

Writers Elevated

Issue #9/Spring 2015

From the Editor: Reflection

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Dear Readers—As many of you at our Larimer Campus already know, one of our long-time Writing Center friends and colleagues had to discontinue her work at FRCC quite suddenly this semester due to the circumstances surrounding a medical diagnosis of the type and intensity that very few people ever have to face. A Writing Center reflective practice group that had been scheduled in early April became instead a session in which those of us who attended spent a lot of time reflecting together about the news. We spoke of how much we appreciate and admire the qualities of our friend: vibrant, active, sincere, caring, giving, hardworking, dedicated, multi-faceted. We talked of how much she will be missed on campus (and is already missed) as her plans now involve new areas of focus, and our gladness to know that one of her new goals is to concentrate more intensely on her own writing. There were also the questions about what we can do or give or create to further reflect our reflections.

One could spend a lot of time trying to reflect on and speak of all the aspects of relationships forged and strengthened through associations with our Writing Center. I think back to so many inspiring and invigorating conversations shared with colleagues and visitors, the experience of getting to know them better at the Center and in that process getting to know myself better, the projects I've seen taking shape, the words and thoughts I've witnessed developing, and the supportive relationships opening beyond our help center because of what has been possible within it.

It's no secret that the impact of a resource such as our Writing Center depends on the people who move through it over the years—the staff who contribute to it and support it as well as the visitors who use it. One looks back at copies of past Writing Center newsletters and schedules and sees some evidence of many long-standing relationships as well as transitions. What can seem more elusive—the exact details of all of the myriad qualities and contributions of colleagues and visitors, all of which cannot be archived in a book somewhere or categorized and quantified as precise data. I can reflect with certainty, though, that the effects are expansive, and there is a lot I have learned in the interim about what is lasting.

Susan Marshall—Newsletter Editor, Interim LC Writing Center Director

*all the room there is in ordinary
time, which embraces all
the people and events and hopes
that choke the street tonight
and still leaves room for everyone
and everything and every
other place, the undescribed
and indescribable, more various
and cacophonous than voice
can tell or mind conceive,
and for the sky's vast depths
from which they're all
a speck of light.*

--Excerpt from "Ordinary Time,"
published in *A Fast Life: The
Collected Poems of Tim Dlugos*

Spring 2015 Writing Center Consultants

Spring 2015 Consultants for Drop-In Service, BP 102, Larimer Campus

- **Cindy Burkhart**—Creative Arts, Design, and Humanities; WAC 2014/2015
- **Marissa Campbell**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy
- **Liliana Castro**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy (working in the Center specific to needs with ESL/ELLs)
- **Sue Davidson**—Allied Health, WAC 2014/2015
- **Jan DeBell**—Allied Health, WAC 2014/2015
- **William Foster**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy
- **Maureen Fox**—Social and Behavioral Sciences, WAC
- **Deb Gengler**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy
- **Ann Healy**—Cherished Community Volunteer
- **BT Huntley**—Social and Behavioral Sciences, WAC 2014/2015
- **Katie Leber**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy; WAC 2014/2015
- **Therese Loeffler-Clemens**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy
- **Jeannie Mobley-Tanaka**—Anthropology, WAC 2014/2015
- **Rhonda Parmley**—Social and Behavioral Sciences, WAC
- **Heidi Petersen**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy; WAC
- **Heidi Quist**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy
- **Johanna Scheurman**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy
- **Seth Vincent**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy
- **John Young**—Rhetoric, Languages, and Philosophy

Newsletter Editor, Interim Writing Center Director, and Consultant FRCC Larimer Campus

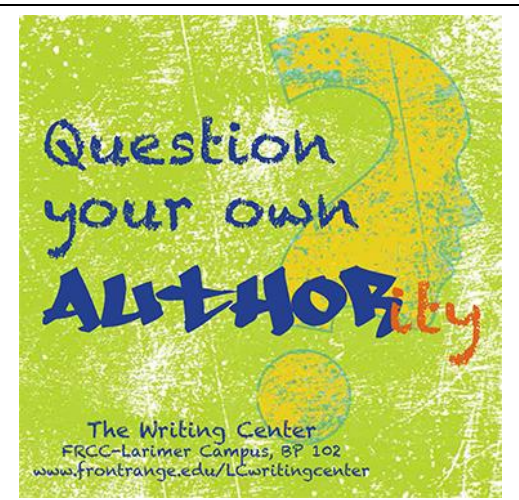
Susan Marshall

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www.frontrange.edu/LCwritingcenter

Visit our LC Writing Center Web pages for more information about our staff, guidelines for visits, and other helpful resources. At the FRCC Web site you can also link from the "Being a Student" tab to "Academic Support" pages for various FRCC campuses.

Here's wishing Marissa Campbell a wonderful transition to her role as LC Writing Program Director and LC Writing Center Director next semester as my own term as director comes to a close this semester.—S.M.



Spring 2015 Consultants for the FRCC College-Wide OWL

Jill Clateman (BCC), **Elizabeth (Crystal) Kerr** (Larimer Campus), **Vicki McLane** (Larimer Campus), **Kathy Mendt** (Larimer Campus), **Sheryl (Sheri) Michael** (BCC), **Melinda Myrick** (Westminster), **Iris Rigby** (Larimer Campus), **Heidi Petersen** (Larimer Campus), **FRCC OWL Coordinator—Sonja Scullion**

See "Retracing Steps" on the next page for more about the FRCC OWL.

Retracing Steps: Writing Center Information

Larimer Campus (LC) Drop-in Writing Center

Located in Blanca Peak (BP) 102 as part of the Learning Opportunity Center (LOC)

Open 9 a.m.-3 p.m. M-F (unless otherwise announced)

Information about our staff and resources and guidelines for visits available at <http://www.frontrange.edu/LCwritingcenter>

FRCC college-wide online writing lab (OWL) information and submissions form available at www.frontrange.edu/writingcenter

Or follow these steps at the FRCC Web site to learn more about Writing Center and other help center services: Click from "Being a Student" to "Academic Assistance" and then to links available under "Academic Support Centers" for our various campuses. Some links are also available in D2L, and you might consider posting Writing Center links in D2L for students.

We encourage students to try both our drop-in and OWL services for the unique consulting experiences that they both provide. On 4/3 Kathleen Hefley reported a total of 487 OWL submissions received across campuses (154 from Westminster, 128 from BCC, 116 from LC, five from Brighton, and fifty with no campus listed), and from the start of the semester through late April we've been in the process of totaling a few hundred sign-ins at our LC drop-in Center. Many thanks to all those who visit and support us, and please let us know if you have questions about Writing Center resources and guidelines for visits or if you are interested to receive a class visit from a staff member to help with Q&A about this. Return to [Inside This Issue](#)

Planning Waypoints: Writing Center and WAC Projects in Development

Sampling and Surveys—Due to some unique circumstances this semester, LOC Director Cid Shinsel decided to temporarily vacate her usual office space in the LOC and re-locate, allowing our Writing Center use of the room for Spring 2015 while Foreign Language Lab staff and LOC tutors from various disciplines had the chance to use our previous space near the front of the LOC. (Many thanks to Cid and to Phyllis DeVauil who worked so hard to have everything we needed moved and arranged!) We also began a new Writing Center exit survey and of the forty-one surveys reviewed between late March and 4/22, the clear majority of visitors commented on how much they liked our new space, ("warm," "cozy," "comfortable," "inviting," "welcoming," "relaxing," "quiet," "private," "focused"). A few others added that while they liked the space in terms of its coziness and privacy and its helpfulness to minimize distractions, they also felt it could benefit from being a bit larger during busier times. This seems to imply that a room similar to our current office space, but slightly larger, would be beneficial to experiment with as resources might allow. There were a few additional suggestions to increase consultant availability, but the feedback was once again (as with the last round of exit surveys) unanimous in terms of satisfaction with the quality of our service and with often emphatic replies such as "Yes!" or "of course" to the question "Would you visit us again?" Many of our survey respondents had heard about us from teachers, but some had also been told about us by friends, had been prompted by informational ads or orientation visits, or had just passed by and dropped in. Visitors mentioned gratitude for help to brainstorm and "talk through" thoughts and lay "ground work," to better understand structural or grammatical issues or citations, to think more about flow or detail, to better navigate rules or their exceptions, to improve comprehension and confidence and comfort. Many thanks to all who have given their feedback and recommended our service, and to our fantastic colleagues in the LOC who do so much to support us as we evolve. **(In "Reflecting Outward," you'll also find consultant reports on this year's CWWTC that will help to inform our work.)**

A WAC PAC Report from LC WAC Director Alyson Huff and BCC WAC Director Michael Barber— This year the Larimer Campus Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program collaborated with the Boulder County Campus WAC program and new WAC director at BCC, Michael Barber, initiating plans to foster increased cross-campus collegiality. At the WAC PAC (Writing Across the Curriculum Program Afternoon Club) in February, we met to disseminate pedagogical ideas and WAC-inspired projects from WAC alumni to current WAC participants. From John Cross, Art Faculty, we tried a write-to-learn that enables students to build vocabulary to critique, beyond their habitual surface-level and emotive responses. We heard from Anthropology Instructor Cherrie Emerson who completely revamped her assignment sheet leading to spectacular, insightful work from students at a quality she hadn't seen before. English Faculty Mark Hussey and Psychology Instructor Maureen Fox presented a humorous skit illustrating the kinds of peer-response they'd experienced; they shared how using feedback prompts like Peter Elbow's make those peer-response workshops more productive. Business Faculty Jim Vernon shared his WAC experiences which undoubtedly inspired incoming cohorts. We tried a write-to-learn activity from an online Mythology course from Marcus Fowler, Humanities Instructor. We learned informal writing ideas and assessment techniques in many areas used in both online and traditional courses.

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Writing Landscapes: Some Recommended Resources (Discovered, Uncovered, or Recovered by Consultants)

Helping Students Understand Who They Are as Writers—From Guest Author Susan L. Metzger, MS, MBA, MBTI Administrator, Adjunct English Instructor in RLP

(Intrigued by the title of a workshop that Susan Metzger held on our campus this semester with support from our LC Faculty PD Committee, the Editor asked her to write to us a bit here about its theme.)

Most of us, by the time we're in our mid-twenties, have taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) at least once. It is the most frequently and widely used personality "typing" tool in the world (and related to Carl Jung's "theory of personality"). I use it to help my Composition students understand why they balk at certain stages of the writing process and why others flow easily. Rather than beating themselves up and feeling like failures when they can't push through one or two stages of creating an essay, I help them understand how their personality type influences the ease or difficulty with which they tackle an essay.

Shortly after I completed the intense, week-long certification course to become an MBTI Administrator in 2010, I declared to myself that I would use my new knowledge to write a book on the writing process using the MBTI. I had already been teaching college Composition for thirty years. To my dismay, Ann B. Loomis, a woman with similar credentials to mine, had already written one: *Write from the Start: Discover Your Writing Potential Through the Power of Psychological Type*. In it, she describes four stages of writing: the Dreamer Stage, the Designer Stage, the Builder Stage, and the Inspector Stage, much like those required to build a house.

If you have taken the MBTI, then you were given a four-letter "type." I am an ENFP. Perhaps you are an ISTJ. There are sixteen combinations of these four letters, and these types have been researched for about seventy years. I spend two class periods on this and administer what the MBTI folks call the "best fit" categorizing tool rather than the full 93-question instrument that the Student Counseling and Advising Office offers for \$15. The results of the full instrument provide a continuum for each of four dichotomies: Extraversion (E) vs. Introversion (I), Sensing (S) vs. Intuition (N), Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F), and Judging (J) vs. Perceiving (P), as there are gradations from *slight* to *moderate* to *clear* to *very clear* for each "preference." It would cost too much money out of my own pocket to administer the full instrument, but people often come to a more clear understanding of their type by using the "best fit" lists.

Students who prefer Intuition (N) over Sensing (S) have an easier time in the Dreamer and Designer stages of writing because they are natural dreamers and find it easy to see the big picture whereas those preferring S over N feel more comfortable with lists, graphs, structure, and knowing what to write rather than having to create it. Those preferring Thinking (T) over Feeling (F) prefer to write about hard facts rather than their own emotions or someone else's. In my two class sessions on this, I help my students understand why they prefer certain aspects of the writing process over others. Like signing your name with your non-dominant hand, everyone can perform their non-preferred tasks, but these tasks feel unnatural and don't flow easily. I also tell them that my ex-husband, the U.S. Attorney of Wyoming, had to travel to Washington often for training when he was voted by the U.S. Senate to take his position. One full day was devoted to the MBTI by our U.S. Justice Department. This helps to show how much the tool is respected.

On March 31, 2015, I gave a Professional Development workshop on the Larimer Campus on this topic, and I am happy to share my PowerPoint presentation and lists of "tendencies" and "tools to try" for all sixteen types in all four stages of the writing process with anyone who requests it. Email me at susan.metzger@frontrange.edu.

LC Writing Initiatives, Groups, and Projects—Please let the Editor know if you would like news of your writing initiative, group, or project included in an upcoming edition. See our archive for previous news/listings.

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Exchanging Views: A Summary of Consultant Discussions

Reflections on a PD Workshop: “Inclusion is a Universal Language”

Last year we devoted an LC Writing Center reflective practice session to some questions about our work with a diversity of writers who are English language learners (ELLs). In this edition of “Exchanging Views,” WAC participant and Writing Center consultant Cindy Burkhart reflects on her attendance at a Feb. workshop related to the topic and led by consultant Liliana Castro with support from our LC Faculty PD Committee.

In the past three semesters my art education classes have included eight students from Qatar, two students from China, a student from Saudi Arabia, and at least two students who speak Spanish at home. Teaching these students has been exciting, challenging, and thought provoking, ultimately leaving me with many questions. Liliana Castro’s professional development workshop, “Inclusion is a Universal Language,” began to answer some of them.

English language learners can be divided into two broad groups. Liliana called them “residential” ELL students—those who have done at least part of their K-12 schooling in the United States—and “international” ELL students—those who have come to the U.S. for college. The different school experiences of these two groups of students are huge and affect their abilities to navigate FRCC classes.

Students who have been educated in the U.S. during grades K-12 as English language learners will often, in spite of their linguistic abilities, consider themselves less academically capable than their English-speaking peers, and may have missed learning concepts because they were focusing on language acquisition.

International students, while they may be struggling with English, are more likely to have been challenged academically in their home countries. As a result they usually come to class with both confidence and strategies that will make it easier for them to learn. As Liliana explains, “It is a matter of transferring their academic skills, but not so much of having the linguistic ability to express conceptual pieces.”

So, as Front Range instructors, what do we do to support the English language learners in our classes? What resources are available to them? To us? The good news is that according to Liliana we already know and use the best practices for teaching ELL students; they are the best practices for teaching our English-speaking students. We use the basic elements of Universal Design for learning. We provide oral and written instructions. We utilize D2L. We give demonstrations and opportunities for hands-on learning. We check in with our students again and again, and are always willing to rephrase concepts using simple language as we guide students toward more complex expression. We recognize students as individuals with valuable cultural and life experiences.

We also have even more work to do, though, as an institution and as individuals to help support English language learners and their instructors. Liliana’s workshop is part of a process of questioning and resource development that needs to be continued.

—Cindy Burkhart

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Promoting Practice: What We've Been Studying in Meetings and Workshops

Highlights from the March 2015 Bard Institute Workshop—from Larimer Campus WAC Program Director Alyson Huff and BCC WAC Program Director Michael Barber—At the two-day Bard Institute for Writing and Thinking workshop before spring break, we joined forces once more with our BCC counterpart. Our participants this year represent the following areas: Dental (Allied Health), Anthropology, History, Art, English, Early Childhood Education, Math, Business, Philosophy, Science, and Economics. Rob Whittemore, an amazing Bard facilitator from Western Connecticut State University, designed a series of workshops tailored just for us. The carefully scaffolded curriculum had us move from reading and responding, sharing and listening, culminating in a draft essay. During the last workshop, we provided one-on-one feedback to another colleague regarding a reading assignment students struggle with or one we haven't yet tried. This gave each of us the chance to practice some of the methods of engagement that we'd just explored, hear from someone outside our fields, and leave with new pedagogy. It was great to interact with our colleagues again and have a chance to really get to see what other teachers are doing in their classrooms across discipline, program, and campus lines.

Highlights from the April 2015 CWBTC (See "Reflecting Outward" below.)

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Reflecting Outward: Highlights of Surveys, Research, and Feedback

Notes from the Spring 2015 Colorado and Wyoming Writing Tutors Conference (CWBTC)

This semester's conference theme was "Climate Change: Responding to New Challenges and Opportunities in the Writing Center." LC Writing Center consultants John Young and Heidi Quist attended and represented our LC Writing Center with the help of funding from our LC Faculty Professional Development Committee. Our gratitude for their invaluable reports here!

A Report on the CWBTC from John Young

I attended the Colorado and Wyoming Writing Tutors Conference at the University of Colorado-Boulder on April 18 and found the experience rewarding, with useful insights into the challenge of drawing the best out of student writers and getting the most out of writing centers. Here are some highlights:

ELL Challenges

A surge in students for whom English is a second language was a major theme. Figures from Colorado State University ESL/ELL coordinator Jennifer Levin served to bring the issue into focus. CSU has seen more than a doubling of its ELL population in less than five years, from 3 percent to 7 percent. Levine facilitated a roundtable discussion of how writing centers and colleges themselves can accommodate students. It is clear from the roundtable that FRCC Larimer campus still has much work to do toward this important quest. Consider:

- CSU has an international program called INTO CSU, which gives considerable support to foreign students, not just with their language but with other needs.
- The University of Denver has a pre-semester orientation specifically for international students.
- Arapahoe Community College is fortunate to have Spring International, a private entity that provides support for foreign students, right across the street from its campus. ACC's writing center has started a writers group for international/ELL students. It is planning to have an acculturation seminar for the same population.
- CSU actively scouts for ELL tutors, and at CSU, DU and Red Rocks Community College, active certification programs restock ELL tutoring ranks.

From the discussion, it is clear that FRCC LC is challenged in several ways in serving this population. The biggest problem is that ELL classes are not on the Harmony campus but at the Adult Learning Center locations at the Prospect Center and Loveland. International students who lack transportation are thwarted from getting to those sites.

(cont.)

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A Report on the CWWC from John Young (continued)

At the same time, representatives of all campuses in attendance expressed frustration with a lack of resources to address a growing need. Suggestions made for writing centers included organizing a writing group of ELL or international students who would gather at a set time to make reading/writing a collaborative effort. Sources that might assist consultants include the DVD *Writing Across Borders* produced by Oregon State University, *One on One with Second Language Learners* (Reynolds), *The ESL Writers Guide* (Bruce and Raforth), and *Tips for Teaching ESL Students* from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Another suggestion is to survey international and ELL students about their needs, both academically and socially, as they are served by the Writing Center. FRCC LC would be well-served to have a pre-session orientation/acclimation event each fall (or spring and fall) for these students, so they can feel like a community within a community, so they know what support is available, and so they enter college with a sense of connectedness and confidence.

Helping Each Student Find His or Her Voice—I was a presenter at the conference and headed up a session about how to draw good work out of reluctant writers. Too often we look at writing as a skill—work— and a nagging higher-ed. prerequisite, rather than the art form that facilitates self-actualization, one that draws from and serves as an inspiration. I told those at my session that I look at each individual I serve at the Writing Center “not as a student but as a story.” I talked about ways to get students to find their individual voices and to sense the intrinsic rewards of writing rather than thinking of it as an assignment—drudgery. The key is to make writing a sensual exercise, rather than one in which words are lined up end to end. I also talked about demystifying writing, and getting students to be more conversational with their words rather than attempting phrasing that outstrips their vocabularies. We see this a lot with foreign students who use translation apps to come up with words they think fit the situation in their compositions. Rarely do those words work. The key is to approach writing as conversation. To do that, I get students to think of it as conversing with a peer over fries at a local café. I convince them that they have the English vocabulary to say what they mean clearly, and verbally. Then I say, “Write that.” Without clarity, writing is nothing.

Usefulness of Handouts—Abigail Wernsman, a graduate student at the University of Denver, led a discussion of the function of handouts in Writing Center and tutoring environments. She talked about the benefit of having handouts about key mechanical concepts readily available. She said this is preferable to relying on the Purdue Owl (if one relies on it without also making use of the option to print materials from it) or textbooks, as it allows students to have something on which they can write notes and through which they can take ownership of key concepts with which they might have trouble. She said they should be simple, light on information, heavy on white space for notes and annotation. Sharing a good handout, she said, is preferable to a teacher making verbal pronouncements that might not stick. Some writing centers have handouts available for these purposes and get considerable use from them.

A Report on the CWWC from Heidi Quist

Strategies for Helping ELLs in the Writing Center

Jason Schuleter [Arapahoe Community College] presented on a few different aspects involved in helping ELL students, including our cultural awareness, their cultural adaptation, language barriers, and remembering the long-term picture as well as the short-term. First, we can't assume ELL students, even those from the same country, have all had the same experiences with education. Some of them have had ruler-cracking teachers, and others have had kitten-soft teachers, and some have had a combination. Some students have had tutors who exploit the impoverished education system and run scams and have charged a lot of money. Some of their tutors have been paper correctors. We need to get to know the students' individual backgrounds as we work with them—find out about their country by asking but also by paying attention to their body language and finding cues in the works that they are presenting to us for feedback. Also, we need to explain our function and status in the public forum (we're not to be paid by them because we're already paid), and what we plan to do to help with their papers (not proofreading).

As for their cultural adaptation, Schuleter presented a graph showing the "Adjustment Curve" foreign students experience that looks like a cross between a check mark and the big dipper. The students start a little high—on a honeymoon, and then there's an interrupting event that brings them low—a culture shock, then they gradually adjust until they become masters of the situation. During this process, we should be aware of cultural shock cues, such as anxiety, depression, and anger. While the students are struggling, we and they are both aware of the so-called language barrier. However, we should note that there is always a way to communicate and that communication is always happening. We should play to the student's strengths. If they are strong with oral skills, for example, we can talk with them through their paper. If, on the other hand, they are stronger in writing and their speech is difficult to understand, then we can write more as we go through the paper. On a slightly separate line, the "language barrier" could be manifest in the way they organize and present their assignments, so we can ask how they organize papers in their culture, find and highlight similarities, and then help them adjust to the differences. **(cont.)**

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A Report on the CWWTC from Heidi Quist (continued)

Regarding the long-term vs. short-term goals, Schuleter suggested we consider not just the assignment but the students' academic literacy. Help them understand how they can be a strength in any peer writing groups or peer reviews, for example, by helping them focus on their strength of understanding other cultures. We should also help them be aware of other resources at the college. We also need to be aware of Maslow's hierarchy of needs in regard to the students, and cultivate meta-awareness—help them be aware of their needs and reasons for seeking help in the writing center.

Re-Visioning Revision: Writing Center Roles and Responsibilities with Multimedia

This session from Karen Eisman [St. Edwards Univ.] and Michelle Elliot [Weber State Univ.] was about addressing students' needs for help with multimedia presentations in their classwork. One of the biggest takeaways was the need to acknowledge to the campus the consultants' abilities to help with such things through the verbiage on the mission statement and advertisements for the Writing Center. Specifically, we should pay attention to the use of the word "writing" throughout the mission statement and revise to include "presentations," "multimedia," "compositions," etc. Eisman and Elliot presented examples of good mission statements from Denver University and Auburn University. Another student in the class promoted examples from Pikes Peak Community College as well. As far as why we are qualified, Eisman and Elliot pointed out that all such presentations have the same rhetorical qualities as written texts, though sometimes the pathos and ethos, and/or audience-appropriateness lie in the choice of backgrounds, colors, fonts, and management of space (white space, balance, etc.) rather than in the text alone. They also suggested making sure that common multimedia tools are available on the computers in the writing center, such as PowerPoint, Prezi, etc. They also highlighted the fact that Word itself can be used for multimedia purposes, in that users can load images, sound, and videos, and even the font and formatting tools can be part of the ethos and pathos. To ensure more thorough abilities among the tutors/consultants, they suggested having training sessions for using multimedia tools as well as looking outside of the English department for regular consultants, including instructors from many departments. Consultants can also be encouraged to seek such training on their own, and perhaps be required once per semester (year?) to present something to the other consultants to strengthen their knowledge and abilities.

Authority in Young Authors: The Writing Center as Resource for Creative Writing Undergraduate Students

This session led by Mariah White [CSU] was about changes needed in the current paradigm of creative writing feedback. She read from an essay she had written that included quite a bit of detail about changes needed in the classroom experience—which I thought were quite insightful having been through quite a few Creative Workshops myself through my undergraduate and graduate work—and that included adjustments that could apply to writing centers. She suggested that since, in the current classroom paradigm, students are often asked to be silent while their work is being read and discussed, tutors/consultants can ask students who bring in creative pieces to openly discuss their writing, putting them in a position of authority over it, but also encouraging/enabling them to ask specific questions about their writing to which the tutor/consultant can respond. White also suggested that we not see such sessions as counseling sessions wherein we are the psychologists or the like, forgetting that the student is bringing to us a piece of writing with the same needs as any other type of writing. I raised my hand to suggest that students be encouraged to visit in groups (though small still—two or three at a time) since one of the problems she addressed was the relatively sparse peer feedback students might get on their creative writing in classes. She eagerly agreed with this suggestion. The benefit here of their coming to the writing center rather than just meeting on their own is having a knowledgeable coach, or even just a facilitator of the discussion. Although she didn't bring up the point, the juxtaposition with the multimedia session did suggest the value of also clarifying our abilities in this area in mission statements and advertisements.

Improvisation in the Writing Center: Play, Status, and Status Games

This workshop was unique in that it was largely conducted by way of object lessons. Through games, Nick Trotter [Community College of Denver] helped us identify common non-verbal means people use to assert their status, followed by some discussion and a role-play to help us apply the principles to working with students. Trotter also presented the idea that if two people are conducting an improv activity and one of them negates the other's statement, the game immediately ends. However, if the second player agrees with something and then adds something else, the game can continue. If we use this technique with students, particularly students who have falsely high understandings of the qualities of their papers, we can continue the dialogue and help them. Flattery isn't always beneficial or appropriate, but we can still be mindful of finding qualities to help lift the students' (sometimes masked) insecurities about their writing.

(See the next page for even more news from Heidi on CWWTC workshops.)

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A Report on the CWWTC from Heidi Quist (continued)

The Writing Center and Faculty Outreach

Justin Bain [CU-Denver] began by discussing the many ways that we outreach to students, and then he turned the tables to suggest we use all of these same outlets to outreach to faculty, both to encourage them to send their students to us but also to encourage them to get help with their writing for their students. Such means to outreach include hard copies of documents, posters, fliers, virtual materials such as mass emails, individual emails, D2L, our website, social media, face-to-face tours, visits, orientations, etc. Such outreach should not only have the explanatory value (what we do) and the use value (why they should visit and encourage their students to as well), but also the idea that the Writing Center is a foundational support throughout the college. For example, we should let the faculty know that we are here to help them with aspects of their writing, particularly assignment sheets for students. We are the campus's writing resource. We thus have the opportunity to respond to teachers' needs, given the fact that many of them are teaching without degrees in education but in their field. Thus, while they are knowledgeable about their subject matter, they sometimes teach based on faulty models and/or little guidance in teaching writing, yet they must teach writing due to statewide requirements.

A few opportunities exist here. First, on the simplest level, to promote their encouragement of their students to come to us, we can simply have teacher testimonials on the website, even in video form. Second, because some expect that when they send their students to us that these students' papers will come back "fixed," we should have documents accessible both in print and in digital formats indicating specifically what we do and do not do. (Of course many centers already do this.) Similarly, we can have specific information about guidelines for required visits in such formats, including downloadable worksheet samples to use for such requirements. We can also have downloadable request forms for consultant classroom visits or some sort of request submission portal option, including information about what they would like us to cover but also what we would require of them beforehand, most notably their class syllabus to facilitate tailoring to their needs and even selecting the best consultant for the circumstances.

In like manner, we can provide handouts both in paper form and as downloads for teachers that facilitate their own teaching, including assignment modules they can use or adapt, guidelines for effective commenting, rubrics and effective grading strategies, scaffolding of assignments and activities, etc. [We want to also help remind instructors that our campus WAC Program and a variety of campus PD workshops are also available to help with some of these types of needs.--Ed.] We can also offer specific help to instructors by diplomatically reaching out at times (for example, contacting instructors via e-mail) with offers to help improve assignment sheets that students have questions with in the Writing Center. Bain described a few situations of sending such e-mails to specific teachers. A few times he received negative responses or none at all, but more often he had positive responses to such e-mails, even leading to his spending an hour or two with the teachers to improve the assignments. Of course, the opposition to address here is the budgeting. While he is the director for a writing center at a university (CU-Denver), they are still not funded for teacher outreach, but he justifies this work as effectively student outreach because the better the teachers feel about us, the better help their students will receive. Bain also discussed workshop options that the Writing Center could provide for faculty which their department could fund. He noted his campus does this, and usually upon the first receipt of a particular type of request they offer the workshop free, but thereafter charge. If demand gets too high for such things, integrating such programs can be done on a schedule with deadlines, such as requests for the semester coming two weeks before classes begin.

Additional Conference Notes and Thanks from the Editor

John and Heidi covered a lot of ground at the conference, but of course there were many other individual sessions, workshops, and panels on the schedule as well—including a session led by Aaron Leff at FRCC Westminster titled "What Do We Talk About When We Talk About Student Learning?" (We look forward to following up with Aaron to learn more.) You can find a copy of the full conference schedule archived at www.cwwtc.pbworks.com. It also includes links to conference materials from some of the individual presentations. **Our thanks to Heidi Quist and John Young for the thoroughness and value of their reports here and all the attention they devoted to the conference, to our LC Faculty PD Committee for their support, and to all those helping to increase our awareness of issues and strategies related to writing instruction and consultation. Hope you've enjoyed this special extended conference edition of the newsletter!—S.M.**

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