals. The ways the leaders shaped our conversations through the questions they asked and the responses they offered gave us a sense of direction and professional guidance. We felt encouraged to contribute our opinions and doubts because they showed a genuine interest in and concern for who we were and the kind of scholars we would like to become. During that week, their years of knowledge and experience created a kind of looking glass into the lives of writing center administrators and scholars. However, for us, these moments of one-to-one interaction were most meaningful because an experienced professional who understood the demands and dilemmas of our work was listening collegially. We imagine that many participants from the 2005 Summer Institute could share similar stories.

In such a concentrated week, time was an important factor, in that the experience itself was limited to a week, but also in that our time was structured; however, the conversations that began could be continued in the next session, a breakout session, over dinner or drinks, in the lobby, on the bus. On the first full day, leaders spoke about navigating boundary waters in the borderlands during a session on writing centers and activism. The idea of boundary waters as a metaphor for writing center work was a salient one for the two of us throughout the

week. Exploring and surviving in the boundary waters means taking risks that constantly expand our roles as writing center professionals. However, exploring borderlands takes time that many of us feel is already at a premium, so the task becomes inventing navigational techniques that traverse time and space. During the Institute, constraints on time posed by session boundaries created a kind of immediacy and expediency that propelled us into alternate spaces and times.

As the week pushed forward, we visited the plenary and breakout sessions and witnessed the growing surge in conversations. Community and time created trust and risk-taking among the participants. Folks who had been working in what they perceived to be isolated conditions at their writing centers at home were now working with others who knew how to appreciate hard work and successes in the Center. What emerged that week was a group of people invested in extended thought and reflection about the work we do and a realization that there was a community of people with faces and real life experiences rather than just names on a listserv or in the journals. The bonds we formed fomented opportunities to communicate our desires, needs, interests, fears, and accomplishments in the writing center in candid, subversive, and productive ways. The effects this community will yield will be as big and spacious as the risks we take upon returning home.

As we operated personal car services, made multiple trips to the airport and hotels, and acted as pseudo activities directors, we realized that movement was a key theme and experience throughout the week. The busyness of the Institute is one of its intriguing qualities because, although exhausting, the constant motion allowed for a multitude of ideas and topics to emerge. Always building on previous topics or mutating into new ones, the constant exertion and motion gave us the sense that we were moving toward some-

thing greater. Like the trips to the hotel, the store, the campus, and different corners in Lawrence, we revisited places we had been to many times before while exploring new ways to think about our work and our roles as colleagues, administrators, and teachers. We watched the group begin to rewrite itself into the field through a recursive process of discussion and writing that allowed participants and leaders to reposition and reconsider our identities in the writing center.

Our conversations took us many places, including how to communicate with administrators and faculty, how to address writing issues, writing center needs, and the literacy "crisis" that so many outside of our field feel is an immediate concern for the writing center. Despite the belief common among administrators, donors, and some faculty that new technologies are ruining our young people's ability to communicate effectively, the current needs of our students are realistically due to the demands of being members of one of the most literate generations the world has ever seen. Interestingly, the Vice Provost for Student Success (the administrator the KU Writing Center reports to) offered the closing remarks at the final luncheon, and she reminded us of the delicate line we must walk as we strive for such support while communicating to administration what we learn about the needs of savvy and highly literate students. Our subversive talk throughout the week revealed to us the complex relationships we negotiate. Not only must we find ways to help students, we must discover new ways to communicate this new vision of students to our administrators and colleagues throughout the academy while listening and responding to their concerns for the students at our institutions.

The renewed sense of community we gained during the SI has propelled us to make a few ripples, if not splashes (a risky business) on the campuses to which we returned. At IUP, Brian

helped persuade deans to visit the writing center and helped to build support for the writing center at a branch campus. Moira has revised the tutor training course at KU to include the bibliographies and materials she collected at the SI in addition to providing new challenges to tutors on how they work with English language learners. But that week left us with something more than just some tools to develop our own writing centers. We became more certain than ever that we, Brian and Moira, will continue to be a part of this writing center community, but where we will take this high-risk/high-yield kind of learning from here is still a discussion the two of us often have. Will we go into the streets with it? Into what towns, what schools, what organizations . . . to what students, to what learners? We can only imagine.

We like to think that the week we experienced last July, in addition to having seemed both long and short on time, will also continue to have important effects *through* time. It has. After all, that's what we do with summer camp, right? Take it with us to help us create some noise that amplifies, distorts, and mutates something that is seemingly unimaginable into a new possibility. We navigate muddy waters outside the center where we meet faculty members and administrators and take risks that ripple throughout the institution. At least for the next couple of years, we will be reminded of the conversations we had during the 2005 Summer Institute week, and we hope, even expect, these conversations will broaden and expand—ripples in a pool, a butterfly in the Amazon, if you will.

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IWCA Summer Institute
Stanford University
July 23-28, 2006

- New to directing a writing center?
- Starting up a new center?
- Looking for new directions for your writing center?
- Planning a writing center career?
- Interested in learning and sharing with writing-center colleagues?
- Ready for more sustained writing-center discussions than conferences offer?
- $500 tuition + travel & lodging

Join us for an intensive week of stimulating presentations, discussions, mentoring, and fun with writing center colleagues from around the world. The institute will provide a mentoring network of professional contacts, including both new directors and a range of veteran writing center professionals. Leaders are drawn from both large and small colleges and universities, community colleges, and secondary schools, with specialties that range from technology in the writing center to peer tutoring and writing across the curriculum.

Co-Chairs
Michele Eodice, University of Kansas
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Clyde Moneyhun, Stanford University
(e-mailto: moneyhun@stanford.edu)

Workshop Leaders
Al DeCiccio (Rivier College)
Lisa Ede (Oregon State University)
Michele Eodice (University of Kansas)
Scott Miller (Sonoma State University)
Clyde Moneyhun (Stanford University)
Janet Swenson (Michigan State University)
Sherri Winans (Whatcom Community College)
Lisa Lebduska (Wheaton College)
Jenny Jordan (Glenbrook North High School)

Online registration at: <http://swc.stanford.edu/ iwcasi2006/>

International Writing Centers Association and South Central Writing Centers Association

Call for Proposals
April 12-14, 2007
Houston, TX
"A Space for Writing: Writing Centers and Place"
Keynote speakers: Valerie Balester and James McDonald

Prepare a 500-word proposal and a 75-word abstract for poster sessions, 20-minute individual presentations, 90-minute panels/roundtables, 90-minute workshops, 1/2-day pre-conference workshops, or 1/2-day post-conference workshops. Proposals may be submitted online to <http://ahss.ualr.edu/iwca> or via surface mail to: Dagmar Corrigan, University of Houston-Downtown, Dept. of English, One Main Street, Houston, TX 77002. For questions, please e-mail Dagmar Corrigan at corrigand@uhd.edu. Proposal Deadline: September 15, 2006; Acceptance Notification: December 15, 2006

Southeastern Writing Center Association

Call for Proposals
Feb. 8-10, 2007
Nashville, TN
"Static and (dis)Harmony: Tuning into Writing Centers in the Music City"
Keynote speaker: Elizabeth Boquet

We encourage submissions for 75-minute panels, roundtables, or workshops; 20-minute, individual papers to be shared within a 75-minute session; or poster presentations in hour-long increments. Individual papers will be grouped with two other, 20-minute papers about related topics whenever possible with a 15-minute period at the end for questions All submissions should be submitted via the website by October 1, 2006. For any questions or concerns, please e-mail SWCA2007@comcast.net. More info at <www.mtsu.edu/~uwcenter/swca2007>.

TUTORS' COLUMN

Carving a niche in a new land

When I arrived in United States from India in the month of August, I came prepared to teach a group of twenty American freshmen students at Utah State University in Logan. I had been appointed as a Graduate Instructor for English 1010. Although I realized that teaching in America would be a lot different from teaching that I had been familiar with back home, maneuvering my teaching technique was easy. I realized that teachers and students enjoyed far more liberty in discussion here than in India, and I appreciated the equality and mutual respect my students and I began to share.

It had come as a surprise to me during my teaching workshop in August that I had to tutor. I was unfamiliar with the whole concept of the Writing Center, since there weren't any in India. While I was beginning to get more comfortable as a teacher, I continued to struggle as a tutor. In the first few months, I tried to tutor straight from the instructions in the books that we read in our tutoring practicum class that I along with my fellow Graduate Instructors attended. But gradually, I realized that I could not succeed as a tutor if I only imitated other tutors of whom I read in the books or observed at the center. I knew that if I hoped to become a good tutor, I had to develop my own personal technique that depended on my personality and background as a writer.

In time I observed that it was not just I as a tutor who was struggling to learn and to adapt to a new role. When students would first come in, I would notice a flicker of surprise pass their faces. My Asian-Indian looks would amaze them. In a few moments of tutoring many would exclaim their surprise aloud. They would marvel at the fact that I could speak impeccable English. I would tell them that I was an English major and had been speaking English since I was a small girl. However, where diversity in culture was incorporating new perspectives in my sessions, I was struggling with another greater dilemma. It was my own struggle as a writer.

Because I was struggling so hard to be a good writer, my ambition was cramping my attempts to improve as a tutor. My two interests were constantly clashing. I was so occupied by improving as a writer that I was subconsciously treating all students, irrespective of their backgrounds, as writers. I was so cautious to check their technique and style of writing that I closed my mind to understanding the language demands of each field. One time a student came in who wanted help with his psychology assignment. When I began to work on his sentence structure, he told me that verbosity made him uncomfortable. It was not his voice. He just wanted to articulate his ideas as clearly as he could. Although I wasn't attempting verbosity in the first place, my writer instinct was surfacing subconsciously. It was then I realized that being a writer and a tutor are two different skills. I had to learn to juxtapose them in the right way. I could not be biased toward one skill while ignoring the other.

During the same week another student came in who was studying English literature and writing a paper on the book *Sense and Sensibility.* My heart jumped. Jane Austin is my favorite author. I thoroughly enjoyed reading the student's paper. Our common literary interests bonded us instantly. Interested in writing, she was appreciating my thoughts as much as I was hers. Here my writer and tutor self were complementing each other perfectly. What had failed earlier in the week was succeeding this time. It was then that I realized the importance of maneuvering my two interests to suit the situation.

While I was struggling to incorporate successfully both my interests of learning to tutor well and be a good writer, another problem was beginning to surface: I was also struggling to adjust my roles as a teacher of writing and a tutor. As a teacher, I am the one who sets the structure of their papers. My discussions in class influence the ideas that come forth in my students' papers. When I grade their papers, I subconsciously picture them in my thoughts when I read their words. The image and words match so perfectly that they leave less room for misunderstanding. I know what they are trying to say because I have heard them in class and am familiar with their personalities.

On the contrary, as a tutor I suffer from this disadvantage of not knowing the tutee in person. In a time span of twenty minutes, I try my best to get to know the student and maneuver my tutor skills accordingly. Unfortunately I sometimes turn a wrong corner and fail. At one time, I had a girl come in to brainstorm for ideas. Although she had a topic in mind, her sources were not supporting her argument. Due to her own vagueness at explaining her topic to me, I was groping further and longer in the dark. As I saw the time running out, I began to panic. I wanted

to help her, but we weren't heading anywhere with our discussion. In my desperation, I began to throw my own ideas forth. Unfortunately, I forgot to include her in the search for illumination. As a result she found me both opinionated and domineering. This had not been my intention, but I had done it nonetheless.

Unlike this student, some of them like the tutor to talk and dominate the conversation. I have often found students come in and tell me what they want help in and then remove a notebook to take notes. They hang on my every word and nod their heads once in a while but interrupt me only when they can't take down what I say. They try to make my words their own. A few weeks back, I had a student come in who had a rough draft of a paper for an intermediate composition class. Reading his paper out loud, I suggested several changes. At one point he told me that he should really take all that I was saying down, otherwise he would forget. He asked if I would mind putting it down while I was reading his paper. I was surprised that a student should tell me this. But as I wondered at his odd request, I suddenly realized that subconsciously I was holding the pencil in my hand. This was making me seem like I was a teacher grading his paper rather than a tutor who was helping him improve his paper. He was glad that I was doing that, but I wasn't. This was no different from him just copying his paper from a book. I politely passed the pencil to him and told him

that he would understand his own writing better. I felt his face fall a bit, but he nonetheless took the pencil. By this simple gesture I had passed the authority to him, and he was now responsible for successfully incorporating it. As he wrote short notes along the margin, he began to co-operate further in the discussions, trying to link ideas better than he had earlier.

It was then that I understood the vulnerability of my own position as a tutor. I was expected to make suggestions and to help out. But at the same I had to learn the skills of equally incorporating the student in my train of thought.

Six months later I definitely feel I have come full circle and have been able to incorporate my experience to benefit my writing and teaching. Being a tutor has exposed me to students from diverse fields. Reading their papers has helped me to appreciate the practical demands from language that each field demands. Consequently, I am a more versatile writer now. Moreover, discussions with tutees about language problems have also helped me to address them in my own classes that I teach. Therefore I have been able to help students and myself weave around language more appropriately and integrate it more successfully to our use and benefit.

Puja Sahney
Utah State University
Logan, UT

Ungrammatical Verse 3: Unscheduled Stops

Commas hit the spot
when you have a second thought,
and a third,
and a vast conglomerate
of clauses insubordinate
(grammar endlessly deferred), is
coupled with a predicate
insensibly absurd.

When a sentence is too long
and needs a little polish;
a semi-colon's just the thing

to carve a cool new niche;
slice a thought in two,
leave the reader gasping like a fish.

At least the colon can't go wrong.
What, never?
Well, hardly ever:

John Blazina
York University
Toronto

Writing Center Director
Eastern Arizona College

Writing Center Posters Available

Many of you have taken advantage of the inexpensive, professional posters the Clarion University Writing Center provides in collaboration with our Student &University Relations Center. The posters are designed to draw the attention of students majoring in various disciplines across campus. We received requests from many of you for posters in disciplines not represented. This year's writing center staff worked to fill that need and are proud to announce the availability of posters in the following areas:

- Biology (a new one)
- Criminal Justice
- Engineering
- Environmental Studies
- Geology
- Geography
- Nursing
- Pharmacology
- Athletics: baseball, basketball, football, lacrosse, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track & field, volleyball, wrestling.

You can check out the posters by going to our web site and clicking on "Writing Center Posters" in the navigation bar. <http://www.clarion.edu/academic/wc/>.

Kathleen Welsch (kwelsch@clarion.edu)

Writing Consultant The College of Wooster

The College of Wooster is seeking Writing Consultants for the College Writing Center. Candidates must have graduate degrees and/or graduate-level training in the teaching of writing, writing centers, or a related field. Excellent writing skills are essential; teaching and/or tutoring experience is preferred. Writing Consultant's duties include tutoring student writers, especially junior and senior-level Independent Study students; working to assist and support writing curricula and programs; and assisting the Director of Writing with special projects related to writing instruction at the College.

Hours are flexible, based on the Writing Consultant's availability and the needs of the Writing Center. One evening per week is expected. This is a nine-month, part-time/no benefits salary position. Send by June 1st a resume, cover letter, compensation expectations, and names, address, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of three professional references to:

The Department of Human Resources
The College of Wooster
536 East Wayne Avenue
Wooster, Ohio 44691

<www.wooster.edu/humanresources>
humanresources@wooster.edu
EOE/AA Drug Free Workplace
Position Classification is C-1-N

Call for Proposals

Rewriting Across the Curriculum: Writing Fellows as Agents of Change in WAC
Guest Editors: Brad Hughes and Emily B. Hall, U. of Wisconsin-Madison

For a special issue of *Across the Disciplines* (for Fall 2007), the editors say they are "eager to read innovative work that critically explores the foundations, implications and influence of Writing Fellows across the disciplines—work that is theoretically informed, that offers original research data, and that builds on the conversation of recent WAC, writing center, and Writing Fellows literature." They welcome inquiries about this issue and about ideas for proposals.

Deadline for proposals: Sept. 1, 2006
Notification of acceptance: Nov. 2006
Manuscripts due: June 1, 2007
Publication: Fall 2007

Proposal format: Please submit a one-page proposal explaining your topic, the research and theoretical base on which you will draw, and your plans for the structure of your article. Proposals and manuscripts should follow the APA documentation style, which is standard for *Across the Disciplines*. Send your proposal electronically (in MS Word format) to both guest editors (bhughes@wisc.edu and ebhall@wisc.edu) and to Michael Pemberton (michaelp@Georgiasouthern.edu), the editor of *ATD*.

Mock tutorials: A dramatic method for training tutors

Dramatizing / Traumatizing the tutorial session

My most anxiety-laden moment as a consultant was the time when my supervisor sat in on a consulting session. When my student, a regular, saw the supervisor in the room, he turned around in the doorway and left because he didn't want her to judge him. As a minority on conditional status, his consulting visits were mandatory, so our first few weeks together I had spent trying to get him to trust me. The supervisor and I had to goad him back into the room, reassuring him that I was being observed and "judged," not him. That was a very tense session for both of us. He worried that he would lose me as a tutor, if I didn't do well, so he tried very hard to make me look good. Because of this incident, I have always been reticent about observing my Writing Center consultants' student sessions. At the same time, I am keenly aware that writing consultants need and want supervisory training. In order to bridge this gap, I have developed mock tutorial sessions. Mock tutorials offer a good method for training new writing consultants because they provide an interactive environment where consultants put to work the strategies learned in the Writing Center seminar.

As a writing center director, I met regularly with my writing consultants in a seminar forum. During this seminar we would discuss their experiences—both positive and negative—in order to learn from each other, to disseminate my own practical professional strategies, to review basic writing language, techniques and grammar, to discuss articles from a variety of writing center journals that I required them to read and to calibrate assessments of anonymous student essays. During these sessions, I buoyed their energy level by stressing the value to their whole educational process, but I also knew that some of them needed more direct help. This need became even more evident after several students from my writing class had sought help at the Writing Center, and I received Conference Summary forms that overemphasized surface issues and grammatical correctness to the detriment of larger structural problems, such as thesis, organization, and development. I suspected that in an attempt to help the students and to avoid looking like they didn't know what to address, the new consultants looked for quick tangible ways of making a difference. I also suspected other new consultants might need more direct help learning the trade because they avoided interaction during seminar calibrations, usually taking notes on other's comments and avoiding eye contact that might elicit a direct question to them.

I wanted to watch the consultants in action, but I didn't want to create the tension or the trauma that I had experienced as a new consultant or that my student had experienced. Moreover, the arrangement of our new Writing Center did not lend itself to easy conversation eavesdropping because it had been divided into individual conference rooms. These small rooms offered a much-appreciated privacy for the students, but they also prevented new consultants the opportunity to watch the seasoned hands at work. These casual observations of the senior consultants had taught my two seniormost consultants their craft when they were new. They both concurred that learning in that way had been invaluable. Videotaping seemed to offer an option for tutorial observation, but it too seemed invasive, especially since many students prefer not to be taped during an interactive learning session. After discussing the idea of training with two senior consultants, we decided to try mock tutorial sessions. The mock tutorial offered the new consultants a private, independent opportunity to learn, without the director hovering over their shoulders.

Setting the stage

The mock tutorial is a role-playing session in which the senior consultant visits the Writing Center in the guise of a freshman with a poorly written paper and requests help from a consultant. Every Writing Center consultant was required to sign up for a half-hour session. The session sign up sheets were posted in the Writing Center. After each mock tutorial session, the consultants were required to write up a conference summary form and to send it directly to me. The senior consultants were to jot down notes during the session about the advice given; they also took notes afterward about their general emotional feelings about the session. The quotations in this essay are from those forms and notes written during spring 2002 semester at the University of Evansville.

In order to prepare for these sessions, the two senior consultants and I selected an anonymous essay from a freshman level course that all students are required to take. The paper included an assignment sheet that emphasized the basic elements of a good essay: thesis, evidence, analysis. The essay had surface problems with grammar and mechanics, as well as structural problems. It lacked a sound the-

sis, textual evidence, analysis, and organizational strategies. All of the consultants would have been somewhat familiar with the book, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart,* being discussed in this paper, an advantage that they wouldn't always have during a regular session. Both senior consultants decided to use the same essay, in order to reduce variables during the consultation. The two senior consultants were able to get through all of the sessions in about two weeks.

Thinking about the performance

I met with the senior consultants after all of the mock tutorials were over, and we reviewed and compared conference summaries and their notes. The senior consultants identified several problems that had originally raised red flags for me in the conference summary forms. These problems centered on consultants focusing on surface issues, such as awkward phrases and grammatical mistakes, rather than larger structural problems such as thesis, paragraph organization, and development. The senior consultants noted that these sessions emphasized the same things: rewritten sentences, phrasal corrections, and comma changes. One senior consultant's post-conference notes revealed that as a writer, she felt frustrated that these new consultants had immediately addressed the paper's surface problems without preliminary discussion about the assignment, topic, thesis, or development. Larger structural problems were not mentioned until the very end of sessions. Also, she noticed that consultants who focused on grammatical structures would often get "tangled in surface problems" without ever referring to a handbook or explaining how to use a handbook. Both senior consultants agreed that using overly technical terms with a fledgling writer, without offering them access to a handbook or explaining the language, put them off, making them feel like they would never "get the technical stuff" enough to improve their writing.

The senior consultants noticed other problems too that did not and could not appear in a brief conference summary form. A consultant's body and verbal language could affect the student's response. For example, some consultants failed to introduce themselves, make eye contact, and offer a place to sit down to work. Both senior consultants felt that the lack of "hospitality" made them feel a bit tentative and awkward about entering the Writing Center's space. Eye contact seemed especially important; both senior consultants felt that lack of eye contact indicated avoidance and insincerity. Sometimes the avoidance issue occurred right when a student walked into the Writing Center, as if the consultant did not really want to have a consulting session. Also, the senior consultants noted that inquiring about the assignment and the class made them feel more at ease, almost like inviting them into a discussion. Friendly interaction helps to create a more productive environment.

Also, the consultant's tone in addressing the student and issues in the paper were significant. For example, some consultants were very directive, almost dictatorial, in making suggestions for improvement. This behavior is often accompanied by consultants rewriting sections without adequately interacting with the writer. In other words, the consultant takes over the paper, almost leaving the writer out. Both senior consultants felt that this behavior made them feel inadequate as writers, as if to invalidate their ideas or strategies. This aggressive behavior did not help them when they left the Center, either, because they didn't know how to proceed independently. Conversely, both senior consultants also noted that when a consultant set aside the paper, the consultant inadvertently insulted them. Such a gesture suggests that the paper is beyond the realm of revising; its ideas are not worthy of being discussed, and it simply needs to be started all over again. Al-

though the senior consultants may understand Donald Murray's claim to write a paper, then put it away, and start all over again to get at the more interesting ideas, the average college writer doesn't appreciate this perspective when coming into the Writing Center for revisions. It is best to keep the paper as the focal point and to let the writer decide which ideas should be excised.

The last issue of student/consultant interaction that the senior consultants addressed in their post-conference notes was the problem with consultants barraging them with questions that they could not adequately process. Though this was not a common problem, both senior consultants noted that when they didn't have time to think through the first question before the second question was asked, they began to feel muddled and would simply avoid responding, mostly because they didn't know where to begin.

During the most productive sessions, the senior consultants noted that the discussions remained focused on the paper, included such issues as thesis, topic sentences in paragraphs, idea development, and required writing. In these sessions, their consultants either read through the paper completely before beginning the discussion or read through sections then paused for discussion. The consultants led the discussion by referring to the paper, but didn't dominate the discussion by taking over the paper or questioning without allowing adequate time to consider and to answer. And, most significantly, the consultants almost invariably included interactive writing, such as note taking, outlining, brainstorming, jotting down thesis or topic statements. One consultant wrote that the "thesis statement did not reflect the rest of her paper, so [she] revised it to reflect her point, and revised a paragraph reflecting the thesis statement." This consultant actually asked the senior consultant to write during the session because he didn't want her to forget the ideas they

had covered. The senior consultant said that when she left that session, she felt very positive about what she could do with the paper. In another instance, a consultant wrote that the role player needed "less summary and more ideas." In order to achieve this end, the consultant asked her to create an outline from the various items that were summarized, focusing on why each item deserved to be cited. They then used these points to discuss and create a thesis. The strongest consultants were those who engaged the two role players in some activity that made them feel ready to tackle their papers when they left. Both senior consultants felt as if a light had been flicked on when the session became interactive.

The role-playing aspect did get in the way for at least two of the consultants. In the first case, the consultant treated the paper as a hypothetical situation, discussing the issues in the third person: "I would tell this student that she should work on. . . ." The senior consultant responded in a like manner, remaining hypothetical and using the third person to raise questions: "What if she responded to you by saying. . . ." About this conference, the senior consultant noted that the advice covered all of the larger structural problems that would be important in revision. In other words, consultants uncomfortable with the dramatic aspect of mock tutorials could still gain critical reading and tutoring skills from an independent session with a senior consultant. The second case was more difficult because the consultant felt that the senior consultants didn't know the paper well enough to have a sound discussion. This consultant wrote to me that she thought that the senior consultants should have used their own papers so that the conversation would have been smoother. On one hand, she is correct to think that the senior consultants would have been more articulate in discussing their own work; even they

realized this point. On the other hand, most freshmen do not think enough about their papers after they hand them in to remember why they wrote something in particular. I often have had students ask me, "How am I supposed to remember what I was thinking at the time?" Of course, this response indicates that the writing is not very clear, but it also indicates that the writer was not very involved in the material and probably was writing against a deadline. The consulting session also must address the intellectual development of the student. If the student cannot answer critical questions regarding a paper, then the consultant must be able to explain the relationship between the critical questions and the structural and developmental problems in the paper. This is not an easy task, but when students begin to see the link between these two issues, they start to think in more sophisticated ways. Hence, using a paper not written by the senior consultants in a mock tutorial can offer productive challenges.

Directing the weak performances

Before meeting with all of the Writing Center consultants, I took the opportunity to meet casually with several of the new consultants about their performances. In order not to single out the "weaker" consultants, I met with a few of the stronger consultants too. With the stronger consultants, I asked them to tell me how they felt about their mock tutorial. Their responses were overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the point that the session enabled them to practice the skills we had covered in the seminar and to receive feedback later in casual conversations with the senior consultants. The weaker consultants had mixed emotions: they worried about "pleasing" the senior consultants, feeling overwhelmed by the number of problems in the paper, and losing their jobs. I had addressed these issues prior to the mock tutorials, emphasizing that this process was geared toward improve-

ment, not toward getting rid of any tutors. These emotions, however, aren't easy to disperse, especially with students who are used to excelling and who may suspect they are not being as productive as they could be.

With the weaker consultants, I asked them to discuss how they approached a paper with a large number of issues. As suspected, they approached grammar first; I was given three basic reasons for this strategy. The first was to find out if the student was really involved in correcting the paper. They claimed that students who came to the Writing Center because their professors required it rarely wanted to talk about anything else. One consultant also noted that fixing grammatical issues immediately made the client feel good about his paper; she said the students often didn't seem to want anything else. So, she rarely pushed clients onto the higher road without first "testing" them via grammar issues. The second reason was related to the first: the consultants felt so overwhelmed by the number of problems that starting with the grammar just seemed easiest. Though these consultants knew the hierarchy of issues to address and discussed them in seminar, they felt that facing the "real live problem" rather than sample papers in group discussions was far more difficult. Most of these consultants needed more time to watch others tutor and to get used to the tutoring environment. The third reason was that the consultant felt so distracted by the surface problems that she could not get beyond them. Excessive surface problems indicated, to one particular consultant, a level of carelessness that made it difficult for her to take the student seriously. This consultant admitted that she pointedly refused to read a paper that had surface errors until they were fixed. She even informed me that she had sent a student away to fix all surface issues before she would read the paper. Larger pedagogical discussions

during the consultants' seminar had not helped these consultants to overcome their focus on grammar to the detriment of other issues. In each conversation, I encouraged the consultants to take the high road by engaging the client in larger structural problems, as we had discussed in seminar. Though these consultants all intellectually understood the importance of thesis, organization, and development, they resorted to a comfort zone when faced with a "messy" situation. These cases indicated to me that many new consultants needed and wanted more guidance than a seminar could offer. To respond to that issue, several of these consultants rearranged their schedules so that they could work with the senior consultants during the rest of the semester. Pairing them up with more seasoned consultants made them feel more comfortable and did help to improve their skills. Only one consultant opted to stop tutoring at the end of the term; she did not feel that she could ignore grammatical issues while helping others with thesis, organization, and development. She preferred her method of grammar first, though she admitted that she rarely saw any students more than once.

Critiquing the drama

As a group we addressed the mock tutorials during our regular seminar session after all of the tutorials were completed. In order to facilitate a discussion, I asked the consultants to freewrite on the following questions:

1. When you receive criticism on a paper, what might cause offense?
2. How do you feel when someone sets aside your ideas, and how do you feel when someone incorporates your ideas?
3. What are your thought processes when you are asked an intricate/complex question, and what helps your response process?

I developed these questions based on the information from the senior consultants' observations. The consultants' responses concurred with the senior consultants' observations made earlier. In fact, one of the stronger consultants put in the margin of her freewrite about the second question, "Yikes, I think that I do this to students!" The consultants obviously were honest with themselves and really reflected on their positions as peer consultants and students. I then asked the consultants to freewrite specifically about the mock tutorial session, focusing on the following   questions:

1. After your mock tutorial, how did you feel about your position as the "authority"?
2. How did you think the student felt?
3. Would you have done anything differently?

The aforementioned consultant discussed her penchant to set aside papers in order to get students talking. She theorized that maybe she should focus more on what is put in front of her. This was a real breakthrough moment for her. The majority of the consultants at the Writing Center felt very positive about the mock tutorial sessions. The freewriting brought into focus the duality of their roles as both students and tutors, and the soundness of the "golden rule": do unto others as you would want them to do unto you. Indeed, during this seminar, the tutors voiced their desires to be referred to as consultants because they felt that the word better represented their position as peers and as fellow writers. They further suggested that we continue using the mock tutorials in the future in order to address individual needs.

The mock tutorials also motivated the consultants to write a mission statement for our Writing Center:

Writing Center consultants do not serve as a replacement for a grammar book, but instead serve as creative consultants who encourage the writing process by providing feedback on the clarity, organization, and strength of the student's work. Consultants are not professional editors or judges. They are critical readers who can provide access to resources, such as writing techniques and styles, and textual guides and handbooks. Consultants are aids, and sessions at the Writing Center are meant to be interactive, cooperative efforts. Responsibility for the writing ultimately belongs to the student.

This mission statement reflects the consultants' collective experiences. They want to help students with the creative and intellectual process of writing. The mock tutorials, more than any other grading calibration exercise or journal article, had prompted an intense discussion of their purpose and goals. They taught a group of young consultants quite a bit about themselves and their roles as consultants. Moreover, these tutorial sessions established a bond for them as writing consultants, which was another reason why they wished to continue the mock tutorials. Overall, the mock tutorial sessions created a positive environment for interactively assessing consultants' skills as well as developing strategies for training stronger consultants.

Kirsten Komara
Schreiner University
Kerrville, TX

Calendar for Writing Center Associations

June 24-26, 2006. European Writing Centers Association, in Istanbul, Turkey
 Contact: Dilek Tokay, e-mail: dilek\t @sabanciuniv.edu. Conference Web site: <http://ewca.sabanciuniv.edu/ewca2006>.
October 25-29, 2006: Midwest Writing Centers Association, in St. Louis, MO
 Contact: Susan Mueller at smueller@stlcop.edu or Dawn Fels at dfels@earthlink.net. Conference Web site: <http://www.ku.edu/~mwca/>.
February 8-10, 2007: Southeastern Writing Center Association, in Nashville, TN
 Contact: E-mail: SWCA@Comcast.net. Conference Web site: <www.mtsu.edu/~uwcenter/swca2007>.
April 12-14, 2007: South Central and International Writing Centers Associations, in Houston, TX
 Contact: Dagmar Corrigan at corrigand@uhd.edu; Conference Web site: <http://ahss.ualr.edu/iwca>

WLN Call for Proposals

Next April, the *Writing Lab Newsletter* celebrates its 30th anniversary. In honor of this occasion, a special edition of the newsletter will be published. The focus of this edition will be on reflection—how *WLN* has helped tutors and directors improve their work through writing, reading, and sharing experiences.

To that end, this anniversary edition will consist of essays in which contributors describe their favorite *WLN* article and explain how that article contributed to their professional growth and understanding of the work we do. Each reflection will also be accompanied by the original article. Possible areas of focus include, but are not limited to theoretical issues, tutoring strategies, and assessment.

Please send your reflections to me, Kathy Gillis, Guest Editor, at kathleen.gillis@ttu.edu.

Essay length: 1500 words.
Deadline for submissions: February 1, 2007.

THE WRITING LAB
NEWSLETTER

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Address Service Requested