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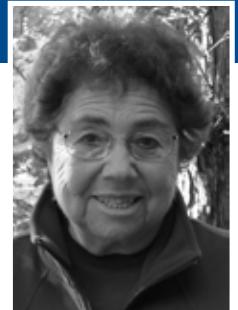
DINITZ | RADKE | ECKSTEIN | STROUP

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## From the Editor

Muriel Harris



This *WLN* issue focuses on four groups in writing centers: tutors, grad students, speakers of English with differing levels of proficiency, and classroom tutors. Susan Dinitz' article starts the conversation by focusing on critically important threshold concepts in writing and the misperceptions tutors may harbor if they don't fully grasp these concepts—misperceptions that can lead to ineffective tutoring. Noting that threshold concepts are very difficult to teach, Dinitz shares with us writing projects she assigns to help new tutors experience and enact some of these concepts. Next, Chuck Radke's article describes the formation of a graduate writing center at a time before there was extensive scholarship on graduate writing centers to guide them. Radke offers a compelling rationale for why a graduate writing center needs "a room of its own" where the graduate writers are the experts and the consultants are their personal trainers.

In addition to graduate students, another group seeking writing center tutorials are those whose English proficiency varies: non-native speakers of English, Generation 1.5, and native speakers of English. These three groups, the subjects of a study that Grant Eckstein reports on, have differing goals that should influence the agenda of the tutorial. Eckstein's survey offers answers that can help tutors respond to those different goals. One more group—tutors in the classroom—is the subject of Rachel Stroup's Tutors' Column. As Stroup points out, tutoring in the classroom is not the same as writing center tutoring in several ways. Unlike tutors in writing centers, classroom tutors are there to help the instructor further classroom goals, and their tutoring is necessarily more directive.

In the back pages of this issue you'll find a lengthy Conference Calendar, one that is impressively global, with 16 conferences to choose from in the U.S., Canada, Latin America, China, Japan, and the UAE. If we've overlooked a writing center conference or if you're now in the process of organizing one, please let us know so that we can help publicize it on our social media and list it on our Conference Calendar.

## Changing Peer Tutors' Threshold Concepts of Writing

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One of the most generative and powerful new ideas in composition studies over the past few years has been that of threshold concepts—core concepts in a field that, once learned, transform one’s understanding of the discipline. In their edited collection *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies*, Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle posit five main threshold concepts of writing studies: “Writing Is a Social and Rhetorical Activity” (17), “Writing Speaks to Situations through Recognizable Forms” (35), “Writing Enacts and Creates Identities and Ideologies” (48), “All Writers Have More to Learn” (59), and “Writing Is (Also Always) a Cognitive Activity” (71). This article explores the misconceptions some of my new undergraduate tutors hold about four of these threshold concepts and discusses how their misconceptions may underlie some ineffective practices they intuitively bring to tutoring.<sup>1</sup> I argue that one of the best ways to help these tutors acquire the threshold concepts is to allow them to experience the concepts *as writers*.

In a chapter of *Naming What We Know* that argues for the centrality of threshold concepts to writing center work, Rebecca Nowacek and Bradley Hughes explore how the concepts guide their tutor education. Indeed, most writing center directors likely discuss these concepts with new tutors given that textbooks/materials for tutor training commonly include considerations of writing process, revision, and writing in the disciplines, as well as how aspects of identity shape writing and tutoring. However, helping tutors acquire new understandings about writing, such as threshold concepts, is complicated. As Adler-Kassner and Wardle explain, threshold concepts are difficult to acquire, involving “forms of troublesome knowledge” that are “counterintuitive” (2), and so they “often cannot be taught directly . . . but must be experienced and enacted over time” (8). Having new tutors experience the concepts as writers facilitates deeper learning that they will more likely integrate into their tutoring.

For such deep learning to occur, writing projects must engage tutors in ways that challenge their current understandings of the writing process and the nature of “good” writing. For the past few years, I have created those challenges through two multi-draft writing assignments, in genres and with rhetorical contexts that are often new to tutors. Tutors first write a social narrative, drawing from personal experience to explore issues facing a community to which they belong. They then write a literature review on a topic related to writing centers—synthesizing the scholarly conversation, drawing implications for tutoring, and suggesting areas for further research. When I ask tutors to reflect on how their tutor preparation and experiences have impacted them as writers, many mention these assignments as key and describe how the assignments changed their ideas about writing, often using language echoing the threshold concepts. Throughout this article, I quote from these tutor reflections to illustrate my points, changing names to preserve anonymity.

### **CONCEPT 1, “WRITING IS A SOCIAL AND RHETORICAL ACTIVITY” (ADLER-KASSNER AND WARDLE 17):**

I find that new tutors often do not understand that writing is a social and rhetorical activity. However, some have a circumscribed view of the rhetorical context for academic writing, seeing papers as written for the teacher, and thus thinking the teacher’s expectations (as spelled out in the assignment) fully determine a writer’s choices.

***Consequences in Tutoring:*** With this view, some new tutors do not see students as having much agency in their papers, and instead see their role as limited to helping students understand assignments and meet teacher expectations. Consequently, such tutors may focus on improving the issues in a draft without considering that the deeper cause of those issues might be a fuzzy or mistaken understanding of purpose and audience. For example, in noting that a paper has a weak introduction, a lack of transitions, and some confusing or vague sentences, such tutors may assume the writer needs to learn general principles about constructing effective introductions, transitions, and sentences, not realizing that all of those vague elements result from the student writing to the teacher in order to fulfill the assignment but without a unifying vision and purpose of their own.

***New Understandings:*** The social narrative assignment helped some tutors develop more awareness of how a clear rhetorical stance—a sense of to whom one is writing, from what position, for what purpose—guides a writer’s choices. Tutors had to con-

sider how a wider social context shaped their narrative, how to present themselves, who ideally would be reading their essay, and what they wanted those readers to take from their text. As a result, some began to bring questions of audience, voice, and purpose into their writing process for other papers. Liz explains, “This class has helped me internalize the guiding question: What idea do I want to leave the reader with? I have shifted my focus to writing more for the reader’s understanding (at least in an academic setting.)” Daphne describes how thinking about audience and purpose changed her writing process, leaving her feeling empowered to enter and revise her writing in new ways:

This class and writing the social narrative have given me the tools to study how the writing process works for myself and for my readers. I find myself considering more variables when I write: Who is the audience? What areas will people “zero in” on? What are the strongest parts of my arguments, and what parts need bolstering? What seems awkward? It feels as if I have gained the power to zoom in and out of the writing process. A paper is less like a linear product and more like a web.

With this broader understanding, tutors are more likely to pursue conversations aimed at creating a sense of rhetorical stance and agency. This more rhetorical approach often requires detective work: the consultant may need to pursue conversations that can uncover mistaken assumptions underlying a paper’s issues, such as a writer’s not being engaged in a research paper because it seems to involve just reporting on others’ ideas, or not including enough background or supporting detail because the professor already knows that information, or not realizing it is possible to ask the professor about modifying an assignment, if that request grows from engagement with the project.

### **CONCEPT 2, “WRITING SPEAKS TO SITUATIONS THROUGH RECOGNIZABLE FORMS” (ADLER-KASSNER AND WARDLE 35):**

When I ask new tutors why they want to become tutors, some explain that they look forward to the opportunity to share their knowledge of writing with other students and help them become better writers. Embedded in their views are ideas (shared by many professors) that there are universal qualities of “good” writing and that these qualities result from following certain processes. More specifically, some tutors (like some professors) believe that what *they* have learned about good writing applies to all writing and writers—regardless of genre or discipline (e.g., all academic writing is thesis-based, the thesis should appear at the end of the first paragraph or section, and you shouldn’t include new ideas in the conclusion).

**Consequences in Tutoring:** This limited understanding of genre and disciplinarity may cause some tutors to offer inappropriate advice to students writing in other disciplines (e.g., encouraging the writer of a sociology paper to have a thesis in the introduction, or the writer of an education paper to avoid the first person), or to not understand why an assignment is challenging for students writing in a new genre or discipline. Furthermore, it may prevent some tutors from considering that the issues they see may be a result of a student's lack of experience with the process of writing that particular kind of paper: for example, that a writer stuck on the introduction of a science paper may not realize that writers in the sciences often begin by creating the charts/figures and figuring out the "story" told by the data, or that a writer struggling with a literary analysis paper may be new to the process of doing a close reading that connects style and form to meaning.

**New Understandings:** Writing both the social narrative and literature review during our training made some tutors aware of the narrowness of their own understandings of academic writing, as when Natalie, a religion major, notes she has learned that "Not every writing assignment follows the traditional thesis-driven, MLA-formatted essay that I have strictly followed for most of my academic career." It also brought more awareness of the complexity of genre. Liz observes, "I learned that a person can *know* what a certain genre should look like, without actually fully *comprehending* what it should look like. It took me a long time to internalize the feel of a literature review, which will give me much more empathy for students who don't seem to understand what tone and feeling their paper should have." And Nancy, like Liz, notes that her own struggles writing in a new genre help her understand and empathize with writers:

Working on my lit review gave me a new appreciation for the students I work with. As someone who writes almost exclusively in the humanities, . . . I had forgotten how difficult it can be to adjust to a new genre. Part of the difficulty wasn't even the assignment but my own resistance to writing in a style I was less comfortable with. Sometimes when students came in with humanities papers devoid of voice or opinion, it was hard for me to understand why they were so averse to that style of writing. Now I can see why they might have seemed unsure or even resentful about an assignment that forced them out of their comfort zone. [T]his insight will help me relate to students who need help writing in an unfamiliar style and not take for granted the fact that things that may seem automatic or obvious to me aren't necessarily an integral part of everyone's experience with academic writing.

### CONCEPT 3, “WRITING ENACTS AND CREATES IDENTITIES AND IDEOLOGIES” (ADLER-KASSNER AND WARDLE 48):

Like Concept 2, this concept is challenging for tutors who believe there are universal qualities of “good” writing. Believing that norms for writing, including the rules of “standard English,” are objective, some new tutors see no connection between these norms and ideologies or identities.

**Consequences in Tutoring:** The unfortunate result of such beliefs is that some new tutors can be eager to impose their own ideas of the writing process and good writing on others, unwittingly becoming agents of oppression. For example, if tutors fail to recognize word inflections as dialectal and see those differences as errors, their attempts to teach the “correct” rules may stifle rather than support how students draw on their own language backgrounds. Or if tutors have no understanding of learning styles and differences, they may assume that every writer’s organizational problems can be solved by learning to outline. Consequently, in not seeing the connections between identity and writing, some tutors don’t see the value of having personal conversations for reasons beyond establishing rapport, including to provide students opportunities to share information about their backgrounds and preferences as writers and learners.

**New Understandings:** By the end of their first year, tutors have explored these notions about universal, objective qualities of good writing and writing strategies and have discovered that many assumptions they have made about writers based on their (tutors’) own identities are mistaken. Danielle explains,

I no longer expect that people will be at a similar reading or writing level as myself, because everyone simply reads and writes differently, and has very different experiences with the acquisition of those skills. . . . I almost always work with tutees who have had different experiences than me in this regard—or who come from cultures that treat writing differently—and learning to meet them where they’re at—to push off what I think people *ought* to know or what I’m surprised people *don’t* know—has been a very valuable endeavor.

Nancy has come to understand that writers with literacy backgrounds different from her own may experience being a writer quite differently from how she does: “I am lucky enough to have grown up in a fairly affluent suburban area with a good public education system. . . . Many students may come to the writing center having different experiences with education and writing and this may color how they feel about the writing process.” And tutors have also become aware that their tacit assumptions can lead them to judge writers unfairly. By the end of the semester,



for example, Michael recognizes that he holds subconscious prejudices about languages:

As a writing tutor, my background with the English language is both beneficial and limiting. On the one hand, my lifelong exposure to reading and writing has given me great appreciation for the craft of writing. I love reading students' papers and I can always get excited about my job. On the other hand, my appreciation for this craft can be unconsciously limited. If I don't catch myself, I will often favor writing in "Standard English" for no deserved reason.

### **CONCEPT 5, "WRITING IS (ALSO ALWAYS) A COGNITIVE ACTIVITY" (ADLER-KASSNER AND WARDLE, 71):**

This concept relates to understanding that writing is a tool not just for conveying but also for discovering ideas, and that this discovery can take place throughout the writing process. I find that some new tutors think of writing as separate from creating ideas. Some have had little experience with revision, having been able to write an "A" paper the night before the due date. Others may hold a linear model of the writing process: first you develop ideas, then you put them in writing, and then you read your draft and correct whatever is problematic.

***Consequences in Tutoring:*** When new tutors believe writing is separate from discovering ideas, they can expect that students will be coming to the writing center with their ideas already formed, and that the tutor's role will be to help students express those ideas effectively. This misconception can lead new tutors to read drafts for errors or problems rather than for possibilities and to overlook opportunities to help students develop or change ideas.

***New Understandings:*** Danielle reports discovering how the "new tutor" view of the writing process as described above truncated her re-thinking and revision processes:

Before this course, whenever I received a writing assignment, I would spend a great deal of time on the first draft, but then I would seldom genuinely revise; I would edit, which I called revision, but I hardly ever had the patience or the will to really put all my effort into making the piece better, into rearranging, rewriting, or rethinking. . . . The social narrative that we wrote . . . allowed me to realize that what I had done before was not proper revision, and that I was robbing myself of improvement because of that.

Kathy describes applying her new approach to writing—as exploring as well as expressing ideas—in her other academic papers: "All of a sudden in viewing both my personal and academic writing, I noticed gaps, spaces in which I had omitted reality for the sake of

a false image. In the months following this revelation, especially in academic papers, I have found that including more *questionable* information has actually contributed to the depths the paper achieves.”

For some tutors, this new understanding of revision and the writing process transformed their tutoring. Heather feels liberated to encourage writers to pursue rather than suppress what seems questionable or difficult:

My first draft of the social narrative was a comic example of how I would like to think about my family. If it wasn't for this class, I would have submitted the first or second draft as the final. The idea that I would have been okay leaving it so shallow makes me shudder. . . . I felt more liberated to include details I thought were imperfect, unclear, and too complicated to include. I've seen this in multiple tutees, where they question the value of what they want to add or express in their writing.

And Emily now realizes that process, not product, is at the center of tutoring: “Now that I am more intentional about my own writing process, I feel better equipped to help someone else with theirs. I came into the class with the expectation that helping someone with their writing would be looking for mistakes. Now I see that the writing center is much more than a last step on the way to turning in a paper.”

## CONCLUSION

Metacognition, another much-discussed idea in Writing Studies recently, is identified in WPA's *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* as one of the eight habits of mind “essential for success in college writing” (1). The *Framework* posits that students' naming of and reflection on their writing processes and choices support transfer—students using “what they learn from reflections on one writing project to improve writing on subsequent projects” (5). While many writing center directors discuss with tutors the ideas embedded in the threshold concepts, naming them as such—identifying them as core concepts in the field—encourages us to make their exploration more explicit and richer, and helps ensure the transfer of those concepts to the tutoring context. Furthermore, in preparing new tutors, we need to go beyond naming, beyond reading about and discussing these threshold concepts. When tutors encounter these threshold concepts as writers, the tacit mistaken assumptions they may bring to tutoring can become visible and open to exploration, allowing new tutors to begin the process of acquiring a deeper understanding of key concepts that have always been central to writing centers.

## NOTES

1. Concept 4 (“All Writers Have More to Learn”) isn’t included in this article because I have not encountered many tutors with a misconception about it. Indeed, during the application process, most prospective tutors explain that they are interested in the position partly because they think it will help them improve their own writing. In the tutor training class, new tutors never question why they have to write several papers, readily accepting my explanation in the syllabus that this allows them to apply what they are learning from tutoring to their own writing.



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# A Space for Grad Students: Peer-to-Peer Collaboration in a Writing Studio Startup

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In 2009, I was tasked with envisioning a place at Fresno State University where graduate students could find supplementary writing support. At the time, little had been published on the needs of graduate student writers, and only a handful of universities had established centers devoted solely to graduate student writing.<sup>1</sup> For many years, our campus writing center has been a place where any student enrolled in classes at our university can find help with things like brainstorming, organization, and proofreading strategies, either in small group discussions or one-to-one tutoring. Certainly, our university's graduate students were (and still are) welcomed at the writing center, so why was I asked to start something new? With a nod to Virginia Woolf, why did graduate students need a *room of their own*?

My envisioning assignment was actually part of a larger institutional accreditation directive from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) to create a stronger “graduate culture” on our campus, one that would support current graduate programs and others slated to launch. In fact, WASC had specifically requested in two previous visits that we demonstrate forward progress in this area. Further, a campus advisory group was calling for “strategies that would encourage student progress” at all levels as part of a statewide push to improve graduation rates. And finally, our *President’s Plan for Excellence* targeted a 20% increase in our number of graduate students, folks who would have different needs in areas like mentoring, research advising, and specifically, “scholarly writing consultation.” Clearly, it was time to act, and in a survey disseminated to our graduate students and faculty, they agreed: 82% rated as “important” or “extremely important” the need for a research, writing, and consultation space dedicated graduate students.

Because I was the dissertation and thesis consultant in the Division of Graduate Studies,<sup>2</sup> my dean considered me the most suitable person to provide support for “scholarly writing consultation.”

After all, I'd been reading student scholarly writing since starting my position in 2003, and I'd worked individually with many graduate students on all kinds of assignments, from short essays to lengthy dissertations. The responsibility of launching a supplementary writing support service for graduate students seemed a good fit, so when the overture moved from envisioning to actual planning and implementation, I agreed.

I started small: picture Lucy Van Pelt in her "Psychiatric Help" booth and you wouldn't be far off. My assigned space was a conference room artificially split by a fabric wall panel that did nothing to ensure privacy. There were no phones and no computers, but I did have a file cabinet with handouts on multiple writing concerns. Outside the door I lined up some chairs where students could sit until their appointment time. It had that waiting-room feel.

I hired three graduate writing consultants—grad students themselves—and we immersed ourselves in literature on writing center pedagogy that we would use as the basis for our work. We interviewed our graduate faculty to get a sense of their expectations. We conducted a thorough best-practice review to see what others were doing. We defined "consultants" as trained, interested readers who would ask the right questions, let pauses be pauses, and allow students to test their ideas in a safe, responsive, and focused environment. We wanted to provide a place where graduate students could engage meaningfully with the issues about which they were writing, and as consultants, we would—per Nancy Sommers—"reflect befuddlement" (155) and guide writers "back into the chaos, back to the point where they were shaping and restructuring their meaning" (154).

We made a door sign that read "Collaboration Happens Here," and in our literature, we billed ourselves as an "empowering service, not an editing service," hoping to debunk the perception of writing centers as places where students with deficiencies get help "fixing" their work. We encountered the writing-center-as-fix-it-shop view frequently in our research. But we wanted to create a space for students who were motivated to improve their writing skills over the course of months and, in some cases, years. We also knew "there was no point in having students correct usage errors or condense sentences that [were] likely to disappear before the next draft [was] completed" (Sommers 155). If those things happened toward the end of the process, that was fine, but it was not our reason for being.

Most importantly, though, we talked about why we were *needed*. What could we provide that graduate students couldn't find anywhere else on campus? Remember, we held this discussion

before the advent of dissertation boot camps and at a time when few resources about graduate-level writing experiences existed. We wrangled a bit with the differences between writing demands for graduate-level courses versus those at the undergraduate level and concluded that any discussion on the topic needed to focus first on one thing: audience.

We wanted students to see their writing as something that would have a life outside their degree programs, something that would contribute to a larger academic conversation through the creation of new knowledge. Students writing a thesis, for example, were expected to advance understanding in their field, contextualize their work against the work of other scholars, converse in a wider dialog, and prepare their ideas for publication. All of these things seemed to be givens in the research we did on graduate-level writing and surfaced in various iterations within the philosophies of the few graduate writing centers that existed at other universities.

To contextualize this discussion for ourselves and for the students with whom we'd work, we modernized Kenneth Burke's parlor metaphor, with the *unending conversations* taking place in each of the many Starbucks on our planet. At the time, I was working with a student who was researching crab bowel movements, a conversation admittedly taking place in a Starbucks much smaller than the ones needed to house conversations about diabetes and depression or vaccination strategies or race relations in Faulkner's novels. Still, there was (and is) a Starbucks where the topic *is* crab feces, and my student wanted to "put in [her] oar" (Burke 111). We'd tell our students from the get-go that they should expect their writing to be read by an audience of like-minded peers. They should expect to enter a discussion that started well before they arrived and would continue long after they left. Wrote Burke, "The discussion is interminable [and] remains vigorously in progress" (111), featuring both allies and adversaries. To engage in that discussion, our students needed to use research to analyze current debates and develop original ideas. In short, if they wanted in, they needed to know their material. No more flipping through index cards. No more highlighter pens. No more reading straight from PowerPoints.

So one Saturday in October 2010, we announced our operation in an email to more than 2,000 students. We did not describe our aims as thoroughly as I have above. Simply, we said we were available to *empower* grad students and help them become *stronger, more confident writers and researchers*. Within ten minutes of my hitting send, we got our first response, a nursing student in her final year, Lillian, who asked where we had been her whole graduate career.

We were thrilled by Lillian's quick reply, and scheduled her for the first available opening: the following Monday at 4:00 p.m. We now had someone to be ready for, and others would follow.

Lillian arrived on time with a patchwork quilt she hoped to mold into a publishable article on culturally competent health care for the Hmong. Bingo. Our very first student, and she embodied everything we'd discussed in our training. She had an "interminable discussion" she wanted to enter. She had original ideas she wanted to contribute to extend current thought on a specific topic in her field. She was simultaneously enthusiastic and confused, and—more than anything—she wanted someone *other than her program faculty* to shepherd her through the writing process. I think that's an important point here; using the precept that you teach best what you most need to learn, it was vital for Lillian to become the *expert* in the relationship and to share that expertise with a layperson, in this case her consultant, Iris. It was also important for Lillian to be "in charge," and knowing that Iris wasn't issuing a grade also helped set her at ease. The more Lillian was able to talk through her ideas with Iris, an attentive non-specialist who could help her organize thoughts and clarify meaning, the more confident Lillian became in her ability to communicate her ideas on paper and in conversation.

It helped, too, that Iris was available on a regular, sustained basis to provide a level of attention that Lillian's faculty mentor—given the rigors of a full teaching load and a robust cadre of mentees—was not. Lillian and Iris met for an hour every Monday from October 2010 through May 2011, chiseling away at the paper, refining the ideas, and—in due time—addressing lower-order concerns like appropriate transitions and accurate documentation. As they journeyed together, Iris earned Lillian's trust, which has become one of the hallmarks of the Graduate Writing Studio over the last seven years; the consultants stick around, and the students they work with stick with them. Students have come to expect they'll see the same consultant—their personal trainer, if you will—every week, and in many of our student surveys, we see language that builds on that metaphor: consultants "push" and "challenge" and "drive" our students to meet their weekly writing directives, holding them "accountable to goals for return sessions." On the rare occasion when their regular "trainer" isn't available, most students are nimble enough to work with another. One student, in fact, called our staff her "personal team" who collaborated with her each week: "They challenged me and taught me something new in each session," she said.

Others, however, say they'd rather postpone the appointment than acquaint themselves with someone new, and we're okay with

that, too. “Nothing personal,” they’ve said. “It’s just writing.” But writing is, in fact, *deeply* personal, even academic writing, which is why some don’t want to work with a different consultant; putting ourselves out there on the page with the expectation that others will read what we have to write can make even the most experienced writers feel vulnerable. In our space—in our *room of our own*—it’s common for consultants to spend two years or more with the same student or students, becoming—as one of them has said—“as much a source of social and emotional support as writing support.” They aren’t trained counselors, but it can sometimes feel that way, and when you’re talking about writing, an empathetic listener can sometimes be as valuable as an accomplished wordsmith.

This sustained, intensive-learning model has worked well with our graduate students. In our state university offering master’s degrees in a number of applied areas—e.g., social work, public health, education, nursing—many of our students are returning to school after spending a number of years in their fields. Their primary goal is to make themselves more employable, not necessarily to earn a doctorate. Some are a bit older than the norm, they keep their day jobs, and they have responsibilities at home as wives, husbands, moms, dads. Most haven’t written a paper since college, which for many of them has been a decade or more. And when they show up for the first time, they bring with them a suitcase full of personal and professional concerns. “Our students,” wrote one of our consultants, “are probably spending more time, energy, money and emotional vitality on their programs than at any other time in their academic lives.” Given this, it makes sense they’d want someone to come alongside to help navigate expectations for their writing, someone who has an ability to extend an analytic position, refine a methodology, and challenge current thought, all while helping them gain fluency in the language of their disciplines.

For Lillian, it was imperative to have a companion on her writing journey. She was in her 40s, established in her career, and was juggling life as a student, wife, mom, and working professional. Anything she’d learned about writing as an undergrad, she’d either forgotten or didn’t feel it relevant to her graduate-level pursuits. She was heavily invested in her graduate education—financially and emotionally—and she wanted to use every resource at her disposal to help her succeed. She wasn’t just writing a paper—she was building a professional identity, of which every paper was an important part. Iris—a like-minded peer in healthcare who shared some of Lillian’s characteristics—understood that, for she was working toward similar objectives: validation, credibility, professional satisfaction. By the end of Lillian’s program, she realized her goals: she earned her degree and placed her article in



a well-respected journal. She couldn't have done it without Iris's support, she said. Her gratitude was effusive, and her story—along with so many others like hers—illustrates why we are here, why graduate students do, in fact, need a room of their own.

Our data from the past seven years confirms this point. From October to December of that first semester in 2010, we reported a modest 98 contact hours, not astounding, but enough—thanks also to some early success stories—to keep us going. The number of contact hours and students served has grown considerably; in the spring 2017 term, we logged 993 contact hours with 300 different graduate students. Thankfully, too, our workspace has grown. After two semesters in the “Lucy Van Pelt” conference room, we moved to a more appropriate space in the Henry Madden Library while construction of our 1,100-square foot Graduate Study Center was underway. In 2013, with support from our library administration and graduate dean, we opened our new space, which features two Graduate Writing Studio offices, eight private study rooms, and a common area with computer workstations and plenty of room to collaborate. We now have two part-time, on-site managers, and our number of peer writing consultants (from a variety of disciplines) has grown from three to ten. We offer approximately 100 individual student appointments per week—on-site and asynchronously—most of which are recurring; our students have really embraced the idea of having sustained, individual contact with someone who can help them meet the writing demands of graduate school.

The consultants, who share many demographic and psychological characteristics of the students they serve, have driven this success. I've described the consultants as empathetic peers who also happen to know what different disciplines expect their students to understand in terms of written form, language, and citation style. What might be important to readers of social work papers will not be the same for readers in biology. “Consultants need to understand the differences in expectations,” said one consultant, William, “so we can advise our students accordingly.” They have learned these *differences in expectations* over time, working with students in a wide range of disciplines. In one shift, they might work with students writing papers for the departments of English, Industrial Technology, and Public Health. And what's so tremendous about their work is their ability to move seamlessly from one discipline to the next without having the sessions seem derivative; the students are not cookie-cutter versions of consultants, so consultations cannot be either. “Every student has different needs,” wrote Debra, “and we have to work hard to identify those needs.” Thus, consultants must put in the time relationally, developing strategies to help each student writer grow professionally. Student success

is its own reward, and I believe our consultants would all say—as Ronald, one of our long-timers has done so nicely—that most important is the “connection made with all these different students and the human experiences that we share in our time together.” Yes, the consultants have all acquired competence in an array of academic languages and genres, and yes, they are highly skilled in helping graduate students navigate different phases of writing processes—from idea shaping to fine-tuning. These skills have developed through training and trial. But most important, I believe, is their understanding of the shared human experience which, added Ronald, “has made me into a better person and ultimately a better writer.” I love that our consultants feel this way and have this sense that they are growing too. I love that they can see the page, but also the folks behind the page, and that in helping build better papers, they are in their own way helping build better people.

I don’t think you can find that just anywhere.

## NOTES

1. To better grasp how limited Writing and Writing Center Studies resources about graduate students needs were in 2009, consider that much work in the area appeared in higher education and ESL journals, and none of the following editors and authors had published their work: Susan Lawrence and Terry M. Zawacki; Steve Simpson, et al. (see Works Cited).

2. In 2016, the Division of Graduate Studies absorbed the university’s Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. We are now the Division of Research and Graduate Studies.



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# Goals for a Writing Center Tutorial: Differences among Native, Non-native, and Generation 1.5 Writers

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Students sometimes attend their university writing center with goals that contravene the center’s philosophical approach. For instance, a writer may seek proofreading help on an early draft even though many centers prioritize higher issues of rhetoric or organization over language. Ideally, tutors are trained in these situations to “negotiat[e] with the writer on a mutually agreeable goal” (Gillespie and Lerner 49) such as identifying error patterns instead of “fixing grammar.” Such negotiation is important because, as Carol Severino, Jeffery Swenson, and Jia Zhu explain, “a key factor in whether students are receptive to tutors’ advice . . . and then use the advice to revise is whether tutors ask or discuss with writers the kind of feedback they want” (108). Moreover, Terese Thonus similarly argues that successful tutorials are characterized in part by the degree to which the tutor and tutee agree on the objectives of the tutorial early on. Laurel Raymond and Zarah Quinn explain that when tutors ignore writers’ goals, they “risk robbing students of their authority over their papers, isolating them from their own writing processes and inhibiting [the tutor’s] ability to connect with them [the writers]” (65). All of this is to say, as Muriel Harris does, that “Our success in achieving our goals [as tutors] is likely to increase in direct proportion to our ability to recognize the student’s goals” (33).

Recognizing and responding to students’ goals has grown in complexity over the last 30 years as increasing numbers of non-native English speakers (NNEs) with grammar and language needs have begun attending university writing centers in the U.S. According to the Institute of International Education’s *Open Doors Report*, nearly one million undergraduate and graduate international students were enrolled in U.S. higher education during the 2015-2016 academic year, a 7.1% increase from the year before and the highest enrollment ever recorded. Yet, surprisingly little research has compared the writing center goals of true international stu-

dents (those who come from other countries to study in the U.S.) to their mainstream, native English speaking (NES) counterparts or to Generation 1.5 (Gen 1.5) students, who use English as an additional language but have been educated in the U.S. Linda Harklau, Kay M. Losey, and Meryl Siegal describe these writers as an in-between group of U.S. immigrants. Gen 1.5 writers tend to display wide heterogeneity, but as a general description, they have native or near-native oral proficiency even while their written English and grammar knowledge may lag behind. Joy Reid calls them “ear learners” because they develop their English proficiency informally through activities with friends or incidental conversations at school (76). In principle, Gen 1.5 writers differ from international NNEs writers since the latter typically hold student visas to study in the U.S. after completing high school or its equivalent in a foreign country (Ferris). NNEs writers are sometimes referred to as “eye learners” because they traditionally learn the English language in international contexts while studying grammar rules in order to develop language mastery (Reid 76).

The present article focuses on comparing the reported goals of these three groups of students (mainstream NESs, international NNEs, and Gen 1.5 students). Given that students’ purposes for attending writing centers may range considerably depending upon their language background and level of competency, investigating and contrasting student goals in aggregate can give tutors and administrators additional insights into the perceived needs, goals, and differences among the three groups of writers.

To investigate student goals, I developed an online survey for writing center attendees and, with IRB approval, directly emailed more than 800 center directors, via the International Writing Center Association contact list, with a survey link to forward to students. This effort resulted in responses from 462 students (79.4% undergraduate; 19.6% graduate; 1% pre-college) in 26 U.S. states who had recently attended a writing center tutorial. The survey contained numerous demographic questions (such as length of residence in the U.S., language spoken at home, prior enrollment in a U.S. high school, year in school, etc.) in order to distinguish NES from Gen 1.5 and NNEs writers. Based on responses to the survey, I identified 280 (60.6%) as NESs (86% undergraduate, 14% graduate); 105 (22.7%) as Gen 1.5 writers (88.6% undergraduate, 11.4% graduate), and 77 (16.6%) as NNEs (53.2% undergraduate, 46.8% graduate). In addition, the survey asked students to self-identify their main goal in attending their most recent writing tutorial from a selection of eight options, which reflected

feedback categories from my own experience as a writing tutor and composition teacher to NES and NNES students: 1. help with grammar, 2. punctuation, 3. essay formatting, 4. organization, 5. style, 6. research, 7. idea formation, or 8. idea expression. This delineation of purposes was intentional to keep the results systematic and to avoid what Severino, et al., refer to as “creep” (115) in which open-choice categorization loses consistency as hundreds of responses are coded. I recognize that a forced-choice survey also has the potential to limit respondent participation. Of course, such a survey may also present limitations and false dichotomies: what one student considers to be grammar might be punctuation to another (a point I discuss more below), and in many cases a writer comes to the writing center with an agenda prescribed by a teacher or a blanket request that masks a deeper concern. To reduce these conflating variables, the survey asked students to report on the purpose they had for their *most recent* tutorial in an effort to allow students to be guided as much by their own recollection of their purposes as any deeper purposes the tutor helped them identify.

The data from the survey is formatted in Figure 1 below, which illustrates student purposes across all language groups. The data reveals that NES writers who responded to the survey largely reported wanting help with organization, NNES writers overwhelmingly reported wanting grammar help, and Gen 1.5 writers had a somewhat hybrid NES and NNES response pattern.

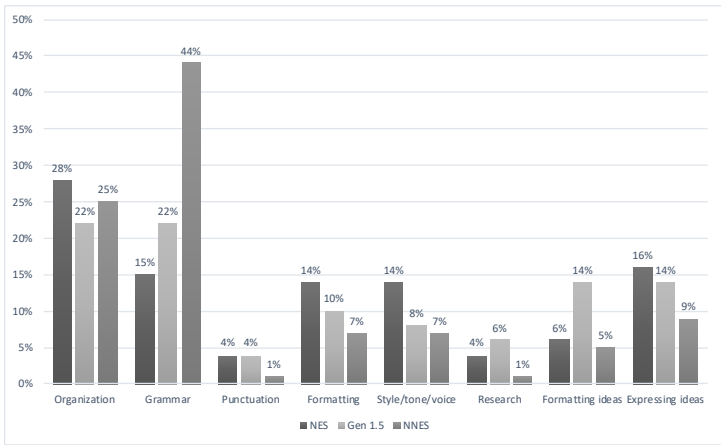


FIGURE 1: Individual Feedback Goals Compared Across Language Background

## ORGANIZATION

The data indicates that organization was an important goal for writers across all language groups. In fact, help with organization

was the single most popular purpose among NES writers, nearly 30% of whom reported it as their top concern. Exactly one-quarter of NNES writers had the same purpose, and a little over 20% of Gen 1.5 writers also went to the writing center for organization help.

## **GRAMMAR**

Unlike paper organization, help with grammar varied from group to group. Only 15% of NESs listed grammar as their main purpose while nearly 50% of NNES writers indicated the same. This finding should come as little surprise; even if NNESs have excellent language proficiency, they may want to seek native-speaker input. Yet the term “grammar” means different things to different groups of students. Sarah Nakamaru argues that “the ESL learner, the applied linguist, and the monolingual English composition teacher or writing center tutor likely do not conceptualize grammar the same way” (“Theory in/to Practice” 119). “Grammar” for NESs, for instance, tends to mean issues with punctuation, conjunctions, prepositions, confused words, and agreement issues (see Connors and Lunsford; Gillespie and Lerner). Meanwhile, Janet Lane and Ellen Lange identify common NNES grammar issues that include verb tense, verb form, sentence structure, word order, and article concerns. In addition, Paula Gillespie and Neal Lerner argue that the request for grammar help can also be a catch-all phrase for multifarious agenda items that students may lack the vocabulary to express (51). So while the survey findings on grammar show how strongly many NNESs feel about grammar help, especially when compared to their NES and Gen 1.5 peers, these findings also highlight how much more difficult it may be for NNESs to articulate goals beyond grammar help.

Survey results also show that about 20% of Gen 1.5 writers reported seeking grammar help, placing this group between NNESs and NESs. Yet once again, Gen 1.5 aggregate grammar needs are likely to be unique. Stephen Doolan and Donald Miller provide quantitative evidence to show that NES and Gen 1.5 writers differed significantly from one another in their verb errors, preposition usage, and word forms. Jennifer Ritter and Trygve Sandvik further explain that Gen 1.5 writers come to the writing center with grammar, punctuation, spelling, and vocabulary errors. Not all of these errors are purely grammar mistakes, and Nakamaru points out that when working with Gen 1.5 writers, tutors often conflate lexical issues with grammar errors and avoid “giv[ing] words’ to students, for fear of appropriating their texts or raising suspicions of plagiarism” (“Lexical issues” 108). NNES scholars ex-

plain that Gen 1.5 academic language issues stem from the fact that these students develop most of their grammatical knowledge from participating in non-academic English conversations (Reid), but Ritter and Sandvik also note that these students are still developing English language proficiency and may have limited literacy exposure, which can affect their written control of language. All of this suggests that working with NESs, NNESs, and Gen 1.5 writers on grammar errors requires a nuanced approach that interprets the notion of “grammar” differently for each group and perhaps each individual.

## **OTHER TRENDS**

Other interesting trends appeared in survey responses from each language group. For instance, NES writers were mainly concerned with paper organization, but four other categories received almost equal weight with one another: grammar, style formatting (APA, MLA, etc.), style/tone/voice, and expressing ideas. This variety suggests that NES writers have very diverse goals in attending writing centers and likely have very rich ways of expressing those goals in a free-form discussion about their interests and needs in a tutorial.

The NNES writers surveyed exhibited a different pattern of writing center goals that overwhelmingly favored grammar, as discussed above, and then organization second, and expressing ideas as a distant third. NNES writers showed little interest for any other category and were particularly uninterested in punctuation help. That is, NNES writers appeared to have a very narrow conceptualization of their writing center agenda driven by grammar and, to a lesser extent, organization. Although NNESs largely wanted grammar help (whether that was their true goal, a teacher’s request, or a catch-all phrase for other issues), tutors have been repeatedly advised against “giv[ing] in to the easy inclination to tackle LOCs before HOCs” (Gillespie and Lerner 121) since it is thought that students are unlikely to revise on a higher scale if local text has been scrubbed free of errors. But language instruction may actually be its own pressing need, as Sharon Myers argues when she says, “writing tutors are perfectly positioned to facilitate the language learning these students need” (64). Moreover, Jennifer Staben and Kathryn Dempsey Nordhaus, who work extensively with NNES writers, explain that it is possible to “balance toward the middle ground between text and language—or shift more toward language” (87) when tutoring these writers.

The third group, consisting of Gen 1.5 writers, exhibited a combination of NES and NNES characteristics in that they reported an

identical weighting for both grammar and organization and a NES-like preference for help expressing ideas. This finding suggests that Gen 1.5 writers overlap in some ways with NES writers and in other ways with NNES writers, a conclusion that other practitioners have drawn (Ortmeier-Hooper). In addition, a relatively high proportion of Gen 1.5 writers reported wanting help forming ideas, indicating a need for brainstorming and invention help. Taken together, these findings may mean that Gen 1.5 writers also very much need the kind of specialized and individual support a writing center can provide, including agenda negotiation and practices of offering vocabulary or language assistance to meet very specific needs.

While the findings above provide an interesting look into the goals of different student groups, there are several complicating limitations, the most obvious being the difficulty some students may have in articulating their goals. In addition, students undoubtedly have different needs/goals depending on the type of paper and draft they are writing, the expectations of their teachers, and their educational level (i.e., undergraduate or graduate). The data presented above may therefore change in specific contexts. Furthermore, the forced-choice response survey necessarily limited student responses and may have subsumed other goals, such as seeking help understanding the assignment prompt or reading. Even with these limitations, the present findings are still instructive in that they suggest a sort of pyramid of language goals in which NNES writers, near the top, are highly focused on language issues and NES writers, near the base, have many diverse goals, while Gen 1.5 writers inhabit the space in the middle. An interesting future study may be to look at student goals by language proficiency and educational level (graduate vs. undergraduate).

With more understanding of what NES, Gen 1.5, and NNES students want help with (in general and in aggregate), writing center directors and tutors can be even more prepared to meet diverse student expectations and negotiate tutor and student roles and agenda items. Admittedly, it is perfectly reasonable for tutors to determine writers' needs during tutorials, but when those needs include structural grammar instruction or extensive vocabulary help, for instance, tutors need specialized training to negotiate and address these topics. This is particularly true for novice tutors and/or tutors who work with a wide range of language learners. Ultimately, understanding even more what multilingual students tend to want and helping them meet these goals within the writing center's philosophical approach is bound to result in satisfying tutorials for both tutors and students.





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# Tutors' Column: "Paradoxical Authority: Preparing Tutors for Classroom-Based Tutoring"

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While I was tutoring in a writing classroom one day, a student needed help finding direction within his paper. He wanted to offer his opinions on his topic more than back up his claims with research. Because he lacked research, his paper stopped at his own conclusions and ended up falling short of the page requirement. "What I would do," I told him, "is to find research that supports those ideas

and research that goes against those ideas, and see how that information shapes your understanding of the topic." As I finished relaying this advice, I looked up and saw three other students with their hands in the air, waiting for help. Though I wanted to help this student come up with ideas, I did not have the time he needed—unlike what would have happened in the writing center. Later, when I thought about this incident, I realized there were numerous different factors at play in the classroom that were absent from the writing center—namely, the number of students who require assistance, the teacher's instruction, and the integration of the tutor as a part of the curricular structure. Because of these factors, the roles and methods the classroom tutor adopts vary in nature and effectiveness from those used in the writing center. In other words, the environment of classroom-based tutoring (CLBT) requires a new understanding of tutoring in ways beyond simply bringing the writing center into the classroom. Gradually, as I thought about the difference in roles between the two settings along with the debate between directive and non-directive tutoring, I decided that simply adapting to each student's needs allowed me to shift my focus away from my specific tutoring strategies and more to helping each student in the ways that serve him or her best.

Much of the pedagogy surrounding the tutor-writer dynamic assumes most consultations occur within the writing center. Scholars such as Stephen North and Jeff Brooks, whose essays are frequently assigned in tutor preparation courses, depict the ideal writing

center as an academic sanctuary built for breakthroughs and revelations. According to them, speaking within the context of the writing center, tutors should be Socratic, nondirective, and minimalist—and, as it happens, this style of tutoring lends itself well to the one-to-one dynamic of the writing center.

However, CLBT throws a wrench into the power dynamic tutors are used to in the writing center and prompts tutors to rethink the approaches (like nondirective tutoring) that some writing centers encourage. Instead of two people co-contributing, in CLBT, three voices—the student, the tutor, and the classroom teacher—are acting over a student's work. This confounds the close peer-to-peer relationship, and the curricular structure of the classroom complicates the power relationships between writers and tutors. As Candace Spigelman and Laurie Grobman contend, CLBT “operates amid contradictions within the productive chaos of writing classrooms; it confuses the nature of classroom authority; [and] it encourages noise and active collaboration at the very scene of writing” (219). In the classroom, teachers have authority in assigning and evaluating students' work and in determining how they want to utilize the tutors per the class's needs. Instead of collaboratively negotiating an agenda with the writer, the classroom teacher may establish the plan for the day. Barbara Little Liu and Holly Mandes, in “The Idea of a Writing Center Meets the Reality of Classroom-Based Tutoring,” discuss the role-conflict tutors can feel when tutoring in the classroom: “Since tutors are a part of the curricular structure of a [CLBT course] and since the primary authority figure in the classroom—the instructor—introduces the tutors to the students, the tutors do, in essence, receive a ‘stamp of approval’ as an expert” (95). Because the teacher designates the authority to the tutors, the peer-to-peer dynamic is diverted by the built-in power structure of the teacher in the classroom. Thus, tutors in the classroom often serve as deputies to the teacher, and the teacher expects a level of expertise from them. As a result, the position of tutors in the classroom inherently establishes their authority when tutoring. Though the curriculum in the classroom carves a space for an authoritative role for tutors, this space also takes power away from them at the same time. The tutors' role is to help according to what the teacher wants. Therefore, the tutor's autonomy is restricted in the classroom setting. Thus, the issue of tutor authority in the classroom seems to be a paradox. Though tutors' roles are firmly established, their roles do not give them the power to simply tutor as they please. The idea that tutors in the classroom are, in a way, bringing the writing center to the classroom, is perhaps too basic an understanding of the dynamics involved in CLBT.

The established role of authority tutors possess in the classroom (though quite complex) may give them a platform to be more directive. Even though non-directiveness is an important feature of much tutoring practice, scholars such as Steven Corbett, as well as Linda Shamoon and Deborah Burns, have also acknowledged that there is a time and a place for directiveness—and I argue that one of those times and places may also be in the classroom. Even though tutors in the writing center have authority as a result of their positions as tutors, the power dynamics of the teacher-tutor-student triumvirate prompts directiveness in a way the reciprocal dynamic in the writing center does not—but only when that directiveness is used to tutor according to the curriculum established by the writing program and classroom teacher.

Another important difference between tutoring in a classroom and in a writing center is the ratio of tutors to writers: in a CLBT classroom, there may be one tutor for every five students. This ratio, in the context of a limited class meeting time, does not allow for a conventional tutor-to-student conference typically seen in the writing center. Simply stated, the Socratic, nondirective method so encouraged by traditional tutor preparation takes a lot of time. It can be time-consuming to keep tossing questions at the students in hopes that they will eventually find their own answers. Due to the logistical constraints inherent in CLBT, tutors must be innovative. As Spiegelman and Grobman write, “Classroom-based writing tutors will assume various roles and functions to meet the needs of particular tutoring situations and will therefore need to readjust and recalculate their practices on the scene” (220). This recalculation could be asking questions in a nondirective way, or it could be providing a clear set of instructions. It is up to tutors to adapt to the resources and constraints of the CLBT setting, using their best judgment.

Therefore, in preparing tutors for CLBT, the dichotomous understanding of directive versus nondirective tutoring may be less helpful than a focus on adapting to the various factors involved in CLBT: the teacher’s instructions, the writer’s preferences, the current condition of the draft, and the tutor’s expertise. The degree of innovation required in CLBT reflects not only the unique structure of the classroom-based power divide, but also the paradoxical authority granted to classroom-based tutors because of their curricular position. The discussion surrounding CLBT cannot be a set of idealized projections of how tutors ought to tutor. The situations provided by the classroom offer such varying circumstances that they do not allow for a clear definition of what a classroom

tutor's role ought to be. Viewing tutors' roles in CLBT as primarily assistive allows us to break away from a binary discussion about directiveness or non-directiveness. The chaotic mess of authority—that as Spigelman and Grobman note is productive—prompts the innovation characteristic of the best tutors.



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## Announcements

### Mississippi Writing Centers Association

March 23-24, 2018

Senatobia, MS

Northwest Mississippi Community College

*"Teamwork Makes the Dream Work: Collaboration and Inclusion in the Writing Center"*

Keynote: Brian Fallon

For conference information, contact: Jason Jones: [wjjones@northwestms.edu](mailto:wjjones@northwestms.edu); conference website for proposals and conference registration and information: [mswritingcenters.wordpress.com/cfp-2018-conference/](http://mswritingcenters.wordpress.com/cfp-2018-conference/)

### Writing Centers Association of Japan

March 9, 2018

Tokyo, Japan

Tokyo University and The National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies

*"Innovations in Writing Education"*

Information on registration and proposals is available on the conference website: [drive.google.com/file/d/1IBBVph1RHqsMDW9BQbfKZH0Qmu3Kukt6/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IBBVph1RHqsMDW9BQbfKZH0Qmu3Kukt6/view).

### Writing Centers Association of China

June 1-3, 2018

Haining, Zhejiang, China

Zhejiang University

*"Studying Writing Centers"*

Keynote: Jackie Grutsch McKinney

For information about proposals and registration, contact [zjuewritingcenter@163.com](mailto:zjuewritingcenter@163.com), and see the conference website: [writingcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CFP-for-2nd-WCAC.pdf](http://writingcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CFP-for-2nd-WCAC.pdf).

### IWCA Summer Institute

The 2018 IWCA Summer Institute will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana from Monday, July 16 through Friday, July 20 (with an opening event the evening of Sunday, July 15).

The Summer Institute (SI) is open to both new and experienced writing

center administrators, scholars, and practitioners from universities and colleges, K-12 education, or independent writing centers. Since 2003, the SI has allowed writing center professionals to work with leaders from the field in whole-group workshops, small-group discussions, and one-on-one conversations.

The cost of registration is \$900/participant. The hotel cost is \$164/night (plus tax); participants must stay at the conference hotel for the duration of the institute. For information about registration, theme, scholarships, and names of workshop leaders, see the website: [writingcenters.org/summer-institute/](http://writingcenters.org/summer-institute/).

## International Writing Centers Association

Oct. 10-13, 2018

Atlanta, GA

*"The Citizen Center"*

For information about the conference theme, proposal formats, and proposal submission, see the conference website: [writingcenters.org/annual-conference-2](http://writingcenters.org/annual-conference-2). For further information, contact the conference chair: Nikki Caswell: [caswelln@ecu.edu](mailto:caswelln@ecu.edu).

Proposals are due by April 6, 2018, at 11:59 p.m.

## National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing

Nov. 1-4, 2018

South Padre Island, TX

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Tutors, researchers, and other writing centered folks are invited. The website for proposals and registration is now open: [www.ncptw.info/index.php?msg=2](http://www.ncptw.info/index.php?msg=2), and updates are forthcoming. The conference will take place at the South Padre Island Convention Centre and the South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center. For more information contact Randall Monty: [randall.monty@utrgv.edu](mailto:randall.monty@utrgv.edu), or the organizing committee: [rgvwc17@gmail.edu](mailto:rgvwc17@gmail.edu).

Proposals are due by April 30, 2018.

## Secondary School Writing Center Directors

November 9-10, 2018

George Mason University

Arlington, VA

*"Process and Progress"*

This conference is for secondary school peer tutors, program directors, and school administrators. Proposals are due April 13, 2018. Address questions to [sswca.board@gmail.com](mailto:sswca.board@gmail.com). Conference website: [sswca.org](http://sswca.org).

## The Latin American Network of Writing Centers

October 23-25, 2019

Guadalajara, Mexico

ITESO University

*"Reading, Writing, and Orality in Writing Centers and Writing Programs"*

LANWC conferences are held on a biannual basis, and information for the 2019 conference can be found on the website: [sites.google.com/site/redlacre/home](https://sites.google.com/site/redlacre/home). For additional information, contact Minerva Ochoa: [euridice@iteso.mx](mailto:euridice@iteso.mx).

### GET INVOLVED WITH WLN

**Interested in serving as a reviewer?** Contact Kim Ballard <[kim.ballard@wmich.edu](mailto:kim.ballard@wmich.edu)> and Lee Ann Glowzenski <[laglowzenski@gmail.com](mailto:laglowzenski@gmail.com)>.

**Interested in contributing news, announcements, or accounts of work in your writing center to the Blog (photos welcomed)?** Contact Brian Hotson <[brian.hotson@smu.ca](mailto:brian.hotson@smu.ca)>.

**Interested in guest editing a special issue on a topic of your choice?** Contact Muriel Harris <[harrism@purdue.edu](mailto:harrism@purdue.edu)>.

**Interested in writing an article or Tutors' Column to submit to WLN?** Check the guidelines on the WLN website: <[wlnjournal.org/submit.php](http://wlnjournal.org/submit.php)>.



## Conference Calendar

**March 3, 2018:** SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION  
Thousand Oaks, CA

**Contact:** Scott Chiu <schiu@callutheran.edu> and Tanvi Patel <tanvipatel@callutheran.edu>; **conference website:** <sandbox.socialwritingcenters.org/2018-tutor-conference>.

**March 9, 2018:** WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION OF JAPAN  
Tokyo, Japan

**Contact:** <wcajapan@gmail.com>; **conference website:** <drive.google.com/file/d/1IBBVph1RHqsMDW9BQbfkZH0Qmu3Kukt6/view>.

**March 23-25, 2018:** EAST CENTRAL WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION  
Columbus, OH

**Contact:** Genie Giaimo: <Giaimo.13@osu.edu>; **conference website:** <ecwca.org/conference/current-cfp>.

**March 23-24, 2018:** MID-ATLANTIC WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION  
Glassboro, NJ

**Contact:** Celeste Del Russo: <conference@mawca>; **conference website:** <www.mawca.org>.

**March 23-24, 2018:** MISSISSIPPI WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION  
Senatobia, MS

**Contact:** Jason Jones: <wjones@northwestms.edu>; **conference website:** <bit.ly/2AsAOIU>.

**March 24-25, 2018:** NORTHEAST WRITING CENTER ASSOCIATION  
Worcester, MA

**Contact:** Robert Mundy: <rmundy@pace.edu>; **conference website:** <newcaconference.org>.

**March 30, 2018:** ROCKY MOUNTAIN WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION  
Salt Lake City, UT

**Contact:** Anne McMurtrey: <anne.mcmurtrey@utah.edu>; **conference website:** <akernest.wixsite.com/rmwca>.

**April 7, 2018:** NORTHERN CALIFORNIA WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION  
Santa Clara, CA

**Contact:** Denise Krane: <dkrane@scu.edu>; **conference website:** <norcalwca.org/events/conference-2018>.

**April 13-14, 2018:** COLORADO AND WYOMING TUTORS CONFERENCE  
Denver, CO  
**Contact:** Michael Ennis: <mennis@regis.edu>; **conference website:** <www.cwwtc.org>.

**May 24-25, 2018:** CANADIAN WRITING CENTRES ASSOCIATION  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, CA  
**Contact:** Sarah King: <sking@utsc.utoronto.ca>; **conference website:** <cwcaaccr.com>.

**June 1-3, 2018:** WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION OF CHINA  
Haining, Zhejiang, China  
**Contact:** <zjuewritingcenter@163.com>; **conference website:** <writingcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CFP-for-2nd-WCAC.pdf>.

**October 10-13, 2018:** INTERNATIONAL WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION  
Atlanta, GA  
**Contact:** Nikki Caswell: <caswelln@ecu.edu>; **conference website:** <writingcenters.org/annual-conference-2>.

**November 1-4, 2018:** NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PEER TUTORING  
IN WRITING  
South Padre Island, TX  
**Contact:** Randall Monty: <randall.monty@utrgv.edu> or <rgvwc17@gmail.com>; **conference website:** <www.ncptw.info/index.php?msg=2>.

**November 8-9, 2018:** MIDDLE EAST-NORTH AFRICA WRITING  
CENTER ALLIANCE  
Al Ain, UAE  
**Contact:** Elizabeth Whitehouse: <Ewhitehouse@uaeu.ac.ae>; **conference website:** <bit.ly/menawca2018>

**November 9-10, 2018:** SECONDARY SCHOOL WRITING CENTERS  
ASSOCIATION  
Arlington, VA  
**Contact:** <sswca.board@gmail.com>; **conference website:** <sswca.org>.

**October 23-25, 2019:** LATIN AMERICAN NETWORK OF WRITING CENTERS  
Guadalajara, Mexico  
**Contact:** Minerva Ochoa: <euridice@iteso.mx>; **conference website:** <sites.google.com/site/redlacpe/home>.



## ***WLN: A Journal of Writing Center Scholarship***

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