

THE WRITING LAB

N E W S L E T T E R

Volume 29, Number 3

Promoting the exchange of voices and ideas in one-to-one teaching of writing

November, 2004

...FROM THE EDITOR...

This month's *Writing Lab Newsletter* has articles focusing on administrative concerns as Tom Truesdell examines the question of how tutors react to the director's presence (or lack of it) in the center, and Shareen Grogan and Sylvia Whitman review the scheduling software package, TutorTrac. For tutors, Brian Yothers offers insights on tutoring students who bring in literary analyses papers, and Leslie Shope ponders the question of how much the tutor should influence choices writers make. In addition, there are numerous job announcements, conference announcements and calls for papers, and a call for manuscripts.

In forthcoming issues there will be progress reports on an important new project to collect handouts and other materials on <writingcenters.org>, the International Writing Centers Association Web site. The planned outcome is to have a central repository where writing centers can share materials. Bill Macauley (MACAULWJ@muc.edu) is chairing this project.

And for our American readers, a slightly early wish for a Happy Thanksgiving.

• Muriel Harris, editor

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Don't forget us: The impact of director presence on tutors

In his book, *Lives on the Boundary: A Moving Account of the Struggles and Achievements of America's Educationally Underprepared*, Mike Rose claims that writing centers and other similar service entities are marginalized within the academy because they don't produce research but, rather, provide a service: "The work the center does is not considered a contribution to a discipline; in fact, much of what tutors do is considered 'remedial,' work that isn't even part of a disciplinary pursuit but preliminary to it" (198). Many members of the writing center community have attributed this misperception to the faculty status, or lack thereof, of writing center directors. To gain more respectability and power within both individual institutions and academia as a whole, then, the writing center community has pushed for an increase in faculty directorships. So far, the efforts of the writing center community appear to be working. Of the 193 writing center directors who responded to a 2000-2001 survey conducted by The Writing Centers Research Project, 66

percent were faculty members, while 33 percent were non-faculty or professional staff.

Many members of the writing center community see these statistics as a good thing, and rightly so—in the current administrative structure of the

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Manuscripts: Recommended length for articles is approximately 2500-3000 words, 1500 words for reviews and Tutors' Column essays. If possible, please send as attached files in an e-mail to wln@purdue.edu. Otherwise, send hard copy and a computer disk or CD-ROM, and 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 an October issue).

academy, faculty directors are the best, and often only, way to improve a center's institutional status and clout. What has been forgotten in this movement, however, is the effect of director status on tutors. While each institutional situation is unique, the benefits many faculty directors gain with institutional status can often be offset by the duties professorships entail (e.g. teaching loads, publication and research expectations, committee meetings, advising roles, etc.). Because of these pressures, many faculty directors struggle to devote adequate time and energy to the writing center. Again, while this is certainly not the case for every center and institution, having a faculty director can often mean having a director who isn't as present in the center as she or he would like to be, and the consequences of this for both tutor and director need to be considered.

For instance, in her recent book, *Noise from the Writing Center*, Elizabeth Boquet argues that writing centers should embrace the "noise" that is often seen as chaotic or disruptive. Bouquet's argument has generated much buzz, and met some resistance, in the writing center community because it challenges the assumption that centers should be quiet, structured, and controlled places. Still, Bouquet's biggest challenge in getting directors to embrace and productively channel noise is not convincing them to do so; instead, it is enabling them to do so. Consider a faculty director's reaction to Bouquet's argument:

The fact is, though, there's a limit to how much noise we'll be able to productively channel, and for a reason Boquet probably doesn't anticipate. I'm simply too far from the noise. I am a writing center director and assistant professor of English. The writing center is in the basement (of course). My office is one floor up. Coincidentally, I'm directly above the center, but unless we drill a hole through the floor, it's much too far away. I don't hear

about the new tutor having problems with his first session until four days later, and then my source is third-hand. I'm never there when the student in crisis demands to have her paper fixed *now*, or when a faculty member comes by upset with a student paper that still lacks a thesis. I call and drop by as often as possible, but that possibility diminishes as the quarter proceeds, and besides, it's on-site physical presence that's needed. I wish I could hear the noise, any noise. (Bokser)

Intrigued by both this testimony and my experience tutoring in centers with a faculty and non-faculty director, I decided to further explore the effects of director status on *tutors*, specifically in relation to director presence, or absence, in a center. While the unique administrative situation of each center and institution prevents any definitive, conclusive answer to this question, both individual directors and the writing center community as a whole need to foster a more tutor-centered discussion on the issue. To help do so, I surveyed 30 tutors and three directors (one faculty and two non-faculty) of centers at three different institutions. The responses I received demonstrate how director status affects, both positively and negatively, writing center personnel by influencing the amount of time a director spends in the center.

Responses

Nearly three-fourths of the tutors I surveyed expressed a desire to have directors maintain a substantial presence in the writing center. Many of these tutors felt that director presence significantly enhanced tutor morale because the director is able to counsel and encourage tutors. For example, one student said that her director's "pats on the shoulder, questions about how our days are going, and encouragement creates more community among the tutors . . . Just seeing her smiling face and hearing how much she appreciates us just feels good." Moreover, several tutors mentioned

that director absence hinders morale. According to these tutors, there is no neutrality—the director either enhances moral with her presence or hinders it with her absence. Tutors, wrongly or not, can interpret director absence as a sign of apathy and disinterest: “When [the director] is never there, I get a sense of apathy and disinterest from her. Though I doubt she actually feels this way, I still get that sense from her, and I feel those same feelings can be attributed to the tutors because of it.”

In addition to providing encouragement, many tutors stated that a present director enhances morale by serving as a tutoring resource. These tutors feel more confident about tutoring because they know the director is nearby and willing to help with a difficult situation. One tutor said his director is always available if someone “gets stuck and does not know the answer to a question during a tutoring session. . . . We as tutors are more confident because of her presence, and in turn, the students are more comfortable with the tutors.” Several directors echoed this opinion, stating that being in the center lets them be better mentors than in the classroom or training sessions where scenarios are staged. For them, the writing center possesses an immediacy that is absent in the classroom.

Interestingly, some tutors mentioned that having a director in the center was beneficial because it helps create a more professional working environment. By keeping tutors more accountable, a director can enhance morale by preventing, or at least reducing, the frustration and tension that occurs when tutors feel certain peers aren’t “pulling their own weight.” One director claimed that tutors often “feel burdened by my absence, mostly for interpersonal reasons, such as when a fellow student does not show up for their shift. . . . They hate reporting or tattling on someone else.” Most tutors agreed with this observation, claiming that although they work in a peer

center, a director is more effective in maintaining accountability and keeping tutors on task.

Of course, not every tutor wants a boss keeping them on task—while not in the majority, one quarter of the tutors I surveyed expressed reservations about director presence in the center because they feel intimidated by having someone they considered an authority figure present. One tutor said that if her director was present more often, she would feel more pressured and therefore tutor less effectively. Along these lines, some tutors feel that director presence threatens the autonomy and “peeriness” of a center because it makes tutors over-reliant on an authority figure and less reliant on themselves or other peers, which calls for the replacement of “the hierarchical model of teachers and students with a collaborative model of co-learners engaged in the shared activity of intellectual work” (Trimbur 23). If a tutor is continually referring to the director instead of a tutee or another tutor, however, this shared activity of co-learners is interrupted by an authority figure. As one tutor said, “Not having a director in the center is a good thing because it allows the students to run it themselves. And problems, issues, or obstacles have to be dealt with by the students, without the director knowing, for the time being at least.”

Recommendations

In my survey, I also asked for recommendations about what directors could do to alleviate some of the aforementioned problems caused by director absence. Recognizing the time demands that faculty status places on directors, almost half of the tutors suggested that directors schedule both individual and group conferences with tutors to establish closer, mentor-like relationships and improve morale. One tutor stated that conferences would build community by modeling, and thus encouraging, conversation in the center. Even those tutors who opposed director presence expressed an interest in

conferencing, believing it would enable communication without threatening the autonomy of the center.

In addition to conferencing, tutors suggested that the director have an office in, or at least near, the center because it would help directors keep a pulse on the center and be more available, regardless of their institutional activities. Indeed, all the directors I interviewed agreed that directors should have their office in or near the center because it enables and invites communication. Still, two of the directors insisted that an office should be near, but not necessarily in, the center. They felt that this enables directors to maintain enough of a presence to let the tutors know that they care without significantly impeding on the autonomy or peeriness of the center.

Conclusion

Conferencing and maintaining a close (but not too close) office location seem to be effective, feasible means to achieve a balanced presence that enables directors to hear and productively channel noise without having their imposing authority drown it out. One student, for instance, said that while she enjoys the autonomy of not having the director continually around, she would also like the director to be present more often: “The atmosphere changes when the director enters the center. People don’t know how to behave when she is around. She is viewed as the authority that occasionally makes her presence known. I feel that it would be beneficial for her to spend more time in the center.” I believe this tutor’s desire for balanced director presence summarizes the findings of my research. While the responses I received varied, most tutors and directors expressed a desire for directors to maintain a consistent but not overbearing presence in the center.

Of course, my findings by no means provide a conclusive answer as to whether director status and/or presence

is good or bad for tutors—determining a definitive answer is impossible because each center and institution is uniquely situated. That said, this inquiry shows that faculty status can affect tutors, for better or worse, by influencing the amount of time directors can devote to writing center activities. Granted, faculty status does give writing centers more institutional status, which indirectly benefits tutors (e.g. improved facilities, equipment, wages, etc.). But the possible trade-off is that a director might have an office that is located in another building or might have to spend afternoons grading papers, writing article submissions, or attending committee meetings instead of conferencing with tutors. If the issue of faculty status is examined from an institutional status perspective, this trade-off is inconsequential. If the issue is examined from a tutor perspective, however, the trade-off is much more significant. While institutional status is essential to a writing center's effectiveness, it should not be an "achieve-at-all-costs" goal. This is not to say that directors (both faculty and non-faculty) must always strive to be present as often as possible—indeed, the aforementioned issues of autonomy

seem to support director absence—but they must at least consider how their absence can affect tutors. They cannot forget how hard tutoring can be and how important it is to encourage tutors and keep morale high.

Consider one tutor's comment about the importance of her director's presence and encouragement: "She's extremely encouraging every time I go in there. If I didn't see her and wasn't reminded of my purpose as a writing center tutor, I can honestly say I would get a lot more discouraged and would probably enjoy it a lot less." As writing center professionals, we might not be able to be around and provide this encouragement as much as we like, or we might determine that being around to provide this encouragement is not necessarily a good thing for a peer center. However, at the very least, we must ask for and seriously consider the perspectives of tutors, and we must seriously consider how our decisions, whether voluntary or not, will affect them. And we must let tutors know that we have seriously considered their perspectives and explain to them why we are or are not consistently present in the center. In other words, there

should never be a lack of communication that causes tutors to assume the worst.

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European Writing Centers Association

Call for Proposals
Halkidiki, Greece
June 10-12, 2005
"Local Practice/Global Vision"
Keynote speaker: Gerd Brauer

Proposals are invited from anyone involved or interested in writing center theory, practice, research, and/or development: including writing center administrators, professional tutors, peer tutors, researchers, curriculum developers, and educators of all disciplines involved in writing-across-the-curriculum programs. Conference Language: English. Presentations: 60 minutes (15 minutes for questions—inclusive); Workshops: 90 minutes—interactive; Panels/Roundtables: 75 minutes (15 minutes for questions— inclusive).

Deadline for Submission of Abstracts: January 31, 2005. Deadline for Conference Registration [presenters & non-presenters]: Feb. 25, 2005. Conference Chair: Anna Challenger, e-mail: annachallenger@hotmail.com; Conference Web site: <<http://ewca.sabanciuniv.edu/ewca2005/>>.

Helping students write literary analyses: Some challenges and opportunities for writing center consultants specializing in literature

As a graduate student in literature and a tutor in the Writing Lab at Purdue University, I found that some of the most difficult tutorials I faced were those that required me to tutor undergraduates taking literature courses. A tutorial dealing with a literary analysis can be, paradoxically, an exceedingly stressful session for graduate students who are immersed in the study of literature, precisely because we have so much to say about the subject matter. As writing consultants, we are trained to help students do their own work without being unduly directive; as students and teachers of literature, we strongly desire to help the students with whom we consult be more careful and thoughtful readers.

I have outlined some of the scenarios that a literature student tutoring a student on a literary paper might face. I suspect that these scenarios are readily transferable to other disciplines and thus can stand in for the general difficulty that writing center consultants might face when consulting with students who are dealing with subject matter about which the consultants already possess some expertise.

1. Jennifer comes into the writing lab distraught because she has received an essay about a short story back from a professor known for her rigorous grading standards; the paper is covered with annotations and has received a C-. Jennifer reveals that she is an English major who is taking her first literature class within the major and is used to receiving A's on her essays. She is startled that the professor has stated that her essay consists of little more than clichés and unsupported generalizations. "This is how I always write!"

she exclaims with an air of frustration. "And anyway, what does she mean when she says that that I haven't read the story closely enough?" she asks. As you read over her essay, you realize that she has combined plot summary and free association rather than focusing on the story itself.

2. Kevin has come in because he would like to have "another set of eyes" go over his essay on Michel Foucault's essay "Panopticism," which has been assigned to him in a course in literary theory. Halfway through Kevin's essay, you realize that he has not understood the material he is discussing at all; rather, he is stringing together quotations from the text and using terminology from the text with little regard for what the terms mean.

3. Janice is writing a "close reading" essay on an Emily Dickinson poem, and she confesses that she doesn't "get" the poem. "Poetry isn't something that I'm good at," she says apologetically.

The questions raised by these examples address issues related to personal expertise and its role in the writing center. When we consult with students who are writing papers in areas that are very familiar to us, perhaps even for courses we ourselves have taught, where is the line between acting as an "informant" about the discipline in order to help the student understand his/her writing task and arrogating to ourselves the role of teacher within the discipline (a role that, in another context, we can justifiably claim)? How do we negotiate this crucial boundary?

I will offer some suggestions about how to handle such tutorials using the three scenarios I have provided:

In Scenario 1, Jennifer is facing several problems common to students in introductory literature classes. First, she may not understand the assignment. The professor's commentary seems to indicate that Jennifer is not really engaging the text with which she is dealing at all. Instead she is trying to use the text as a springboard for reflections about her experiences, the human condition, or some recent event. A complicating factor here is that in introductory composition courses and first-year humanities or social science seminars a short story or poem might be used in exactly this way. This provides the opportunity for the tutor to act as an informant about the discipline by explaining that essays for a literature class demand a tighter focus on the text itself than for essays she may have been assigned in the past. Therefore, by doing with a literary work precisely what she has been asked to do in a previous class, she is actually failing to accomplish her task in this class. The role of the tutor in this case is to act as an informant by explaining to her the difference between disciplinary expectations in literature courses and those in other courses that also make use of literary texts. In this situation the authority a graduate student in literature derives from his or her position can be helpful.

One approach to working with Jennifer would be to start by asking her why she chose to write about this story in the first place. Often, students will only be able to articulate the answer to this question vaguely at first (unless

the answer is “Because my professor said I have to!”). Nonetheless, the process of articulating what they find to be significant about a particular story is often the first step toward developing a coherent thesis. Once Jennifer has begun to explain her response to the text, the next step would be to ask what elements in the text evoke these responses. This step is important because it actually relates the existential concerns that make the text interesting to her to the process of analyzing and critiquing the text. Many students see literary analysis as a rather boring game, the rules of which they are never quite able to master. When they see that the process of looking at the ways in which the text’s components fit together can be a way of explaining the response they have to the text, the process of writing a literary analysis becomes much more interesting. By getting Jennifer to talk through her own response to the text and by showing her how her response can interact with disciplinary expectations, a writing lab consultant can help Jennifer to write more confidently and meaningfully about literary texts.

In Kevin’s case, the role of the tutor becomes even trickier. One response, of course, is to say that his misinterpretations of the text are none of a tutor’s business. Our role, according to this line of thought, is simply to help him communicate his ideas clearly and organize them effectively, without reference to whether the ideas are sound. This argument, I would contend, reveals an insufficient appreciation of the degree to which the quality of writing must be determined by the quality of thought. A paper that is ostensibly about another text that fails to make meaningful points about that text is a failure however it is organized, and I would suggest that our task as writing consultants in such a tutorial is to help the student understand that the quality of reading comprehension, logic, and critical thinking exhibited by their writing is an integral part of what it means to be a good writer.

How then, do we approach a case like Kevin’s without becoming surrogate authors of his paper? Clearly, one thing that we cannot do is offer an “authorized” interpretation of the text to which he must conform. Such an approach is completely alien to our training as writing consultants and is ultimately counterproductive. On the other hand, there is a basic level of grammatical competency that a reader must have in order to form a meaningful opinion about any text. If the reader simply fails to grasp how an essay (or story, poem, play, or novel) fits together, then the reader simply has not read the work in any meaningful sense.

In Kevin’s case, a consultant might start by reading several important passages of the essay with Kevin and asking him to summarize them in his own words. He would likely be resistant to this process at first. At this point, a strategic assertion of authority as someone who has studied this material before might be useful. (Surely one of the paradoxes of writing lab instruction is that a consultant must at times establish a persona of authority in order to persuade the student to embrace a non-directive approach!) As Kevin answers the consultant’s questions, he likely will begin to see for himself that there are more focused and interesting directions in which he can take his essay.

Janice’s case is also fraught with pitfalls. Again, proposing an interpretation of Dickinson’s poem for Janice to plug into her paper, while it is manifestly what Janice would like, is not an option. I have found that the most successful approach to a tutorial such as this is to walk the student through the process of reading the poem. I try to encourage the student to read through the poem in grammatical units, simply trying to make sense of the most literal meaning of what is on the page. Often I find that there are words in the poem with which the student is unfamiliar. I find that in this instance, the process of modeling good academic practices (walking over to the bookshelf, picking

up the dictionary, looking up the word with the student, brainstorming about which meanings might apply) is the best way to help the student. As with the other scenarios, asking questions that clarify what the significance of the text is for the student, encouraging the student to see a relationship between textual elements and the reader’s response to the text, and requesting that the student summarize or paraphrase portions of the text orally can be exceedingly helpful. If Janice can be helped to see that there are concrete steps that she can take in order to make sense of a poem, the result will be greater success, not only on this essay, but in any course that she takes that involves textual analysis.

One element that all of these scenarios have in common is the importance of having the text available to the student and the consultant while the consultation is going on. On a structural level, writing labs can make these kinds of encounters more likely by recommending during lab tours and other informational sessions that students bring texts and resources with them to the writing lab for their consultations. The best writing lab tutorials on literary subjects almost always occur when student and consultant are able to pore over the text together. This act of being able to approach the text together and to interrogate the text jointly provides an opportunity for learning that is difficult to reproduce inside the literature classroom, and can have the effect of significantly improving a student’s inclination and ability in close reading of texts.

Ultimately, the lesson that I would suggest that we take from these scenarios is that reading, like writing, is a skill that can be developed using the non-directive pedagogical skills that we who work in writing labs strive to develop. Furthermore, because of the intimate link between reading and writing in the process of knowledge creation, it is a mistake for us to refrain from seeking to address issues related

to the reading and interpretation of texts out of a fear of being too directive. If those of us who are students and teachers of literature can achieve the balance necessary to offer the same non-directive skills that we apply to writing tutorials to reading comprehension, our students will reap significant benefits.

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Notes

¹ Another possible scenario I don't deal with directly here is the tutorial in which a consultant is forced to reveal to a crestfallen student that he or she has not, in fact, read the text that the student is considering. In many ways this type of scenario simply takes us back to the standard writing lab con-

sultation in which the student must help to provide the information necessary for the consultant to understand the student's work. In other ways, this tutorial can closely resemble the three discussed in this essay, in that as a student of literature, the consultant is providing information as a disciplinary insider, even when direct knowledge of the text at hand is lacking.

² One objection to this approach to dealing with literary analyses is that there is a limited amount of time available in a writing lab tutorial. At Purdue, we typically have a 30-minute time limit for our tutorials that must be observed to some degree in order to make sure that all the students who are signed up get their turn. I have found three effective ways of dealing with the time constraints when they apply to tutorials such as these. The first is to

stress to the student the fact that our tutorials are necessarily incomplete—it makes much more sense for a student to try to apply the lessons of one tutorial and then return for a second, preferably with the same consultant, than to seek to accomplish everything in one session. The second is to make a student aware of the resources that he or she already has. For example, if there is a section on writing about literature in the back of the assigned textbook, the student can make use of this resource in completing the assignment. The third strategy is to introduce the student to new resources, whether print resources physically present in the lab or electronic sources like the Purdue Online Writing Lab and other OWLs, which have online resources for students writing literary analyses. The strategies can extend the effectiveness of a tutorial far beyond its time limit.

Calendar for Writing Centers Associations

November 4-6, 2004: Midwest Writing Centers Association, in St. Cloud, MN

Contact: Frankie Condon, Department of English, 720 Fourth Avenue South, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498. Web site: <<http://www.ku.edu/~mwca/>>.

February 10-12, 2005. Southeastern Writing Center Association Conference, in Charleston, SC

Contact: Trixie Smith, Middle Tennessee State University, Department of English, P.O. Box 70, Murfreesboro, TN 37132. E-mail: tgsmith@mtsu.edu; Web site: <www.swca.us>.

March 3-5, 2005: South Central Writing Centers Association, in Baton Rouge, LA

Contact: Judy Caprio, B-18 Coates Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA: 70803. Phone: 225-578-4438, e-mail: jcaprio@lsu.edu.

March 4-5, 2005: Rocky Mountain Peer Tutoring Conference, in Orem, UT

Contact: Lisa Eastmond Bell, Utah Valley State College, MC-176, 800 West University Parkway, Orem, UT 84058-5999. Phone: 801-863-8099; e-mail: lisa.bell@uvsc.edu.

April 1-2, 2005: East Central Writing Centers Association, in Adrian, MI

Contact: April Mason-Irelan, Siena Heights University, 1247 East Siena Heights Drive, Adrian, Michigan 49221. Phone: 517-264-7638; e-mail: amason@sienahts.edu. Web site: <<http://www.sienahts.edu/~eng/ECWCA/ecwca.htm>>.

April 9, 2005: Mid-Atlantic Writing Center Association, in Frederick, MD

Contact: Felicia Monticelli, Frederick Community College, 7932 Opossumtown Pike, Frederick, MD 21702. Phone: 301-846-2619; e-mail: FMonticelli@frederick.edu. Conference Web site: <<http://www.english.udel.edu/wc/staff/mawca/index.html>>.

April 16-17, 2005: New England Writing Centers Association, in Brooklyn, NY

Contact: Patricia Stephens, English Department, Humanities Building, Fourth Floor, Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus, One University Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Phone: 718-488-1096; e-mail: patricia.stephens@liu.edu.

June 10-12, 2005: European Writing Centers Association, in Halkidiki, Greece.

Contact: Conference Web site: <<http://ewca.sabanciuniv.edu/ewca2005/>>.

October 19-23, 2005: International Writing Centers Association, in Minneapolis, MN.

Contact: Frankie Condon at fvcondon@stcloudstate.edu.

TUTORS' COLUMN

Passivity vs. responsibility

I had successfully finished my first peer tutoring session, and I was feeling quite proud of myself. There were no major problems, no difficult questions, no high emotional situations, and no conflict over global versus local concerns. As a result of this positive first session, I was feeling confident when another writer entered the room. I introduced myself to her, found an empty table, and started my second tutoring session.

“What can I help you with today?”

“I have this paper I am working on. It is a final draft. I only have an hour before it is due. I just want to edit the grammar.”

“Ok. I see on your form that you’ve been here before. So you probably know that we don’t edit papers here. However, I can look over the paper with you and discuss some concerns you may have with your grammar. Does that sound ok?”

I knew that the time frame was slim and agreed that local concerns should be the focus of the session. The student seemed nervous because English was not her first language. However, I reassured her that she had less grammatical errors than most English speakers I knew. Again, I was in high spirits. The session was almost over, and it was working out well.

It was at that moment that the problem arose. I looked at the writer and innocently asked, “Why did you place this address for a website in parentheses after this sentence?”

“Oh. I took the sentence directly off of that website. I want people to know where I got it from.”

“I see. Well, it is good that you documented the source. However, you need to use quotation marks around that sentence so that the reader knows the quote was copied directly.”

“Oh, ok. Like this?”

“Yes, that’s right. That just indicates to the reader that someone else wrote the sentence. I notice that is the only time you write something in parentheses. Did you use any other sources in your paper?”

“Yes, but I did not list those sources because I only paraphrased them.”

My face probably turned a little pale as I realized this student was unaware that she was plagiarizing. Everything I had learned in my tutor training filled my head at once. I was not exactly sure of my next move, and blurted out the first thing that came to mind.

“I see . . . well . . . even though you paraphrased the sentence you still need to use a citation here.” The look on her face indicated she was unfamiliar with the word. However, I was not going to give up. “What I mean is that you need to tell the reader where you got your information from. This paraphrased sentence needs the same documentation as the other sentence we just looked at.”

The student seemed uninterested in what I was saying. I had already com-

mented on her fine grammar, and I could tell she was looking to turn in her paper as quickly as possible. As I continued to explain the importance of documenting sources, she started to pack her things. She nodded and told me she understood what I was saying. I had the feeling she wasn’t even listening.

“I hope I’ve answered all of your questions. It isn’t my paper so the documentation is up to you. However, I would strongly recommend that you go back and note the sentences you paraphrased.”

“Ok, thanks. Bye.” And with that, she scribbled a few words on my evaluation sheet, and quickly exited the Writing Center.

My head was still spinning after the writer left the center. Although I could not say for certain, I was convinced that the student had no intention of fixing her citation problems before turning in the paper. This frustrated me as I began to question my role in the situation. Was I partly responsible for the student turning in a plagiarized paper? Was there something else that I could have done? Throughout the session, a voice inside of me wanted to yell out at the writer, “Are you crazy? You are plagiarizing this whole paper!” But there was another voice saying, “I am not in charge. This is not my paper. I cannot tell you what to do.”

A large part of me wanted to play the teacher in that situation. I wanted to tell the writer that what she was doing was wrong and that she could not turn

the paper in until she had corrected her mistakes. But I knew I could not do this. During that session, I came to the realization that tutoring is a balancing act between passively listening to the concerns of the student and actively working to improve a paper. A good peer tutor must be able to guide a writer through a session without becoming too dominant or condescending. At the same time, the peer tutor should have enough respect for the writer to not force ideas onto him or her. While these tasks sound easy on paper, actually finding a good balance during a session can be a challenge.

The role of the peer tutor has several components that can seem contradictory. A peer is someone's equal. Peers are usually our friends, or at the least, someone who can understand where we are coming from. Tutors are usually interpreted as people with a little more authority. A tutor is someone who has a level of experience that allows him or her to help other students. Some would even argue that a tutor is an informal teacher. How then, can we be a figure of authority while also being a person's equal? When does a peer tutor act more as a friend? When does a peer tutor act more as a teacher?

It is easy to fall into a situation where we, the peer tutors, become the know-it-alls. Although we are certainly not experts, we have more experience in writing than most of the students who come into the writing center. As a result, we must immediately be careful not to overstep our boundaries. We may run into things that we know are "wrong," but we can not say this directly. Not being able to point out every "problem" can certainly be an uncomfortable position. However, the session would be far more uncomfortable if we tried to dominate the session entirely. The writer could become totally submissive or quite defensive. In

either situation, the writer would leave the center feeling frustrated because he or she had been talked at for an entire session. This is just one reason why we should try everything in our power to avoid this sort of dominating attitude. We can ask questions and help the writer see certain errors, but in the end the final decisions are always in the hands of the writer.

Just as we need to avoid playing a dominant role in the session, we must also avoid being a totally passive participant. Writers come into the writing center looking for help. While the center does not promise perfect papers, it does promise that a paper will be improved after a visit to the writing center. This promise cannot be fulfilled if we all simply sit down and do nothing during a session. A peer tutor who refuses to take any action during a session is basically wasting a writer's time. Thus, we must at least take on a minor active role during a session. Simply listening to the concerns and questions of the writer is not enough. We must be able to offer advice and point out concerns that we notice. Again, the main responsibility of the session falls on the shoulders of the writer, but we must still play a role. We begin to see that neither totally passive nor totally active is the appropriate attitude for a session.

The balance between being a passive and an active peer tutor can be established by keeping one particular idea in our heads: we are only there to offer our assistance because the writer has asked for it. We are by no means an authority. But, because the writer has asked for help, we can try our best to offer advice. My tutoring situation can be a good example of this idea. My duty was to explain how and why citation is important in writing a paper. The writer had come to the Writing Center for help, and as the tutor, I

pointed out this issue because it stuck out in my mind. My responsibility in the session ended at the point. I had played a more passive role by listening to the writer's concerns and answering the questions she posed to me. I played a more active role by raising my own questions and explaining the issues surrounding plagiarism. What the writer chose to do with my comments was entirely out of my hands. I understand now that I should not feel guilty about her response to my comments. It was her decision not to take my advice. I was in no position to force my ideas on her. While I may personally feel frustrated that the writer did not take my recommendations seriously, I cannot blame myself if she turns in a plagiarized paper.

Peer tutoring can offer challenges that are not always obvious at first glance. We, the peer tutors, can only offer so much during a session. Keeping this in mind can help overcome the challenge of balancing between an authoritative and a passive presence in a session. We must come to terms with the fact that we cannot perfect every paper and that sometimes the writer's interests will conflict with our own. This does not mean, however, that we are not fulfilling our role as peer tutors. During a session, we should offer our opinion and politely ask questions that are helpful to the writer. But in the end, we are not (and never should be) responsible for the decisions that are made by the writer.

*Leslie Shope
Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA*

Assistant Director of The Writing Center University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The Writing Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb>) seeks an assistant director. This is a full-time, non-tenure track position in an innovative, busy center providing onsite and online service. The assistant director will collaborate with the director and graduate student consultants to design and deliver services. Minimum qualifications: Master's degree in English or a related field (Ph.D. preferred), 2-4 years of writing center experience and relevant teaching experience. Demonstrated administrative experience an advantage. Skill

with instructional technology, non-native language learning, or learning disabilities a plus. UNC-CH is an equal opportunity employer. Application review begins November 1st. Applications accepted until position filled. Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, and three references. Teaching portfolios, Web work, or other materials that demonstrate ability are welcomed.

Kimberly Town Abels, Ph.D, Director of the Writing Center, CB#5137 Phillips Annex, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, kabels@email.unc.edu.

Director of the Center for the Study of Writing Virginia Tech

For the position of Associate or Full Professor, the Department of English at Virginia Tech seeks a strong scholar with energy and vision to develop and direct a Center for the Study of Writing and contribute to our programs in composition and/or professional communication. The teaching load will be one course a semester, plus administrative duties to include strategic oversight of our current Writing Center. Required: Ph.D. in rhetoric, composition, or professional communication; active research agenda (specialization open); strong teaching credentials. Preferred: grant-writing experience; administrative experience.

The Department of English offers a B.A. and M.A. in English and a new M.F.A. in Creative Writing. We

are one of two units on campus selected by our Graduate School to develop proposals for Ph.D. programs: ours would be in rhetoric and writing studies, with an emphasis on civic engagement. Virginia Tech is a land-grant university and features strong programs in engineering, architecture, computer science (including HCI), bioinformatics, philosophy, the arts, and the humanities.

Candidates should send a statement of interest and a vita to Paul Heilker, Search Committee Chair, Department of English, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061. We will begin reviewing applications in early November 2004. Virginia Tech has a strong commitment to diversity and seeks applications from women, minorities, and people with disabilities. Individuals desiring accommodation in the application process should contact Dr. Heilker. Phone: 540-231-8444; Fax: 540-231-5692; TTY/PC: 800-828-1120.

Supervisor, Learning Resource (Language Arts) San Jose City College

Position No. 689. 40 hours per week; 8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. 12 months per year, a position as Supervisor, Learning Resource in the Language Arts Department located at San Jose City College. To ensure the smooth operation of one or more learning resource labs including the supervision and coordination of lab services and staff, ensuring effective communication with faculty, students and other individuals concerned with lab operations. Supervise, assign and review the work of staff responsible for the technical and operational aspects of one or more learning resource labs; oversee and participate in all work activities; and per-

form a variety of technical tasks relative to assigned area of responsibility. Direction is provided by an academic manager.

SALARY RANGE: \$51,100— \$62,383/Annually

Open until filled. First Review Date: October 22, 2004. For required district application and more details, visit: <http://hr.sjcccd.org/> or contact Human Resources, San Jose/Evergreen Community College District, 4750 San Felipe Road, San Jose, CA 95135-1599. Tel: (408) 223-6707. E-mail: sjcccdhr@sjcccd.org EOE

Assistant Coordinator, Undergraduate Professional Communications Program in ECE and Assistant Coordinator of the ECE Writing Center Georgia Institute of Technology

The School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology is seeking applications for the position of Lecturer and Assistant Coordinator of the Undergraduate Professional Communications Program. This is a full-time, twelve-month, non-tenure track position with appointment beginning in early May 2005. Salary is competitive and includes full benefits.

The Undergraduate Professional Communications Program (UPCP) is an in-house, discipline-specific technical communications program supported by the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering. Responsibilities include teaching the technical communications component in laboratory courses and supervising graduate assistants assigned as technical writing graders and writing tutors. Additional responsibilities include working with engineering faculty to teach writing and oral presentations aimed at engineering audiences; assisting with the coordination and maintenance of the ECE Writing Lab (supervise tutors, maintain computers, etc.); collaborating with ECE faculty to develop writing assignments in junior/senior-level lab courses; evaluating/grading engineering student writing; and working independently on projects geared at program development.

M.A. in technical writing, comp/rhet, or equivalent required. Demonstrated ability to teach written, visual, and oral technical communications. Writing Center, WAC, and/or WID experience preferred. Experience working with engineers and/or engineering students and discipline-specific discourse preferred. Familiarity with current instructional technology required. Prefer range of teaching experience from large lecture classes to one-on-one tutoring.

Interested applicants should prepare an application package that includes a cover letter outlining relevant experience, teaching methods, salary requirements, and availability; current curriculum vitae; three recommendation letters; and a writing sample/sample publication. Materials should be submitted to Christina Bourgeois, Coordinator, ECE Undergraduate Professional Communications Program, School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0250.

Review of applications will begin December 15, 2004 and will continue until position is filled. The Georgia Institute of Technology is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. Applications from women, minorities, and persons with disabilities are encouraged.

University of Arkansas Writing Center Celebrates a Birthday

We are having a birthday! The Writing Center at the University of Arkansas will be 20 years old on November 12. Since that time, we have moved from a small office to two classrooms, an office, and a satellite location. We have added a computer lab and expanded our staff from three faculty and four tutors, to two faculty, 10-15 graduate tutors, an online tutor, and 10-12 workstudy support staff. Visit our webpage at <http://www3.uark.edu/qwct/index.asp> to join in the celebration.

*Carole Lane
clane@uark.edu*

Curse or Godsend?: A dramatized dialogue via e-mail about the TutorTrac scheduling program

The Characters: Shareen Grogan, Director of the Writing Centers, National University in San Diego, CA; Sylvia Whitman, Coordinator of the Writing Center, Rollins College in Winter Park, FL; and (off-stage) Kelly Corder, founder of Redrock Software and TutorTrac programmer

Dear Sylvia,

When I first bought TutorTrac in October 2002, I was desperate for an online scheduler to make appointment setting easier for our students. At our geographically disperse university (15 locations in San Diego County and 14 in other California cities), we have no receptionist for the writing centers at the various locations. Most of our writing tutors offer only evening hours: a student may call a writing center hoping to make an appointment for 5:00, but won't receive a callback until a tutor arrives to work at 4:30. TutorTrac seemed like the answer to our scheduling needs.

TutorTrac also seemed like the solution to keeping an accurate count of the students we serve. I was growing weary of hounding tutors to send me their reports, to give me their numbers. With 32 tutors, just getting them to turn in their data was a time-consuming task. I hoped that TutorTrac would solve all my problems, and would free up time spent on paperwork.

I bought the program for \$3,323 and let it sit for a while. I reconsidered using TT, thinking a custom-made program might be a better solution. When I inquired about a refund, that's when I received the hard sell—how good the program was, how easy it is to learn, how good its data compilation, how willing the company was to customize the product to meet our needs—I should give it a try. Kelly, the founder of Redrock Software and creator of TT, came to see me and came back to train a few of the tutors. (He could train only a few, since most live from 2 to 16 hours away.) The training was more of a sales pitch overview, but we

bought the necessary hardware and set it up. I trained the tutors—some in a workshop, the rest one at a time over the phone, and launched the program statewide.

The tutors were resistant to using the program because it took more time than our old paper reports. I reassured them all that it would be faster than our old paper methods once they got used to it—they just needed to adjust to a new system. I worked hard to convince them. Now it is I who am no longer convinced. Tutors had a hard time getting used to the program because the user manual is poorly written, incomplete, and basically user-unfriendly. It wasn't until I wrote instructions myself that tutors started to use the program with any regularity. They stopped keeping paper records of their interactions with students because they thought TT would suffice (I did, too!), but they didn't do a good job of entering all sessions into the system. We've lost tons of data, the tutors have become cavalier about keeping records, and I have more work than ever.

It's been a disaster. —Shareen

Dear Shareen,

Could it be your expectations were too high?

In 1997, our longtime writing center came under the umbrella of a comprehensive student resource center (TJ's)—and then started to share the front desk with a new content tutoring program. These two side-by-side programs employ 50-60+ students: peer tutors (econ, psych, bio, etc.) and peer consultants (writing) from day, evening, and graduate programs.

We're open 7 days a week, over more than 65 hours. The phone was always ringing, our appointment binder was a tangled mess of crossouts and arrows, and our office assistant recorded data using forms my tutor colleague and I (both self-taught) had jerryrigged for our side-by-side Access databases. We could hardly keep up. As our small liberal arts college prepared for a "re-affirmation of accreditation" by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), we needed reliable stats for assessing both the quantity and quality of what we do.

We beat you to TutorTrac: we bought it in spring 2001 and implemented it in the fall, going cold turkey to the Web from a binder at the front desk. It was chaos, but we anticipated that. In addition to the program (about \$2,500), we had to buy from our IT department a dedicated server, another \$2,500 for a regular but fairly fast PC. (Two years and countless crashes later, we installed more memory and Windows 2000, wondering why no one had steered us that way earlier.) From the start, we budgeted for the 22-carat gold TT service contract for several years.

Since TutorTrac was so new, there wasn't a user's manual, but hey, we're used to struggling. Our campus IT department believes in self-educating consumers, i.e. survival of the fittest. At least Kelly Corder wasn't a computer Darwinist. Three of us—my tutor coordinator colleague, our office assistant, and I—called and e-mailed questions all the time, several times a day sometimes. Kelly responded quickly, and as we bumbled along, he joked with us and held our hands long distance. Once when Kelly traveled to

Orlando on a family vacation, he stopped by our office.

TutorTrac has had plenty of bugs, which we always pointed out to Kelly. He fixed them and also incorporated many of our suggestions about what we wanted and needed. TJ's and TutorTrac sort of grew up together, and we feel a certain pride in some of TutorTrac's handiest features.

Within a semester, we started to get scheduling down, and then we focused on data collection. Each semester we do a little better than the last. More on that later. But when we compare our systems now with how they might have been, we cannot imagine life without TutorTrac. —Sylvia

Dear Sylvia,

I had just the opposite experience with Redrock Software. My requests for help from TT's tech support often went unanswered—for weeks. Kelly sells as well as services the product, and was for the greater part of our support contract year the sole tech-support person: he travels extensively to conferences, so he is not available to offer tech support. I asked if there was an administrator's manual that addressed questions such as the ones I had. I was told that I should visit the Web page to get answers to my questions, that I couldn't expect Kelly to answer all my questions because he travels extensively to conferences. I was annoyed to have to wait a week to get a return phone call that directed me to a Web page, and felt that my service contract should not go on hold because Kelly was overextended. Besides, the Web page, like the manual, is sketchy and does not address administrator-level needs. My last conversation with the company's tech support is typical of that of a frustrated user and a contemptuous computer programmer. If I didn't know how to use the program properly, it must be my fault.

I bumped into Kelly once at a conference. He suggested that we meet there

to discuss my questions about TutorTrac: I had not allotted time or mental space to dealing with technical matters, so I did not meet with him. I didn't think I should be limited to meeting with him only when it was convenient for him.

The cumbersome way one has to move within the program does not help. The simplest things are the most annoying. You must click on specific keys to move from one screen to another: hitting the <enter> key, a mechanism so common in most modern software, does not work in this program, nor does the cursor go to a default key when you change screens. When working in reports, the back key doesn't work consistently, so I have to retype the details of my query repeatedly. To add specialties for tutors, there is no simple way to cut and paste a long list, rather each course must be added individually.

Once tutors did start using the program regularly, the questions came flooding in: if a student cancels an appointment, why doesn't their appointment time open up in the schedule? How do I set an appointment for a student with another tutor? What is the easiest way to record a walk-in session?

As the administrator of the program, I did not always have an answer ready for the people I had required to use the program. —Shareen

Dear Shareen,

This year we've noticed a striking fall-off in Redrock's responsiveness to questions, which we attribute to growing pains at the company. Calls and e-mails go unanswered. We're learning to bundle our questions, but even then we get partial answers. (I once sent Kelly a memo with questions grouped into seven continents.) Trouble is, during the lag, we get busy and forget where we are in the conversation. Ah, for the good old days. . . .

You're right about the counter-intuitive mechanisms. When I'm creating an appointment a week ahead and hit <return>, TT often takes me back to today. Since we have two centers, one has to be the default, so <return> often takes me back to TUTORS instead of WRITING CENTER. Still, we find our students and staffers adjust much better than we do. They love being able to make/break/check appointments 24/7 from any computer with Internet access.

Some of your problems puzzle me: when our clients cancel (sometimes five minutes after an appointment was supposed to have started), the space opens up instantly. We have enforced (emphasis on *force*) a standard username and password system that makes it easy for our tutors/consultants and student receptionists to help clients make appointments. You know those checkboxes on the tutor profile page—*can edit schedule, can edit appointment, can give availability, can access students?* Cautious about granting too much scheduling power to student staffers, we've clicked only *can edit appointment*; the consultant/tutor can then create an appointment slot after the fact and put in the walk-in client's name.

Two of the best things we ever did: 1) limit tutor/consultant powers in TT so we can trace sources of error and 2) standardize the username and password. Even with our edict, you wouldn't believe how many people change passwords and then forget that they've set themselves up as StudMuffin007. —Sylvia

Dear Sylvia,

You're right about forgetting where you are in the conversation with such long waits for answers.

Students resist using TutorTrac, but do fine once they get their feet wet. Mostly, our students just avoid setting appointments and prefer to take their chances as walk-ins. Tutors don't trust

it, and they find there are all kinds of ways they interact with students who don't fit neatly into the parameters of the program. For example, when tutors give presentations to classes, how do they schedule that so that class presentations appear in the reports? What about the five-minute session to get a handout on APA? What about reviewing a writing assignment with a faculty member?

I find the program cumbersome, inelegant, and inefficient. It does allow students to schedule appointments online and tutors to track their appointments, but we have to weed through a lot of unnecessary steps to get to what we need. Our institution has had to adapt to the program. —Shareen

Dear Shareen,

Adapt is the word. Kelly adapted TT for us, and we've had to adapt to it.

From the start we didn't trust clients to enter reliable data. During every session, consultants/tutors make notes on a triplicate form—copy for the student, the prof, and our file—so we tacked on a two-minute task of logging visit information on TutorTrac. Voila: instant database.

TT transformed our office assistant's job. No longer receptionist and data typist, Linda is now the TT czarina. With us coordinators, she troubleshoots how to handle those out-of-parameter situations, and she reconciles the data on our session forms with the info in TT to make sure we report what really happened on a given day. Inevitably, a consultant has forgotten to log out a client . . . or mixed up am and pm . . . or substituted for a colleague who no-showed.

Linda then runs the missed appointment report and with a click sends our canned reprimand/reminder to clients who stood us up. We also have almost around-the-clock work-study students at the front desk who, among other chores, answer clients' TT questions

and make sure that our rare drop-in clients get into the system.

TutorTrac didn't save us any labor, but it did expand our capabilities—and our ambitions. We've always had books and videos around, for instance, but now we've numbered them so clients can check them out library-style.

Here are some of the things we asked Kelly for and got:

- a three-hour block (clients cannot make an appointment less than three hours in advance), which gives our consultants/tutors a sense of control over their schedules and helps us in our fight against last-minute-itis and instant-gratification culture
- custom questions on the visit entry screen, so among things we track required visits and the deadlines of papers we see (today—within the next two hours, later today, tomorrow, within a week, etc.)
- scheduling shortcuts, such as the feature that allows us to block spring break without having to change every single staffer's availability each day for a week
- ability to import demographic information from campus Banner software (our student clients never bothered to update their profiles, screwing up our data)
- a slew of instant reports.

And TT can probably do a whole lot of stuff that we're not exploiting. We don't use it for payroll yet. TT e-mails appointment reminders to consultants and clients, but it took us almost two years to get that going; TT and our campus server weren't talking because of a firewall problem. Kelly was willing to confer, but . . . (I could make another comment about our IT department but won't.) With these e-mails, we have new ammunition to fight our battle against no-shows.

Maybe you have some happy discoveries ahead?—Sylvia

Dear Sylvia,

Kelly did some adapting of the program for us, too, but then it all seemed to stop when he got busy. I guess I was not prepared to have to spend so much of my time managing the software, adjusting the settings, answering questions, cleaning the data, writing intelligible instructions for using the program. I don't have an office assistant to handle questions from students and tutors. I've just renewed my service contract—I felt I had to. Now that we've launched this thing statewide, I can't just pull it. I upgraded our service contract to the platinum level, hoping to see significant improvement in service, but actually I've lowered my expectations considerably of the product and of the company. Though well-intentioned and on the right track, I think the company is unable to fulfill all its promises.—Shareen

Dear Shareen,

At times my tutoring colleague and I miss our jerrybuilt Access queries because we could control how we look for info. TT will give us course counts, for instance, but can't think by department prefix. We've asked Kelly to look into that—among 25 other things.

But do you think another program would do any better? I don't know about Accutrack, TT's main competitor: at the time of our purchase, Accutrack didn't have the "optional web module" it now does. Given the chill emanating from our IT department, we knew we couldn't get a custom program there. And a custom program may serve your needs at the moment, but what about six years down the line? At least TutorTrac is evolving.—Sylvia

Dear Sylvia,

We're hoping for a better year—I'll let you know how it goes!—Shareen

Editor's note: Margaret Mika's review of WCOOnline, another software package for writing centers, will appear in the January issue of WLN.

Mid-Atlantic Writing Center Association

Call for Proposals
April 9, 2005
Frederick, MD
*"Space, Place, Vision: Celebrating Writing
Center Journeys"*

Presentation Formats: Presentations (20 minutes, sessions should be interactive); Workshops (60 minutes); Roundtable or panel discussions (60 minutes); Poster presentations (easels and tables provided).

Please submit a one-page abstract with a cover sheet that indicates the type of presentation, names and addresses (including email) of presenters, and a two-to-three sentence informative description by February 7th. Conference chair: Felicia Monticelli, Frederick Community College, 7932 Opossumtown Pike, Frederick, MD 21702. Phone: 301-846-2619; e-mail: FMonticelli@frederick.edu. Conference Web site: <http://www.english.udel.edu/wc/staff/mawca/index.html>.

Council of Writing Program Administrators

Call for Proposals
Workshop, Institute, and Conference
July 3-10, 2005
Anchorage, Alaska
"Writing as Writing Program Administrators"

Proposals addressing the conference theme or other issues of interest to WPAs are invited for concurrent sessions, including (1) full panels involving several speakers addressing related topics, (2) individual presentations to be grouped together by the program committee, and (3) roundtables on a single topic. Proposals for multimedia presentations, poster presentations, or other presentation formats are encouraged.

Review of proposals began October 15, 2004 and will continue until the program is complete. Successful proposals will be acknowledged at the earliest possible date. Proposals may be submitted at <http://moose.uaa.alaska.edu/wpa2005/>.

Kellogg Institute for Developmental Educators

The Kellogg Institute for the Training and Certification of Developmental Educators will again offer an intensive four-week summer residency program from June 25-July 22, on the campus of Appalachian State University in North Carolina. The Institute will train faculty, counselors, and administrators from developmental and learning assistance programs in current techniques for promoting learning improvement. The program consists of a summer session followed by fall term practicum project on the home campus of each participant. The 2005 program will focus on assessment and placement of developmental students; use of learning styles, process of designing and implementing developmental evaluation activities, classroom assessment, and other topics.

Institute fees are \$930, plus \$895 for room and board. A graduate credit fee for the three-hour practicum will also be charged. Up to six hours of additional graduate credit may also be obtained for participation in the summer program.

For applications and additional information, contact Sandy Drewes, Director of the Kellogg Institute or Maggie Mock, Administrative Assistant, National Center for Developmental Education, ASU Box 32098, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608-2098; phone: 828-262-3057; Web site: www.ncde.appstate.edu.

Computers and Writing

June 16-19, 2005

Palo Alto, CA

"New Writing and Computer Technologies"

Conference chair: Corinne Arraez, e-mail: arraez@stanford.edu; conference Web site: <http://cw2005.stanford.edu/>.

Call for Proposals

Theresa Enos and Shane Borrowman invite proposals especially from junior faculty for a collection of reflective essays tentatively titled *The Promise and Peril of Writing Program Administration*. This collection will be in two parts: Part One analyzes the kinds of WPA positions that untenured junior faculty are increasingly pressured to take. Descriptive profiles and demographics of writing program administrators will come from analyzing the data of an online survey that the coeditors launched at the end of October. Part I will also include an historical overview of both the National Council of WPAs and the WPA position itself—beginnings, evolution, rapid rise as a subdiscipline/specialization, and future directions.

Part Two will feature narratives especially from untenured faculty who have recently lived valuable, career-

shaping/career-defining experiences in their work as WPAs (or who have experienced disciplinary bias, trauma, trivialization, and/or marginalization for their work as WPAs). We invite junior faculty who have recently worked/are currently working as administrators of writing programs, writing labs, etc., to submit 250-word proposals for inclusion in Part Two. For information on the contents of a proposal, contact Enos or Borrowman. Proposals must be submitted via e-mail (either in the message or as an attachment in Word format) to both Theresa Enos (enos@email.arizona.edu) and Shane Borrowman (borrowman@gonzaga.edu). Proposals must be submitted no later than midnight PST, November 8, 2004. Contributors whose proposals are accepted will be notified by the end of November, 2004. Complete drafts of accepted submissions will be due April 29, 2005.

THE WRITING LAB
NEWSLETTER

Muriel Harris, editor
Department of English
Purdue University
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