

THE WRITING LAB

N E W S L E E T T E R

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

March/April, 2012

— FROM THE EDITOR —

As I put together this issue of the *Writing Lab Newsletter*, I realized how tightly the issue focuses on tutors. Each article helps us extend our knowledge about training and working with our staff. Dana Driscoll and Sarah Harcourt introduce us to their training program that helps tutors learn how to transfer the knowledge they acquire during and after training and, in turn, how those tutors can help students learn to transfer knowledge gained in tutorials to other writing.

Next, Kevin Davis reviews one of the most popular sources of readings for tutors, *The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors*, edited by Christina Murphy and Steve Sherwood. As Davis considers the 4th edition, he notes which articles continue to appear in this edition, which have dropped out, and which have been added. From that, he draws conclusions as to what this tells us about both this edition and our field of writing center studies.

Another major topic is assessment of tutors' abilities, and Diana Awad Scrocco shares her method of having tutors self-assess their online tutoring skills. And this issue of *WLN* then concludes with Molly McHarg's essay on being a tutor with a disability as she asks the question of how much to disclose when tutoring students.

The next issue of *WLN* issue will be the final one for this academic year. So if you have any conference announcements, please send me an e-mail by April 15. And for those of us who will soon be venturing off to spring conferences—enjoy and safe travels.

◆ *Muriel Harris, editor*

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TRAINING VS. LEARNING: TRANSFER OF LEARNING IN A PEER TUTORING COURSE AND BEYOND¹

◆ *Dana Lynn Driscoll and Sarah Harcourt*
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Rochester, MI

Transfer of learning is the ability to take something learned in one context (such as a peer tutoring course) and apply it in another context (such as an elementary classroom). Robert Haskell describes the complexity and importance of transfer when he writes, "At first glance [transfer] is very simple. Transfer of learning, however, is the very foundation of learning, thinking, and problem solving" (xiii). For over 100 years, researchers in education and psychology have worked to understand the challenges of transfer, and this concept is of great interest to rhetoric, composition, and writing center studies. Through our experiences, as a faculty member teaching a transfer-focused peer tutoring course (Dana Lynn Driscoll) and an elementary education undergraduate student during and after the course (Sarah Harcourt), we explore ways in which transfer can contribute to writing center tutoring pedagogy by re-envisioning how we prepare tutors and shifting our focus from "tutor training" to "tutor learning."

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Manuscripts: Before sending in submissions, please consult the guidelines on the *WLN* website. Recommended length for articles is approximately 2500-3000 words, 1500 words for reviews and Tutors' Column essays, in MLA format (including Works Cited). Please submit files to the *WLN* website.

TRANSFER OF LEARNING: DEFINITIONS AND CONNECTION TO WRITING CENTER PEDAGOGY

Research consistently illustrates the difficulty students have in transferring knowledge and skills from high school to college, from course to course, and from college to the workplace. Studies in writing transfer reveal that students often struggle to adapt writing knowledge to new situations and fail to recognize situations in which previous knowledge can be applied. In *College Writing and Beyond*, Anne Beaufort describes how her student participant had difficulty applying writing knowledge from first-year composition (FYC) to his majors, navigating between writing in his two majors and applying writing knowledge from his majors to the workplace. Her findings are consistent with earlier research by Lucille McCarthy, who called her participant a "stranger in a strange land" as he struggled with engaging in similar writing tasks in multiple college writing courses (234). From studies by Elizabeth Wardle, by Linda Bergmann and Janet Zepernick, and by Dana Driscoll, and research in other fields, a consensus is emerging about how to better teach transferrable skills in writing courses. These transfer pedagogies include several areas addressed in this article: making connections, encouraging metacognitive reflection, and building transferrable knowledge. Thus far, research has focused primarily on FYC and other coursework. As yet, largely unexplored is how transfer might be a useful concept for writing center studies.

Transfer is compatible with writing center pedagogy in at least two ways: by connecting to our goal of producing better writers and by encouraging professional development for tutors. Stephen North argues that the goal of writing centers is to make better writers, not better texts. By emphasizing the writer's development over time rather than the ability to produce a single paper, the writing center tutor focuses on a writer's ability to transfer knowledge gained beyond a single assignment or tutoring session. Transfer of learning is also a useful concept for tutors' professional development, as demonstrated by Bradley Hughes, Paula Gillespie, and Harvey Kail in the Peer Writing Tutor Alumni Research Project. This study surveys former tutors and asks them to make direct connections between the skills and experiences gained as writing tutors and their current workplace or educational contexts. Although these authors don't use the word "transfer," their research asks tutors to describe skills they have transferred into new contexts, including writing, critical reading, and listening.

Theories of transfer also help us re-evaluate our terminology for tutor preparation. While writing center practitioners often refer to the preparation tutors receive, both within the writing center and through formal coursework, as "tutor training," we argue that using this term de-emphasizes the importance of transferrable learning. The National Research Council dedicates a chapter of its extensive literature review on educational research to "Learning and Transfer" and argues that transfer occurs in learning contexts, where students learn adaptive approaches, but not in training contexts, where skill sets for specific contexts are acquired (39). For example, in a learning context, students are taught with the assumption that they will be using material in diverse future contexts beyond the immediate classroom. In a training context, a student is trained for a particular situation and no assumptions are made that the knowledge would be able to transfer to other contexts.² Meanwhile, David Smit argues that transfer is what the term "learning" actually means (130). To show one example of how "tutor learning" and transfer pedagogy can be enacted, Dana will describe her transfer-focused Peer Tutoring course.

DANA REFLECTS: DESIGNING A TRANSFER-FOCUSED PEER TUTORING COURSE

In designing a peer tutoring course (WRT320) to meet the needs of a diverse set of students, not all of whom are familiar with the writing center, I drew upon three pedagogical techniques that fostered

transfer of learning: making connections, encouraging metacognitive reflection, and building transferable writing knowledge. This section describes these three concepts and illustrates how they can be applied.

Making Connections. Educational psychologists Gabriel Salomon and David Perkins demonstrate that for successful transfer to occur, students must possess two kinds of knowledge: forward-reaching, or anticipating future contexts where current knowledge learned can be applied, and backward-reaching, or recognizing and integrating previous learning into the present. Salomon and Perkins argue that transfer is not an automatic process; students must be actively engaged in making connections between previous, current, and future contexts. As my own research has shown, student perceptions of future writing contexts can greatly hinder or facilitate successful transfer.

In WRT320, I dedicate substantial portions of the course to helping students make direct connections between their past writing experiences, the tutoring practices we investigate, and their own future career plans. I facilitate this process by assigning an open-ended research project, where students are encouraged to connect the information on tutoring with their own interests. This assignment asks students to propose and execute a project where they choose both the topic and manner in which it is delivered (paper, website, newsletter, video, etc.). Many education students, like my co-author Sarah, connect peer tutoring to their future teaching careers. Students have created video projects that examine one-to-one collaboration in a variety of fields (sports coaching, counseling); lesson plans for peer tutoring in elementary school classrooms; and websites that provide suggestions for working with ELL/ESL writers in different contexts.

In a second assignment, students are asked to film a short tutoring scenario that presents a potential tutoring problem.³ We watch the scenarios and engage in discussion about them on two levels. First, we discuss how to respond to the immediate situation and determine the skills or knowledge that would best address the challenge. Second, we focus on transfer and consider how we might activate a student's prior knowledge of the student being tutored. Activating prior knowledge includes talking to the tutee about his/her previous experiences with similar genres or assignments and assisting the tutee in seeing the similarities between writing contexts and addressing what new skills may be needed.

Encouraging Metacognitive Reflection. Metacognition, or “thinking about thinking,” is crucial to successful transfer. As described by Mohammad Nodoushan, metacognition encourages students to take an active role in their learning process by reflecting on their learning, monitoring their comprehension, and evaluating whether or not they have sufficient skills to address the task at hand (1-2). Reflection takes multiple forms in WRT320, including project reflections and weekly reading responses. As part of each major project, students are required to write a reflection that encourages them to engage in metacognition. Questions from the reflection prompt include:

What did you learn from this assignment?

Where did you struggle in this assignment? What did you learn through this struggle?

How does this assignment/reading connect with your other courses this term?

What do you still need to know about this technique/issue? What questions are left unanswered and how might you find the answers?

In what other domains (home, school, or work) does this tutoring technique apply?

“ [T]he emphasis on making connections, metacognitive reflection, and transferable knowledge is especially important in moving from ‘tutor training’ to ‘tutor learning.’ ”

Throughout the course, I encourage students to become more aware of their learning and writing process through weekly reading responses. Students write responses to course readings in which they monitor their comprehension, connect outside experiences, and ask questions about the content. The responses are designed to help students not only better understand the material but also take an active role in their own learning about learning. Students are asked to include three questions in their reading responses—these questions help them monitor their comprehension and facilitate inquiry-based classroom discussion.

Two metacognitive activities serve as the beginning and final reflective assignments for the class. In the first week of class, students are asked to describe skills they already possess and skills they need to acquire to be a successful tutor (this also activates prior knowledge, as described under “Making Connections” above). They monitor these skills as the class progresses through various low-stakes reflective activities. In the final assignment, I ask them to revisit the first assignment and reflect upon how their skill set for tutoring has changed and how these skills might be used in other aspects of their lives.

Building Transferrable Knowledge. One of the critical challenges with transfer, as the National Research Council describes, is that the knowledge students gain in courses often becomes compartmentalized and students have difficulty abstracting beyond the original learning situation. A course that emphasizes tutoring techniques in the writing center could certainly suffer this challenge because tutors may only view tutoring techniques as useful to writing centers and not beyond. It is important that peer tutoring courses emphasize building transferrable knowledge: knowledge that tutors can use to help students and themselves understand and adapt to diverse writing situations.

To address the issue of moving between writing tasks and contexts, I assign advanced readings on rhetoric, metacognition, and discourse community theory that help students understand and adapt to new writing situations. These readings, such as chapters from Beaufort’s *College Writing and Beyond* and from the National Research Council’s *How People Learn*, equip students with theories of learning, writing expertise, and discourse communities. The readings also help students better understand the theoretical underpinnings of the course. We apply material from the readings to their tutoring observation and co-tutoring sessions through reflective writing and in-class activities.

While the activities described above may be common to other tutoring courses, the emphasis on connections, metacognitive reflection, and transferrable knowledge is especially important in moving from “tutor training” to “tutor learning.” In fact, my experience suggests that with some additional framing and discussion, activities designed to build good tutoring behaviors can also help tutors transfer knowledge to both their writing center work and their future careers. This pedagogy of transfer applies both to new tutors and also encourages tutors to help students visiting the writing center become more successful in transferring knowledge and making connections using similar principles. The success of this approach is demonstrated through Sarah’s experiences in transferring her peer tutor coursework to the writing center and beyond.

SARAH REFLECTS: EXPERIENCES DURING AND AFTER WRT320

I originally registered for the WRT320 course as a requirement for my elementary education program. I knew there had to be some relevance from this course to my field; otherwise, why was I required to take it? Little did I know that I was going to be able to transfer almost all of the course learning to the elementary education field and to gain valuable experience in doing so. The projects and course activities in WRT320 were helpful in demonstrating the transfer of learning from a college course setting

to an elementary classroom. While I originally found the weekly reading responses tedious, when I started making more connections between the articles and my experiences, I became engaged. We had a roundtable discussion each session about different scenarios, problems, and techniques that tutors may encounter in writing centers where we again made connections. For the open-ended project, a peer and I created a newsletter about peer tutoring in the elementary classroom. The newsletter provided teachers with information about how to integrate peer tutoring into the classroom, thoughts on including student collaboration, lesson plans, and tutoring approaches for different subject areas.

After taking WRT320, I was inspired to work at the Oakland University Writing Center (OUWC). I found the dialogue and coaching techniques relevant to how I would work with students in my future classroom. By asking questions like, “What do you notice about this sentence you wrote?” I offered the student an opportunity to revisit his or her writing. If s/he didn’t notice anything, it would be an opportunity for me to teach. Additionally, from WRT320 and working in the writing center, I learned to use common language, positive feedback, and constructive criticism. These techniques became useful as I moved into my student teaching.

Throughout my student teaching, I realized the applicability of the course and tutoring in new ways. My experiences emphasized the values of WRT320, including collaboration among writers, reflecting on writing, and self-monitoring through metacognition. In the suburban first-grade classroom where I was placed, the supervising teacher had already instituted something called “small moments,” which featured reflective and personal narrative writing assignments where students were asked to describe their own experiences. Drawing upon my coursework both in elementary education and in my peer tutoring class, I guided students to refine their small moments writing and taught “how-to” writing later in the year. I created a checklist of all the skills students had learned, drawing upon the theories of metacognition and learning about learning from the WRT320 course. I quickly learned that I had to model both reflective writing and the checklist, similar to how I modeled various writing techniques for writing center students. I also encouraged students to share their writing and to engage in conversations about writing as peers. In sum, because WRT320 emphasized the value of tutoring skills in contexts other than writing centers, I found that I continue to use writing center pedagogy as I move from being a student, to a tutor, and into my teaching career.

CONCLUSION: TRANSFER AND TUTOR LEARNING

Although we often talk about “tutor training” in writing center studies, what we are actually talking about is “tutor learning.” By shifting from the term “training” to the term “learning,” and embracing transfer of learning as a worthy pedagogical goal for writing centers, we are placing the emphasis on the diverse learning activities associated within and beyond writing centers. We suggest that tutor learning include:

- *Making connections and encouraging transfer.* Engaging students in discussions about the course content and connecting this content to students’ experiences and lives beyond the writing center. Encouraging students through course activities, writing, and research and examining at how tutoring applies to multiple fields and careers.
- *Fostering metacognition through reflection.* Encouraging students to monitor their own learning: the challenges they face, the experiences they have, the philosophies they hold, and how these contribute to their understanding of learning to write and learning to tutor.
- *Building transferrable writing knowledge.* Learning and applying rhetorical knowledge, discourse community knowledge, and theories of learning and demonstrating—directly and specifically—how these are used across genres and contexts.

NEWS

WRITING CENTER DIRECTOR TOWSON UNIVERSITY

Towson University is accepting applications for a Director of the Writing Center to report to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. This position holds overall administrative authority for Writing Support Services; supervises professional staff, graduate and undergraduate student tutors and assistants; and leads services and programs in support of student development of writing skills.

Responsibilities: Manage day-to-day operations including scheduling, budgets, program design and monitoring, and strategic planning; ensure a strong ongoing program of student writing assistance through tutorial sessions, workshops, and other means; oversee writing support for international students; encourage student interest in writing improvement at all levels of current capability; select, train, monitor and evaluate student writing consultants in the Writing Center in cooperation with staff and faculty, as appropriate; serve as an advocate for writing support programs to faculty across the University. Additional responsibilities listed on the website.

Qualifications: Master’s degree required with either a degree in Rhetoric and Composition or academic training including systematic grounding in writing instruction. The selected candidate must have five years’ experience in writing instruction and support, including at least two years with administrative responsibility; and additional qualifications listed on the website.

Salary: Competitive salary and full university benefits that include excellent health, life insurance, and retirement plans; tuition remission; and 22 days of annual leave. The position is contingent on funds being available at the time of hire.

To Apply: Please complete the online application: <<http://www.new.towson.edu/adminfinance/hr/employment/index.asp>>. Upload one document containing a cover letter, resume, and contact information for three professional references. This position is open until filled.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Director of the Writing Center Willamette University

Willamette University seeks a Director of a flourishing Writing Center in a well-established WAC program. In addition to directing the Writing Center, the Director will teach two to three writing courses a year and will consult with faculty who teach writing-centered courses throughout the College of Liberal Arts. This position is renewable for up to three years, at the rank of Visiting Assistant Professor or Instructor, depending on qualifications.

Minimal qualifications: ABD in Rhetoric and Composition with significant writing center experience, including administration; teaching experience in composition courses.

Preferred qualifications: PhD in Rhetoric, Writing, Composition, or related field; significant writing center experience (preferably administrative); and publications in the field. Training and experience in ELL and writing in digital environments or Little Red Schoolhouse pedagogy highly desirable.

Applications should include a letter, CV, contact information for three references, graduate transcripts (informal), and a short essay (1000 words maximum) on your understanding of the role of the Writing Center in a small, select, residential liberal arts college. Apply online at <<http://jobs.willamette.edu/postings/307>>. Screening begins 14 March 2012; applications received by that date preferred. Initial interviews will take place at the CCCC meeting (21-24 March) in St. Louis, or by phone.

As our experiences have demonstrated, transfer of learning can be meaningfully embraced by writing centers and peer tutoring faculty to provide tutors with more applicable tutor development experiences—experiences that allow tutors to see connections between contexts. By re-envisioning tutor training as tutor learning and integrating transfer-based pedagogies, we can more effectively enhance not only our tutorials but also what tutors take with them beyond the writing center. ♦

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Endnotes

¹We would like to thank Janet Auten, Muriel Harris, Sherry Wynn Perdue, Jennifer Wells, and one anonymous reviewer for their valuable comments on earlier drafts. Thank you to Oakland University WRT320 students who have provided valuable course feedback.

²Learning vs. training discussions have a longstanding history in higher education and reflect the shifting value systems of the academy. For an examination of tensions between specific skill training vs. general education, see Berlin (1984).

³Class tutoring scenarios can be viewed here: <<http://writingcentertutorials.pbworks.com/>>.

BOOK REVIEW

Murphy, Christina, and Steve Sherwood, Eds. *The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors* 4th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011. (352 pp., paperback)

TRADITION AND INNOVATION

◆ *Kevin Davis*
East Central University
Ada, OK

Writing centers have, academically speaking, identity issues. Having been around the writing center block a time or two in the last 30 years, I've never been entirely certain where we stand. Oh, I know where my writing center stands, but I am far less certain about writing centers as a group. Are we our own academic area, or are we a subset of composition studies, education, or English (whatever that means)? Are we a traditional humanity, or are we more of a social science? Are we a service industry or an academic bastion? Is tutoring writing more about texts or more about writers? Do we favor theoretical fashions over research constructs? Are we building on our history or rejecting it in favor of new definitions of ourselves? When we bring new tutors into the fold, are we creating scholars or training workers?

I'm reasonably certain that I have no definitive answers to those questions, but a new edition of *The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors* (4th edition, Bedford/ St. Martins, 2011) has me pondering them yet again. In this new edition, Christina Murphy and Steve Sherwood have extensively revised the selections in the book, and I want to approach this review by reflecting on what their selections say about writing centers. The four editions (distributed over the last 16 years) give us a unique opportunity to see ourselves over time, to reflect on how we've changed and to project our future. Who are we? Where have we been? And, moreover, what do the editors' choices suggest about writing center work?

As a field, can we point to certain moments in our shared history as quintessential? What do those roots say about us, as a field and as professionals? Approached more practically, we could ask ourselves, "What shared background knowledge does a new tutor need to know when joining the writing center community?"

Using *The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors* as our guide, we can identify four articles that Murphy and Sherwood see as representative of our roots, ones which have survived the changes of all three previous editions: Stephen North's "The Idea of a Writing Center," Andrea Lunsford's "Collaboration, Control, and the Idea of a Writing Center," Jeff Brooks's "Minimalist Tutoring: Making the Student Do All the Work," and Anne Dipardo's "Whispers of Coming and Going: Lessons from Fannie." So those are our roots: a self-justification originally written to a doubting, external audience; a brief, general argument for socially constructed, contextual knowledge; a minimalistic tutoring philosophy which places responsibility for learning on the learners; and a case study of one tutor/writer pair over time.

I'm not sure what to make of this, but my initial reaction makes me more than a little uneasy. Why, after all these decades, are we still needing to justify our existence and, moreover, what makes us need to justify ourselves to ourselves? Why are we best represented by 20-year-old statements of systemic philosophies which oddly omit many prominent authors in the field (e.g. Kenneth

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IWCA Writing Center Summer Institute

Imagine five days of stimulating discussions with writing center colleagues from the U.S. and abroad, changing hearts and minds about matters of teaching and learning, sharing insights and practices about technology and assessment, and discovering new approaches to help your tutors better understand and help second-language writers. Imagine all this taking place this summer at a lovely resort in the lush, green mountains of western Pennsylvania?

The IWCA Summer Institute is ideal for current or would-be writing center directors and assistants, writing program administrators, tutors, writing teachers (high school or college), curriculum developers, graduate students, and academic leaders both in the U.S. and abroad. Institute leaders offer presentations and roundtable discussions on a variety of topics and issues. Because of the low participant-to-leader ratio and limited enrollment, there are many opportunities to talk one-to-one with leaders and other participants throughout the week.

The 2012 Summer Institute will be held July 29-August 3, 2012 at Seven Springs Mountain Resort, southeast of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Air travel is to Pittsburgh International Airport (PIT). For more information, including registration, please visit <http://iwcasummerinstitute.com/> or contact the institute co-chairs: Ben Rafoth (brafoth@iup.edu) and Nathalie Singh-Corcoran (Nathalie.Singh-Corcoran@mail.wvu.edu).

Space is limited. Scholarships are available. Visit our website!

Bruffee), suggesting that we have neither grown nor evolved in two decades? Why are we still reprinting a one-sided advocacy of non-directive tutoring when many theorists (some included in this collection) have largely discredited this overly simplistic approach? Does a single case study from the previous century accurately reflect our research? Taken together, these “old standards” seem to represent what the editors consider to be the essential, time-honored perspectives for a writing tutor to know. But are they? As we bring new tutors into our community, is this the picture of ourselves that we want to present to them? Is this really how we see ourselves and how we want to introduce ourselves to the newest members of our writing center community, beginning tutors?

The first edition of the *St. Martin's Guide* included four sections: Theoretical Constructs (two articles), Interpersonal Dynamics (three articles), Responding to Texts (three articles), and Affirming Diversity (three articles). Put another way, we could see these sections as representing various important aspects of writing center work: assumptions, communication, practice, and acceptance. In subsequent editions, Ethical Dimensions appeared as a topic of concern, as did Online Tutoring.

The latest edition has evolved and enlarged. Theory (“Theoretical Constructs”) now contains five articles, while practice (“What We Talk about When We Talk about Writing”) has grown to ten; diversity (“Affirming Diversity”) has greatly expanded its definition of diversity through inclusion of five articles, most on new aspects of the concept; and emerging issues (“Explorations: The Multimodal Writing Center”) offers four articles. Gone are sections on communication, ethics, and online tutoring (though the latter two topics are broached to some degree in individual articles subsumed into other sections).

At the least, the realignment suggests that we have a lot more to talk about than we used to, and it tells me that Sherwood and Murphy see our values shifting. They now provide more theoretical assumptions and improved philosophical balance than in previous editions. But are all these changes good? The editors now see practice as a larger umbrella, one which includes assessment as a more important component than ethical considerations, one which sees outreach as more significant than communication. As a writing center director, I do, of course, see the need for assessment and outreach, but I struggle to see how they are issues of “practice” (the division in which these articles are placed) which are of interest to tutors (the designated audience for this collection).

I have no complaints about the expanded list of resources included by the editors; breadth can be good. But as the *Sourcebook* has gone in new directions, it has abandoned or condensed previous areas of discussion, and as it has expanded its base of articles, it seems to have partially redefined its own audience.

The fourth edition of *The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors* represents a significant overhaul: nearly 75% of the articles have changed from the previous edition; the increased size allows for more voices to be heard; collectively, the discussions have more depth, coming at topics from multiple perspectives. As collectors of articles, Murphy and Sherwood have assembled a representative sampling of good writing center scholarship.

Yet, somehow, the collection leaves me wanting more: a more focused sense of audience; a more comprehensive conceptualization guiding the selection process; a collection that tells me the best about our common roots, our historical discussions, and our directions for the future. As I look over the collection, I cannot help but think Murphy and Sherwood could have done more to conceptualize the new edition as a comprehensive introduction to our work for our newest members.



HOW DO YOU THINK YOU DID? INVOLVING TUTORS IN SELF-ASSESSMENT AND PEER-ASSESSMENT DURING OWL TRAINING

◆ *Diana Awad Scrocco*
Kent State University
Kent, OH

In preparing peer tutors for responding to student writers in an asynchronous Online Writing Lab (OWL), writing center administrators must engage tutors in activities that focus on writing about students' writing rather than talking face-to-face with writers. OWL training proves difficult because, as Roberta Buck and David Shumway have emphasized, critiquing student papers asynchronously contradicts a basic tenet of writing center theory: we work with writers, not texts. Another key struggle in OWL training is ascertaining the strengths and weaknesses of the activities designed to prepare tutors for asynchronous online tutoring. In a recent restructuring of the OWL training program at our writing center, I attempted to bring the values and collaborative atmosphere of our center to the forefront by engaging tutors in reflective self- and peer-assessment activities to facilitate their transition into asynchronous online tutoring. To evaluate the effectiveness of the new program, I surveyed twelve tutors about their experiences with the assessment activities and found that not only did they appreciate and learn from the experience, but they also had productive suggestions for developing the program to be even more inclusive of our writing center culture and values.

Several scholars have identified key challenges and benefits of helping tutors learn to engage in OWL work. Perhaps the greatest obstacle of OWL training relates to a common critique of asynchronous online tutoring: "The relative anonymity of e-mail may appear to reverse North's famous bumper sticker motto for writing centers ('Our job is produce better writers, not necessarily better writing'), giving too much importance to the writing, at the expense of 'the writer'" (Coogan 54). Joanna Castner points out that asynchronous online tutoring involves relatively little dialogue between tutors and writers, which limits writers' engagement in tutorial sessions (120). The primary objective of OWL training thus includes helping tutors "to reconceive response and commentary, to relearn our skills, or even to learn them consciously for the first time" (Hewett xvii). Further, Dana Anderson emphasizes that tutors must learn to balance tutor and writer roles in an "exclusively textual collaborative relationship" (80) by critically reconsidering how to connect with writers in a relatively sterile technological space. Those who design OWL preparation programs must therefore make difficult decisions about "which aspects of writing center theory and pedagogy are to be retained and which cannot be replicated exactly" (Harris and Pemberton 155). Such decisions lie at the heart of my restructuring of our training program and my subsequent survey study.

Over the past five years, the OWL training program at our writing center has undergone significant reform. Five years ago, our program required second-semester tutors to read an anonymous student paper and conduct a simulated OWL session; later, the tutors met with the director or graduate student assistant director to analyze their responses and determine whether another simulated session would better equip the tutor for online conferencing. In the 2009-2010 school year, our assistant director decided to include more reflective work and self-assessment in the OWL preparation process. He asked the tutors to engage in preliminary reflective activities, such as comparing face-to-face and online sessions and contemplating potential uses of a handout with guidelines for asynchronous tutoring; tutors then engaged in a simulated OWL session and then assessed their own and an anonymous tutor's response to the same paper. After these activities, the assistant

TAKE NOTE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PEER TUTORING IN WRITING

Call for Proposals
 Chicago, IL
 November 2-4, 2012
 "Understanding Tutor Identity"
 Keynote: Colin Sato

In their award-winning article, "What They Take with Them: Findings from the Peer Writing Tutor Alumni Research Project," Brad Hughes, Paula Gillespie, and Harvey Kail describe tutoring as a "developmental experience" (2010). We invite tutors to consider their own developmental experiences and share how their insights inform their work as tutors and leaders.

Numerous guiding questions for presenters are available on the conference website. We ask you to consider your own identity as a tutor and to share with us how understanding identity plays a part in your growth as a tutor and your role as a leader. Possible formats for proposals include, but are not limited to, whole session panel presentations, individual presentations, roundtable discussions, workshops, and poster presentations. Alternative formats will be considered. Submit proposals at the NCPTW Chicago 2012 website: <<http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/ncptw2012/index.html>>.

If you have any questions, please e-mail us at ncptw.chicago2012@gmail.com

Andrew Jeter
 Chair, NCPTW Chicago 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PeerCentered [Unplugged] Call for Editorial Board Members

PeerCentered is looking for motivated peer tutors to comprise an editorial board for a special publication project to be completed by fall 2013. The publication, tentatively titled *PeerCentered[Unplugged]* will be a collection of essays by peer tutors about their work in writing centers. It will be a physical publication with a limited run, but will eventually be made available.

In order to be considered for the *PeerCentered[Unplugged]* editorial board, applicants must currently work as a peer writing tutor. For the purposes of this call, a peer writing tutor is a student who works in a writing center at an educational institution. Graduate, undergraduate, and high school student applicants are welcome. Applicants need to provide a statement of interest explaining why they want to serve on the editorial board and what qualities they will bring to the board (250 words maximum). Applicants will also need to provide a letter of support from the director (or equivalent) at their home writing center. Other letters of support will be considered but are not required.

To apply, please send your statement of interest, letter of support, and any other materials to bolster your application to Clint.Gardner@slcc.edu. Please put PEERCENTERED EDITORIAL BOARD APPLICATION in the subject line. Applications that do not have this subject line may be unintentionally overlooked. The deadline for applications is March 15, 2012.

You can find out more about PeerCentered at <http://www.peercentered.org>.

director met with each of the tutors to discuss their responses to the tasks. He found that these tutors seemed somewhat more prepared for online tutoring than tutors in previous years, but his informal sense was that tutors had mixed feelings about the assessment activities.

At the beginning of the academic year 2010-2011, I took on the responsibility of mentoring our novice tutors for the OWL, and I identified two major problems with our current training program. First, during their simulated OWL sessions, some tutors still fell into the trap of editing the writer's work or overwhelming the writer with a great deal of feedback. Second, tutors seemed somewhat confused by the assessment activity, which required them to evaluate their own and an unknown tutor's simulated response. To address these difficulties, I hypothesized that requiring tutors to self-assess and peer-assess simulated responses might expose them to multiple, authentic approaches to the same student paper and could promote better critical thinking about online tutoring techniques and theories. Because of my conception of OWL training, I added some preliminary theoretical reading and reflection activities, and I modified the assessment activity to involve students in assessing their own and a peer's response to the simulated submission.¹ I met with tutors twice during the process: once after the preliminary reflective activities and once after the simulated session and assessment activities. After they finished their modules, I surveyed tutors in order to answer this question: What do tutors believe they learned from an OWL training activity that required them to assess their own and another tutor's simulated OWL response?

My theoretical grounding for these assessment activities stems from Brian Huot's contention that "people who write well have the ability to assess their own writing, and if we are to teach students to write successfully, then we have to teach them to assess their own writing" (10). I extend this argument by hypothesizing that tutors who compose effective OWL responses must know how to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in their own and others' responses. Encouraging the tutors to reflect on their strengths and limitations and compare their simulated OWL response with a peer's response, I approached the assessment module of our online tutor training program as a "writing log or journal, a place for thinking and discovering" (White 67). I speculate that integrating assessment into this training process will weave self-evaluation into these tutors' normal routine in the OWL, and I envision that this generation of OWL tutors may be more reflective and analytical of their online tutoring work.

To understand tutors' opinions of the assessment activities in their OWL preparation, I surveyed the two most recent generations of OWL-trained tutors: the tutors who assessed their own and an anonymous tutor's simulated responses and the tutors who assessed their own and a peer's simulated responses. In the survey, I asked tutors to offer their overall perception of the assessment activities. I also asked them to reflect on how they felt about assessing a peer's response and how the activity facilitated their comfort in online tutoring. Then, the tutors answered a prompt about the theories of online tutoring that emerged during the assessment activities. Finally, the tutors compared their own readiness for the OWL with previous tutors' preparation, which only required them to do a simulated session and meet with the director. Six tutors who were trained during the 2009-2010 year filled out surveys (four females and two males), four of whom were undergraduate student tutors and two of whom were graduate student tutors. Six tutors who were trained during the 2010-2011 year were surveyed, all of whom were undergraduate tutors (four females and two males). I analyzed the results of these surveys by categorizing tutors' opinions of the strengths and weaknesses of the assessment module and their suggestions for improvement. In the remainder of this article, I discuss the tutors' perceptions of the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 OWL assessment activities, and I conclude with some productive avenues for developing this OWL preparation program.

The 2009-2010 trained tutors perceived assessing an anonymous OWL response as facilitating exploration of their own strategies and ineffective tactics, building collaboration among tutors-in-training, and reinforcing the importance of communication in online tutoring. Because this particular sample response modeled typical weaknesses of novice tutors' OWL responses, tutors claimed that the anonymous tutor's insensitive and critical comments indicated what not to do while tutoring online. This model taught tutors the importance of limiting their focus to higher-order concerns, including details, attempting to be supportive, and maintaining professionalism. Tutors reported that informally discussing their assessments of this anonymous tutor's response with other novice tutors promoted collaboration in their training and enhanced their meetings with the directors. Tutors also argued that reading an example of an OWL response positioned them as the audience (i.e., the student) of the response, providing them with a unique perspective on effective OWL communication. Also, assessing someone else's response allowed these tutors to contrast their responses with another tutor's response, helping them develop a better sense of their own abilities and limitations. Finally, these tutors claimed that because they didn't know the tutor whose response they critiqued, they felt they could be more honest and critical.

Despite the strengths of the 2009-2010 assessment activity, tutors criticized the process of assessing an anonymous OWL response, highlighting the limitations of seeing only a negative example of an OWL response and the confusion incited by the ineffective response. Several tutors pointed out that the anonymous OWL response they assessed was an unsuccessful response, rife with common mistakes such as focusing on lower-order concerns and harshly critiquing the writer's work. This negative example made some tutors feel uncomfortable completing a simulated OWL session because they had not seen a positive model. Thus, the assessment activity and mock session left some tutors with a desire to meet with the assistant director or director to talk more specifically about what makes an effective response. In short, the anonymous OWL response left many tutors with more questions than answers.

As a result of these strengths and weaknesses, the 2009-2010 trained tutors offered some suggestions for improving the assessment activity. First, they advocated enhanced communication between tutors-in-training, arguing that meeting in person with other tutors to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of simulated OWL responses would be beneficial. Next, the tutors encouraged in-person peer reviews of OWL sessions with experienced online tutors, which might make the assessment exercise even more productive in helping novice online tutors cope with problems and discomfort. Finally, they argued in favor of better communication between tutors and students, proposing we involve OWL patrons in analyzing and evaluating their tutor's asynchronous response to their writing. Some tutors argued that tutors need feedback from student writers to maximally recognize their productive and unconstructive strategies.

Overwhelmingly, the 2010-2011 tutors perceived peer reviewing another tutor's simulated OWL session as a fruitful activity that facilitates their interaction with other tutors and gives them useful advice in the voice of a non-threatening peer. One tutor reported that analyzing another tutor's simulated response proved helpful and timely because both tutors were engaged in OWL preparation and were currently thinking critically about theories and practices of online tutoring. Others discussed how constructive criticism from more sources than just the assistant director is valuable because tutors-in-training receive multiple perceptions of their simulated OWL session. One tutor highlighted that peer-assessment feels much less intimidating than evaluation by the director or assistant director, who could be perceived as authority figures. Another tutor commented that she

TAKE NOTE

EUROPEAN WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION

May 7-9, 2012

American University in Bulgaria
Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

*“Creating Communities of Collaboration:
Writers, Learners, Institutions”*

Keynote speakers: Chris Batey and Sarah Haas

Our 2012 conference aims to offer a space for working collaborations in the fields of writing center work and writing pedagogies. To enable vivid networking across borders we invite presentations, workshops, and poster presentations. We will also offer open space sessions and ongoing group work throughout the conference. For further information, contact: Filitsa Mullen (FMullen@aubg.bg). Conference website: <<http://www.ewca2012.com/>>.

appreciated receiving feedback in the voice of a peer because it aided her understanding and retention of the advice. A different tutor compared this activity to shadowing face-to-face sessions, which he deems a critical part of in-person tutor training. These tutors' survey answers suggest that they likened this peer-assessment activity to Edward White's notion of "writing groups": "as evaluators as well as support groups" (68).

In addition to appreciating the collaborative nature of the peer-review activity, the 2010-2011 trained tutors also reported that the activity enabled them to analyze their own approaches, generate meta-knowledge about OWL tutoring, and compare face-to-face and online sessions. Tutors reported that the peer-review activity allowed them to compare their own simulated responses with a peer in the context of an actual session, which stimulated the tutors to be self-reflective about their approaches, language choices, and focus. One tutor mentioned that the self-assessment segment of the module made her more cognizant of her own strengths and limitations. Other tutors highlighted that the peer-review activity reinforced the differences between face-to-face and online tutoring sessions, honing their understanding of OWL principles and values. Also, one tutor asserted that the peer-review activity forced her to act as a teacher, pushing her to develop language for discussing what makes an effective or ineffective OWL session—a meta-knowledge of sorts. Most importantly, tutors emphasized the value of this activity as a learning activity, rather than one-sided evaluation from one's supervisor. They argued that this activity enables information and idea exchange, which allows tutors to become more unified in terms of techniques and practices of online tutoring.

Despite these strengths, tutors also reported some potential weaknesses of peer reviewing another tutor's simulated OWL session, including potentially offending other tutors, feeling ill-equipped to assess responses, and deeming written peer-assessment as limiting. Tutors pointed out that because they were friends with the other tutors undergoing training, they felt uncomfortable finding faults in their peers' OWL responses, and they feared insulting their coworkers. They also reported that they struggled somewhat with feeling defensive about the criticism offered to them. Tutors also highlighted that because they had only recently learned theories and practices of OWL responding, they felt somewhat unqualified to critique other tutors' simulated responses. As White has pointed out, self-assessment and peer-assessment can be "a painful and difficult process for students" (67). For this reason, I am not surprised that these tutors viewed peer criticism as potentially polarizing, but their fears that the peer-review activity would create divisions among tutors seem unfounded. By and large, the tutors seem to have learned essential lessons about responding to writers' work online, and interpersonal conflicts did not become evident. Finally, some tutors mentioned that written critiques of another tutor's simulated response can be misinterpreted or misunderstood, which could be problematic.

Considering these weaknesses, these tutors offered some ideas for improving the peer review of another tutor's simulated OWL session, including involving experienced OWL tutors, initiating in-person conversations about OWL strategies, and asking students for feedback about tutors' OWL responses. Tutors advocated involving novice and experienced OWL tutors in peer-review activities to encourage ongoing improvement in online tutoring among all tutors. Next, several tutors stressed the value of talking with other tutors about the strengths, weaknesses, and strategies of OWL responding; although writing feedback about another tutor's simulated response can be productive, tutors emphasized that chatting face-to-face is maximally understandable and supportive. Notably, tutors argued that OWL training and professional development should include students, perhaps by asking student writers to evaluate their OWL tutors' comments on their writing. All of these suggestions promote Rebecca Rickly's emphasis on "critical reflection – on . . . their impending practice, the peer tutoring community, and their own unique, evolving identity as tutors" (53).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Writing Center Position Medical University of South Carolina

The Center for Academic Excellence/Writing Center (CAE/WC) at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) in Charleston, SC, invites applicants for a one-year, Visiting Assistant Professorship or Lectureship to begin August 1, 2012, with possibility of one-year renewal.

Qualifications: The candidate should have a master's degree in composition and rhetoric, Ph.D. preferred, and at least two years of experience teaching in a writing center that has graduate students as part of its clientele. The ability to mentor students is essential. Knowledge of writing assessment is a plus.

Compensation: Provided by a grant. Academic Rank: Visiting Assistant Professor or Lectureship (based on degree), non-tenure track position, one-year with possible one-year extension. Application Information: Send a CV and three letters of recommendation to Dr. Jennie C. Ariail, Executive Director of Academic Enhancement, Division of Education and Student Life, Center for Academic Excellence/Writing Center, 201 Colbert Education/Library Building, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC, 29401. E-mail: ariailjc@musc.edu

Interested parties should submit an online application at www.musc/jobs.edu and apply for Job Requisition Number 048040, Visiting Assistant Professor. Position open until filled.

Because these twelve tutors perceive self- and peer-assessment activities as encouraging collaboration, strengthening online tutoring practices, and promoting self-reflection, we intend to extend these assessment activities beyond the OWL training program. In view of these tutors' opinions and reflections, the director and assistant directors in our writing center have formulated some ideas for developing our OWL program. Importantly, we plan to initiate a "refresher course" at the beginning of each academic year in which all OWL-trained tutors engage in a face-to-face peer review of each other's simulated sessions. By involving novice and experienced tutors in self-assessing and peer-assessing OWL responses, we aspire to develop a tutor-authored rubric in which to guide routine self- and peer-assessments of actual asynchronous online sessions. We are also brainstorming ideas for involving students in assessment of our OWL sessions and seeking feedback from students about their OWL tutor's response to them. Because skilled OWL tutors can accurately assess what works well and what needs improvement in an OWL response, we must continue to integrate self- and peer-assessment activities into our tutors' everyday practices so that reflective assessment becomes a fundamental step in their online tutoring process. ♦

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Notes

¹ The OWL preparation activities for our writing center's 2010-2011 trained tutors included the following: readings and a reflection on two chapters from Beth Hewett's *The Online Writing Conference: A Guide for Teachers and Tutors*; a reflection on the similarities and differences of face-to-face and online tutoring; a reflection on a handout I developed, which distills key strategies of online tutoring; a simulated OWL session; a reflection on the simulated OWL session; a self- and peer-assessment of tutors' simulated sessions; and a final reflection on the tutor's personal goals for tutoring in the OWL.



TUTOR'S COLUMN

THE DUAL CITIZENSHIP OF DISABILITY

◆ *Molly McHarg*

*Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar
Doha, Qatar*

In April 2010, Dr. Marisa Weiss, a breast cancer oncologist, was diagnosed with breast cancer herself. While it was an undoubtedly troubling discovery, she had the opportunity to view the news in a positive light—as a breast cancer specialist, she now had a new “legitimacy” in treating patients. She could have a unique and personal empathy with her patients. Or so she thought. Dr. Weiss has discovered that self-disclosure is not as simple as she had hoped. During an interview with National Public Radio, she explained that while she describes herself as having a “usual style of being open,” she has had to carefully balance the desire to be transparent with concern for her patients (“A Breast Oncologist”). She decided to be upfront with patients that she was having a medical procedure but did not fully explain her diagnosis until after the surgery. She explained her rationale: patient care should remain her primary obligation as a medical professional—and some patients might begin to worry more about her health or her ability to take care of theirs.

Hearing Dr. Weiss's story struck a chord with me: I am a tutor with a disability. You may not be able to see, detect, or even suspect that I have one, but it exists and plays a role in my daily life. As a result of my disability, I feel I have a unique ability to understand many of the students who come into the writing center with special needs (by no means am I suggesting that I identify with all physical and learning disabilities, but rather that I do have personal experience with one). In this essay, I would like to open a platform for further discussion by elaborating on my own experiences.

While significant literature exists about physical and learning disabilities in the educational system, very little has been written about writing center tutors with disabilities. Understandably, many tutors have reservations about disclosing such information, myself included. Some may be concerned that they will no longer be perceived as competent professionals. Perhaps disclosure will affect relationships with tutees, colleagues, and the administration. As Dr. Weiss explained, she deems her role as a professional to make the patient the primary focus and priority (“A Breast Oncologist”). I believe that this runs parallel to our role as writing tutors—we may offer resources and outlets for disability support, but ultimately our professional role is within the realm of writing instruction.

My work in various writing centers has often included close collaboration with university departments that assist students with special needs. At times, students have been referred to work with me. At other times, I have been called upon to determine if a student may have a disability. While I am not an expert in learning disabilities, I am an ESL specialist, and I know that ESL students are often misdiagnosed as having learning disabilities. Sometimes, while working with a student I suspect that the student may be struggling with some limitations. This is one of the particular internal struggles I face—if I suspect a student has a disability, I wonder if disclosing my own might facilitate self-disclosure on the part of the student, cause the student to be offended, or have some other consequence altogether.

Dr. Weiss, in her role as both patient and doctor of breast cancer, refers to this position as “dual citizenship” (“A Breast Oncologist”). This notion of dual citizenship clearly describes my own role as a tutor working with individuals with special needs. In my own experience, I have offered disclosure in various ways. I have never labeled or identified my disability but have made my specific challenge clear and noted what accommodation I need. For example, I explain that if there is sunlight flowing into the room, I cannot work directly from the computer and will need the student to print out her writing. If the room gets too warm, I will need to relocate to a cooler location. Thus far, my experience has been positive—students seem to appreciate my request, accommodate my need, and move on to focusing on their work. My needs do not render me incompetent, and my explanations maintain focus on assisting the student—I do not digress to my own personal challenges, but continue the discussion around what we will be working on during the tutorial session.

My modeling of how to accommodate my disability has never been explicit. In fact, it has never been a part of my consciousness. I have simply been following societal conventions of leaving disability as an unspeakable topic. I do not tell students with special needs that the steps I follow are the

steps they must take—state the problem and solution—because I do not use the language of disability. I have developed this approach to my personal management through my own experiences—not by professional advice. I am not a counselor, nor am I equipped with the necessary skills to guide students appropriately about how to incorporate disability into their lives. Consequently, I also leave this decision to individual students. My professional role is to guide their writing and academic success, and that is precisely what I do.

Each particular writing center context may play a role in how we, as tutors, approach these situations. For example, a writing center solely dedicated to writing may be an appropriate venue for an initial exploration of disabilities—particularly for students who may not even be aware of a disability themselves. Writing tutors working under a larger umbrella of academic or support services may be appropriate people for taking an even more proactive approach with students to identify and discuss disabilities of all types. No doubt many other contextual factors need to be taken into consideration as well.

The disclosure of disability itself remains a particularly challenging area. For example, if I suspect that a student struggles with a learning disability and should go for formal evaluation, many negative associations come into play. Disability typically means deficit. In the ESL context, add in culturally-laden complexities and disability becomes an unspeakable topic. My experience in Qatar over the past five years has taught me that cultural norms and understandings can often play a leading role in the inability to effectively diagnose students with learning challenges, since students typically do not agree to formal evaluation procedures. On the other hand, a clear diagnosis has the potential to be a successful endeavor as well. Just recently, a colleague came to me for professional writing advice by exclaiming with a chuckle, “I’m a non-native speaker and I’m dyslexic—I need your help!” His introduction served as a starting point for our session by clearly delineating the parameters within which we were working. If only all students were as upfront and honest!

Disabilities and accommodations also exist on a spectrum. For example, throughout the years I have worked with a number of older professionals who discuss their challenges with aging in the context of tutoring. One woman explained to her tutees that she suffered from poor eyesight, and therefore she needed special lighting accommodations. From my perspective, the limitations of older generations have never resulted in their credibility being questioned. I often wonder if the same physical impairment would receive the same response if presented as a disability instead of old age.

Recently, a former writing center colleague publicly announced that he suffered from Tourette’s Syndrome. This revelation surprised many of us who had worked with him for years and never suspected a thing. He had undoubtedly focused his energy on providing writing instruction to students rather than drawing attention to his own challenges. His announcement also prompted me to educate myself, since I only knew Tourette’s Syndrome from Hollywood’s generally inaccurate portrayal. (You may notice that I do not provide a medical term for my own disability, as I fear it is too widely misunderstood.) For me, this colleague’s late admission—he no longer works in a writing center—offered insight and confirmation that many tutors may position themselves as I do—with an invisible dual citizenship.

Individual tutors, just like students, have the responsibility to make their own choices about how, when, and how much to disclose. Nonetheless, I write this as a call for writing center tutors with disabilities to step forward and develop a more meaningful, thoughtful approach to accommodating and situating ourselves within writing center instruction. Regardless of disability, tutors everywhere should listen closely to this discussion in an effort to increase awareness and aid in meaningful accommodation. ♦

Work Cited

Weiss, Marisa. “A Breast Oncologist, Diagnosed With the Disease.” *Fresh Air*: National Public Radio, 14 Dec. 2010. Web. 30 Dec. 2010.



(Ed. Note: Readers are invited to respond to Molly McHarg’s call for dialogue, in the form of letters or Tutor’s Column submissions of your own. Send to Muriel Harris, WLN Editor (harrism@purdue.edu) with subject line “Disability Response.”)



Muriel Harris, editor
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CALENDAR FOR WRITING CENTER ASSOCIATIONS

March 30-31, 2012: Mid-Atlantic Writing Centers Association, in Shippensburg, PA

Contact: Karen Johnson: kgjohnson@ship.edu. Conference website: <<http://mawca2012.intuitwebsites.com/index.html>>.

March 30-31, 2012: East Central Writing Centers Association, in Indianapolis, IN

Contact: Jackie Grutsch McKinney: jack-

iegrutschmckinney.com, and Lynn A. Jettpace: ljettpac@iupui.edu. Conference website: <<http://www.iupui.edu/~uwc/ecwca.html>>.

April 13-15, 2012: Northeast Writing Centers Association, in New York, NY

Contact: Conference website: <www.northeastwca.org>.

May 7-9, 2012: European Writing Centers Association, in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

Contact: Dr. Katrin Girgensohn: girgensohn@schreibreisen.de, and Filitsa Mullen (fmullen@aubg.bg). Conference website: <<http://www.ewca2012.com>>.

October 25-27, 2012: International Writing Centers Conference, in San Diego, CA

Contact: Conference website: <<http://www.socalwritingcenters.org/iwca2012/index.html>>.