

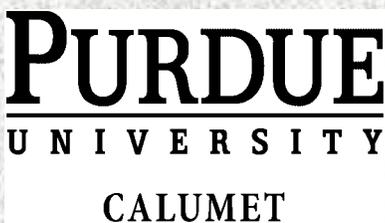
The **International  
Writing Centers  
Association**

**UPDATE**

**Volume 8 Issue 1  
Spring 2007**

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**From the President...**

Around every February I get a certain itch to grow things. Just this past week (mid February 2007), for example, I've planted a couple of flats of vegetables that I hope will bear fruit come summer. I've pretty much attributed this urge to having grown up on a farm. Every February my brother would crank up his greenhouse and begin to plant flat after flat of tomatoes, cabbages, and other cash crops that we would put in the fields later in the spring once the killing mountain frosts passed. I would help my brother on these occasions, and he would patiently explain to me the various depths, spacing, and germination time for each species.

Now you might suspect that I will make some clever analogy between writing center work and growing things.



Clint Gardner, IWCA President

I certainly suppose there are connections between education and the care that one must exert to get plants to grow and prosper, but I am more interested in the connection between my brother's teaching methods and writing centers. My

brother was, I suppose, infinitely patient with his annoying younger brother who wanted to learn this patient, careful craft. I would not say, however, that he

was a very talkative person. In fact he was quite the opposite: shy, retiring—more interested in his silent plants than anything else. His teaching technique was quite different from what we expect of teachers. The misassumption is that all good teachers are talkers. One presumes a teacher just talks and talks and talks until the student gets it. Perhaps this is the type of talk that some might expect when we work with writers in our writing centers.

My brother, ultimately, taught best through demonstration and by letting me know where I went wrong when I planted something

***Member of the NCTE  
Information Exchange***

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too deep or when I should have put a fine layer of strained peat moss over an especially small seed. His manner was unlike so many other people I would encounter later in life. Many people, unfortunately, find it necessary to respond to what they perceive as mistakes by using shame or embarrassment. No, his was a conscientious manner, and if I did mess up an entire flat, he would note what was wrong and then usually say "Well they still may grow."

His style taught me a lot about responding to student writers. I've found the best feedback that I receive is honest, but not embarrassing. It allows me to grow as a writer and learn from my mistakes, and, indeed, discover if they were even mistakes in the first place. For me the writing center is a greenhouse where we don't grow like plants, but we grow as human beings, as learners, as respondents, and as writers.

As I was planting my seeds this past week, which I'm fairly confident will sprout, I recalled most of the things he taught me, even after 25 long years. The impact that writing centers can have is similar. I've heard many stories from many writing centers over the years that confirm that writing centers are places that do make a difference in people's lives. My friends and colleagues, we do offer the sort of provocative but considerate feedback that helps people grow and flourish.

Congratulations go out to Michele Eodice for being the recipient of the 2006 Ron Maxwell Award for Distinguished Leadership in Promoting the Collaborative Learning Practices of Peer Tutors in Writing. Great work, Michele!

#### **Planning to attend a regional conference?**

ECWCA – Spring  
 EWCA – October (2008)  
 MAWCA – April (early)  
 MWCA – October  
 NCWCA – March (early)  
 NEWCA – Spring  
 PNWCA – April (typically the last weekend)  
 RMPTC – March  
 SEWCA – Spring  
 SoCal WCA – February (typically)  
 For more information on specific dates for conferences, visit [www.writingcenters.org](http://www.writingcenters.org).

Letter from Norman  
 February 2007

Like many places in the country, Oklahoma has been riding the weather roller-coaster this year. One week we had no school, no driving, just ice. The next week we were in shirt sleeves with the top down on the old MG. It is as if the seasons have rebelled, resisting the identities we have made for them. No longer constrained by dates on the calendar, seasons have busted over their boundaries, working to the extreme edges of their powers: below zero in Texas, balmy in St. Paul. We are disturbed and want to cling to "what it has always been like before" for our own comfort and peace of mind.

Workplaces have climates too. But instead of just weathering the weather, some central administrators and policy-makers try to control the weather, tame the storms, or seed clouds – in order to predict with vision plans or forecast the future with mandates. Our workplaces, however, are much more like the weather itself – a product of thousands of variables that naturally resist those unnatural attempts to control the environment.

How can we weather the weather in more responsive ways? How can we learn to thrive in all kinds of weather? How can we give up trying to manipulate the weather and begin to embrace it?

I came to the University of Oklahoma because the folks here said: We want a climate change. We want writing to take a more prominent place in the lives of students. We want our graduates to have had rich, regular writing experiences.

But now I wonder if I am truly empowered (or want) to be a "change agent." Can we still do good work in the face of westerly winds? Can't we simply don the right gear for the day ahead and meet the weather head on? I am not sure I want to be directly implicated in "climate change" if it means going against nature.

Carol Haviland wrote an email recently to WCenter listserv wondering if there is a trend



**Michele Eodice,**  
 VP IWCA

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toward "all hell breaking loose."

During the last six months, I've noticed an increase in posts to WPA-L and WCenter that begin with, "Well, all hell has been breaking loose here lately," so I'm curious about the recurring comment. Are things different? Are more stars colliding? Are we speaking more freely? More desperately? Any reads?

Carol's questions coincide with some emails and calls I have been getting lately: My writing center might be forced into a learning center; My budget is now out of my control and I don't know what I will have next year; I am suddenly not qualified for my job—they want a Ph.D.; Should I take a professional staff line to get a job or wait for tenure track position?

Shifting economic winds will impact our work. Writing centers, after all, are not places that bring in income, generate FTEs to any significant degree, or exist as long standing academic departments that no undergraduate curriculum could survive without. We are seen as value-added, enrichment, extracurricular. The best pedagogy available in your school is second to the economic needs (or whims) of the legislature or the vice president for instruction. This is not an explanation that gives us permission simply to keep complaining about the weather, but rather an explanation of what happens in nature, in our environments: can we try to get a little closer to understanding those weather patterns in order to do our work even better?

What can those of us in IWCA leadership roles do to guide and mentor those going on the job market or those in positions that are challenged by rough weather? We may need to reach out more deliberately to our members: each of us with significant experience can determine to network with others, offering our encouragement, advice, and guidance. I know I have personally benefited from having a few of these more experienced leaders as my "life lines" – these are people I can count on for honest input, people I can email or call and know that my concerns are taken seriously and kept confidential.

If you are reading this and thinking: "But I am the one who needs a mentor!" – then seek one out. We may not be able to change the

weather in your locale with a snap of our fingers, but we can let you know when you might need to put on the hip boots.

I recently heard from someone who sees the call for "streamlining" (placing the writing center inside a learning center, for example) as a gathering storm on the horizon; he asked me what he could do. I advised him to figure out ways to make what the writing center does more visible on campus, to collaborate with stable entities like the library in order to imbed his program more firmly in the academic structure and insure sustainability, and to carefully account for the ways his program impacts the students who work there.

I also encourage both new and experienced directors to take part in the most valuable professional development opportunity we offer: IWCA Summer Institute [<http://cwl.oregonstate.edu/iwcasi2007/>] Alums of this experience continue to remark on the lasting value of both the nuts and bolts workshops and the collective and ongoing support that the institute offers.



This past winter also marked a moment when we, as world citizens, finally admitted that human intervention has changed the earth's climate, and likely not for the best. It took the accumulation of research, the influence of experts, and that pervasive gut feeling that something is just not right to get us to hear and believe. We too can read the research, listen to experts, and go with our gut in order to thrive in the future. Talking about a writing center was always talking about what was particular to that local community and I think this will become even more so – we may no longer be able to say there is much in common about what we do from school to school based on such diversity in administrative structures, institutional goals, or staffing patterns – representing the regional climate, if you will. But one thing will likely remain universal across all these configurations: the people in those jobs, leading those writing centers, will be there because they are prepared for and committed to the work. I am happy to be among you all, rain or shine.

**Report on the Midwest Writing Centers Association  
23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Regional Conference  
"Expand the Frontier: Look Up, Look Out"  
October 26-28, 2006, St. Louis**

I joined the faculty at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, in July 2005. When I arrived, the writing center was a small room adjacent to the Humanities Division. It was just big enough for a desk, a computer, a table, and a couple of chairs. One of my first acts as the new administrator was to remove a sign that sternly directed student writers to make every effort at grammatical and mechanical correctness "**BEFORE**" coming to see a tutor. Much has changed in the last year and a half: we renamed ourselves to reflect a new identity (the Studio for Writing and Speaking), we moved into a larger space in the library, we now offer online scheduling, we have regular staff meetings that include on-going tutor training, and we even have writing center scholarship on our library shelves. Most significantly, though, we joined the professional conversation among writing center specialists by attending the MWCA conference "Expand the Frontier: Look Up, Look Out" in St. Louis in October 2006. For the tutors at Union, the conference theme couldn't have been more appropriate. In particular, the keynote addresses by Harry Denny and Shanti Bruce spoke to issues not often raised or even realized on a small Midwestern campus like ours that lacks diversity of many kinds. Though the tutors have not reported on every aspect of the conference, you will see from their responses that follow how meaningful the experience was. A special thank you to co-chairs Susan Mueller and Dawn Fels as well as everyone else who helped them make the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual regional



Tanya Cochran is a Ph.D. candidate in Rhetoric and Composition at Georgia State University and an assistant professor of English at Union College where she directs the Studio for Writing and Speaking.

**Sage on the Stage or Guide by the Side?**

After a long car trip and a late arrival in St. Louis, getting up for an 8:00 a.m. session was a challenge. It was a challenge I was glad to have accepted, however. I attended "Getting to the Heart of the Matter: Tutee-driven Conferences." Given by Barbara Agnew, Mary Boote, and Anne Marie McGee, writing center directors from Deerfield High School, Illinois, this presentation reviewed the keys to a successful "tutee-driven" tutorial.

The speakers opened with a series of role-plays modeling the "sage on the stage" approach to tutoring. "You should write about *hubris*," the tutor counseled the student who had just announced that she had "no idea what to do." Not waiting for a response, the tutor added, "Or maybe you'd rather do a paper about the Golden Mean."

Having established how *not* to conduct a tutorial, the presenters then listed the essential qualities of the "guide by the side," the tutor who listens and makes suggestions while acknowledging the student's ownership of the text. The presenters then asked the audience to apply these skills by discussing a sample text.

This session was valuable as an introduction for novice tutors and as a review for writing-center veterans. The drama and the discussion of the text provided a concrete reinforcement of the concepts presented, and the handouts included some additional useful materials. I found it a session well worth attending, even at the cost of a little sleep deprivation.



Mary Christian, a junior, majors in both English and French. She tutors as well as helps

*Mary's report is continued on page 5*

Visit MWCA's website at <http://www.usiouxfalls.edu/mwca/>

### **Learn and Serve: A Writing Center Impacts Its Community**

In his presentation "The Writing Center Serving Uncharted Expectations," Harry Brake, Seaford High School's writing center director, described how writing center work can develop tutors' leadership skills and encourage them to reach out to their community.

Seaford's writing center has reached beyond the high school with services such as a creative writing workshop in a nearby elementary school and conversation lessons for immigrant and non-native-speaking parents. Brake dwelt not only on the advantages of these projects to those being served but also on the value of the learning experience to the tutors. By taking the lead in various community service efforts, these students have cultivated professional skills such as public speaking, writing grant proposals, and planning advertising strategies.

Brake also gave tips about the effective use of technology such as hand-helds, Inspiration and Kidspiration software, and Turnitin.com for elementary and secondary classroom instruction. His handout folders contained a CD with samples of Inspiration, Kidspiration and Inspire-Data.

Both of the topics with which the presentation dealt—community service and technology—were useful for writing center directors looking for innovative tools and ideas for branching out, and the presenter was well-informed on both topics. The personal, narrative element and the pictures and lists used as visual aids also attracted my interest. What impressed me most in this session was hearing how tutors can use—and have used—their writing and speaking skills to impact a school and community.

### **Meditation, Creativity, and Reality: Finding Who You Are**

After a long trip in a van and a late night, I was not looking forward to a day of trying to learn new things. As a tutor, I knew I would be expected to learn something and take things away that could be applied in my writing center, but I did not know how I would handle this. However, after a few minutes of the first seminar I attended, I came to the conclusion that this was no great chore. The following are ideas that I specifically gained from the seminars I attended.

The first presentation I attended, "Meditation as Stress Relief for Writers and Tutors," was presented by Elizabeth Herman of Southern Illinois University Carbondale. The basic idea was to promote meditation in the writing centers as a way to relax and focus on jobs to be completed during a tutoring session. During the session, Herman provided an example of meditation that could be used to relieve stress and enhance creativity in writing. The first part of the process involved identifying the stressors on paper. The next step was to close the eyes and relax while a sample of a meditation script was read aloud. After the meditation session was completed, the audience was invited to crumple up their stresses and throw them into the trash bin. What I took away from this session is that sometimes people come into the writing center and have problems that are putting up mental blocks that hinder the creative process of the writer. Sometimes it is necessary to spend some time finding those problems and setting them aside in order to make the best of the writing process.



Jeana Styron is a sophomore International Studies major and a Studio tutor.

Another presentation I attended, "The Literary Memoir: Creativity and Self-Discovery in the Training of Peer Tutors," was presented by a panel of student tutors from Washington University. This presentation was about a class that soon-to-be tutors must take before entering the writing center. One of the class requirements was to write a paper about personal experiences that had helped each writer become what they are today. This session was revealing to me because I realized more about how students feel about coming to a writing center. From the essays read by the tutors, I saw a common theme: some were afraid of the revision process; for others, it meant failure. When students come to the writing center, tutors should realize that

*Jeana's report is continued on page 6*

editing and revising is a huge step that should not to be taken lightly. A new goal for me in my writing center is to help students coming in to see that editing is a helpful and necessary part of the writing process.

Finally, I attended "In the Bucket of My Mind: Reality and Other Realities" presented by Tony Shaffer of the University of Central Missouri. The session covered the use of metaphors. Shaffer gave a background on metaphors, examples, and ended with a few activities. I never realized how valuable metaphors actually were until I went to that seminar, and now that I think about it, I am starting to use them more often to get points across. It was very helpful for me to attend this seminar and learn more about how good metaphors are made and how to target my audience.

Overall, the conference in its entirety gave me many good ideas for my writing center and I am thankful that all the presenters were clear in their reasoning and very organized. I walked away with much more information than I expected to and I want to encourage everyone to attend the next conference that they are able to.

### The Extra Mile

I was invited to the MWCA conference to learn what it takes to be a writing tutor. I decided to attend "Out of the Comfort Zone: Tutoring Beyond the Bounds of Textual and Cultural Familiarity" by the University of Iowa and "Reaching Beyond the Session" by the University of Missouri St. Louis. As an Education Major, I am constantly searching for new and innovative ways of teaching. Tutoring is a form of teaching that gives unique experiences that classroom observation cannot. I left these meetings with a focus and a direction that continues to encourage me to push for the extra mile today.

In "Out of the Comfort Zone: Tutoring Beyond the Bounds of Textual and Cultural Familiarity," I learned that it is not the tutor's job to proofread papers. It is the tutor's job to help facilitate learning. The extra mile is what separates the good tutors from the great tutors. The great tutors will use whatever means possible to reach out to the tutee. Anyone can read out of a book and show examples of how to do effective writing, but it is those tutors who go beyond the textbook to connect to their students that excel the most.

Traditional forms of teaching are what have created the increasing need for writing centers. Albert Einstein once said, "The world will not evolve past its current state of crisis by using the same thinking that created the situation." As I sat in one of the meetings, I found myself stunned by a very deep and profound statement: "American textbooks lie to their students." My first thought was, *How could someone say that?* Then, I started to analyze it. Our history books *do* tend to push the "American Dream." Though they may not be completely lying, they are not really telling the whole truth either. Our textbooks *do* favor some points-of-view over others.

As educators we need to help unlock the minds of our students by stepping outside of the norm. By analyzing the same thing, from the same angle, we are not creating anything new. If we submit to this, we are only repeating what has been done before. In a sense, by continuing to support traditional methods, we are supporting a form of plagiarism. I have already seen enough persuasive essays on topics such as abortion or the death penalty to last a lifetime, and I am not even a teacher yet! What has happened to free and independent thinking?

"Reaching Beyond the Session" taught me that education is about going to the edge of what we know and pushing beyond that. Knowing what makes your students tick and what makes your students ticked off will help you find the best ways of engaging them in their writing. Once engaged, their writing becomes a part of them, a representation of who they are,



Derek Timms is a first-year student double-majoring in Mathematics and Religious Education.

*Derek's report is continued on page 7*

rather than merely a writing assignment. The quality of their writing will then improve because they have invested themselves in it.

Additionally, tutors need to be very prepared before a student arrives for the session. Running the sessions professionally by being organized helps students feel safe enough to express their thoughts and opinions. Tutors can also address fear and anxiety with encouragement. This helps students see their logic through building outlines or by putting an essay together one paragraph at a time. Through your sessions, students should learn to see writing as a building process.

This conference has taught me that we may never know the impact we will make on the life of one of our students. We are only asked to aide them for a very short time in their lives, and we need to make sure that those moments count. By learning about who we are teaching, we will then know the best methods to teach the subject. We lead by example. Once you have gone the extra mile, though, each student will respond differently, your students will have the choice to follow and discover what going the extra mile means in their lives. Those who choose to go the extra mile will "Expand the Frontier" of education.

*This report was provided by Tanya Cochran*

### Corrections

In the last issue of *Update*, there was some erroneous information about the Outstanding Scholarship Committee tacked on to the Research Awards Committee report by Nathalie Singh-Corcoran.

Also, I incorrectly tagged a picture from the Summer Institute coverage. Dr. Scott Miller, one of the instructors of the Summer Institute this past summer, is an associate professor of English at Sonoma State University, and not Humboldt State University.

My apologies for both.

Nita Danko  
*IWCA Update* Editor

### Announcing a Special Interest Group (SIG) on Antiracist Activism

In his keynote address at the 2005 joint IWCA/NCPTW conference in Minneapolis and subsequent publication in the *Writing Center Journal*, Victor Villanueva asked those of us who work in writing centers to break the silence around race and racism. His rousing call created a flurry of conversation on WCENTER and in other venues. To sustain this momentum and to continue conversations about the work of undoing racism, we invite you to join us for a special interest group (SIG) meeting on Antiracist Activism at the upcoming IWCA Conference in Houston. Whether you think of yourself as an activist or simply a person wanting to work against racism in your writing center and sessions, gather with others to inaugurate this special interest group on Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup> at 4:45. Look for the SIG in the conference program.

We hope that this group can work at undoing racism at multiple levels: in the immediate context of the writing conference and local writing center and more widely through systematic cross-curricular and cross-institutional initiatives. The more specific goals of meeting include the following:

- Identify and share practical strategies for disrupting systematic racism in our institutions and writing centers;
  - Share stories as well as artifacts (including photographs, comics, news clippings, television programs, or narrative responses) that help anchor conversations about white privilege and racism in our writing centers;
  - Collect and supply speaking notes, presentation materials, workshop ideas, and other documents that can help educate and raise awareness in our local communities;
  - Help writing center practitioners network with others who are interested in learning more about, participating in, or extending their current efforts at antiracism;
- Support the efforts of the IWCA Diversity Initiative.  
Join us in this important work. It takes us all.

Frankie Condon  
Beth Godbee  
Moiria Ozias  
Organizers, IWCA SIG on Antiracist Activism

**International Writing Centers Association  
2006 Outstanding Scholarship in an Article Award**

The International Writing Centers Association proudly announces a tie for its 2006 best article. This year's pool of scholarship proved so strong that, of the nine articles nominated, eight received at least one top three vote in the Outstanding Scholarship Committee. Committee readers note how the articles represent the breadth of writing center contexts, because they include research situated in high schools, community colleges, and universities, and in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. In the end, the committee found two articles especially compelling, one because the authors grapple deftly with a profusion of empirical data they use to theorize centers, and the other because, by contrasting U.S. and U.K. models, the authors complicate and enrich fundamental assumptions about writing center work. The 2006 best articles are:

Jo Ann Griffin, Daniel Keller, Iswari P. Pandey, Anne-Marie Pedersen, and Carolyn Skinner for "Local Practices, National Consequences: Surveying and (Re)Constructing Writing Center Identities" published in *The Writing Center Journal* 26.2.

Bonnie Devet, Susan Orr, Margo Blythman, and Cecilia Bishop for "Peering Across the Pond: The Role of Students in Developing Other Students' Writing in the US and UK." Published in *Teaching Academic Writing in UK Higher Education: Theories, Practices and Models*, Ed. Lisa Ganobcsik-Williams.

The Outstanding Scholarship in an Article Committee consisted of Leigh Ryan, Jeanne Simpson, Melissa Williams, and Roberta Kjesrud (chair).

*The following is an account from the "Peering Across the Pond" authors. According to Devet, "This chapter which focuses on whether writing centers should be staffed with peers or professional tutors is distinctive because it is written by authors from two different countries engaged in a dialogue. This chapter also is unusual because it appears as the only chapter devoted to writing centers in the book Teaching Academic Writing in UK Higher Education, thus serving as a model of international writing center scholarship and as a model for how others cultures can talk to each other about higher education."*

**Summary of Chapter by Devet**

Although peer tutoring is an accepted, and, indeed, integral part of student writing pedagogy in American universities, this model has never been popular in UK higher education. In "Peering Across the Pond," Writing Center directors from the UK and the US engage in a dialogue examining American models of peer tutoring and assessing their implications for developing student writing in UK higher education.

This study arose from an initial conversation between two of the chapter's authors, Bonnie Devet and Margo Blythman, at the 2000 National Writing Centers Association conference. Discussions about staffing foregrounded differences between US and UK approaches to supporting student writing at the university level with both sides realizing the value of doing comparative work.

In part one of the chapter, Devet outlines the origins and models for using students as peer consultants in writing centers and explains why American educators view this model positively. In part two, Susan Orr, Margo Blythman, and Celia Bishop discuss the implications of moving such a model into UK higher education. They interrogate this model without rejecting it, leaving readers to assess its appropriateness for their own institutional contexts, recognizing the advantages but acknowledging that using peers might affect staffing in UK higher education, that having peer tutors could decentralized UK writing centers from their campuses, that peers are not truly peers, and that the pedagogy associated with peer tutors is not exclusive to peers as peers.

As a model of international writing center scholarship, the chapter shows both cultures should rethink their tacit assumptions about higher education and re-examine how cultural contexts influence the teaching of writing. As a trans-national, cross-cultural examination of writing center work, the chapter also serves as a model for other cultures to talk to each other about higher education.

**Devet on what it was like to work internationally on a chapter...**

Writing the chapter "Peering across the Pond" was a cultural wake-up call about style. My half of the chapter, describing the American penchant for staffing writing centers with student consultants, reads like a Sousa march with a deliberate, consistent, forward beat. Maybe we Yanks do drive right ahead, after all? I was glad, though, the UK editor/publisher agreed to retain my hard-driving American prose (not even changing the spelling or punctuation to match the Queen's English) so that my half serves as

*continued on page 9*

a sweet contrast to the British writing which, to my colonial ear, reads like the Thames River, winding its way---formally, slowly, deliberately---through the English countryside. These differences reflect the cultural charm of the chapter--each side of the Pond is being heard from...distinctly.

I have worked quite a lot with colleagues in the United States and Canada so it was not new to me but

what I really like is that it makes me re-think my tacit assumptions. When you work within one culture it is easy to see certain ways of doing things as fixed and non-negotiable. Realizing that other countries achieve similar results through totally different routes makes one question these assumptions.

Email is fantastic because it is more or less instant. It seems like magic to have documents winging their way back and forth across the Atlantic in seconds. It is also fascinating dealing with time differences. It feels quite nice when I arrive at my office in the morning to know that there is no rush since my transatlantic colleagues will still be asleep for hours. However, the downside is when a very fresh perky response arrives just as I am heading home tired and at the end of the day.

**Orr writes...**

Writing across the pond: reflections  
Email works well and easily...what did we do before it existed! Also, as writing specialists, we all had strong views about our writing and the writing of others. This did sometimes lead to a feeling of being 'marked' by another co-author. While we may be non directive with our students, at times I felt we

were being very directive with each other! In addition, USA punctuation is different to that used in the UK! I never put a comma before 'and'!

Writing with colleagues from another national setting made me better able to understand the contextual nature of the writing development arrangements we have in place in the UK.

**Blythman adds...**

I think there are very few actual clashes but it is important to keep checking that our terms (especially acronyms) are understood by the other side and of course we have to decide on spelling! I always find it amusing when I write about writing 'centers' - not only does my spell check complain but no British editor will accept it happily, even if we are talking about American centers. I don't think there is really a style issue except that American colleagues have told me that we hedge more. I think sometimes we are also more formal and avoid what



"British Colleagues cistern"--photograph of Celia Bishop, Bonnie Devet, Margo Blythman (left to right) on College of Charleston campus (SC) in front of the main administration building Randolph Hall-not shown Susan Orr. Photo courtesy of Bonnie Devet.

we might see as 'cutesy'.

**Bishop writes...**

I was not so involved with the exchange of emails "across the pond" but have been lucky enough to attend a few conferences focused on writing center work in the US.

What has struck me is that even though we come from different cultures and may organize our support in different ways, and can at times be divided by a common language, when I meet US colleagues it is apparent that whatever our differences, we all have our students' best interests at heart and are ready to do our utmost to help them succeed and fulfill their potential.

**International Writing Centers Association 2006 Outstanding Scholarship in a Book Award**

The Outstanding Scholarship Committee is proud to announce that Richard Kent's *A Guide to Creating Student-Staffed Writing Centers, Grades 6-12* has been selected for its 2006 Outstanding Scholarship in a Book. Kent's *Guide* is an important contribution to writing center studies. Drawing upon his experiences as a teacher, scholar and high school writing center director, Kent offers the reader not just a comprehensive treatment of how to establish a high school writing center, but a compelling argument for doing so. In a recent review in *The Writing Center Journal* Catherine Oriani notes that Kent "presents wide-ranging and even inspiring material will prove helpful to would-be, novice, and veteran writing center directors" (68). The Outstanding Scholarship Committee concurs with this assessment and therefore has selected this work for the Outstanding Scholarship Award.

Kent, Richard. *A Guide to Creating Student-Staffed Writing Centers: Grades 6-12*. New York: Peter Lang, 2006.

The Outstanding Scholarship in a Book subcommittee consisted of Melissa lanetta, Wayne Robertson, and Elisabeth-Piedmont Marton (chair.)



Bob Barrier and SWCA's Keynote Speaker, Beth Boquet

Lounging at the Salt Lake City Community Writing Center after the Rocky Mountain Peer Tutoring Conference



From left to right, are Dan Emory, University of Utah; Tiffany Rousculp, Salt Lake Community College Community Writing Center; Clint Gardner, SLCC WC and IWCA president; Claire Hughes, Weber State University and host of RMPTC.



Alison Holland receives her Award of Service from Clint Gardner, IWCA President, and Jon Olson, IWCA Past President.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/slccswc/>



Lunch crowd at the SWCA Conference

All photos courtesy of Michele Eodice

Attendees of the IWCA Meeting at NCTE in Nashville



Front Row, from left to right: Ben Rafoth, Pam Childers, Clint Gardner, John Tinker, Steve Sherwood, Jon Olson  
Back Row, from left to right: Jenny Jordan, Elisabeth Piedmont-Martin, Michele Eodice, Sherri Winans, Wayne Robertson, Trixie Smith



In Nashville, Elisabeth Piedmont-Martin meets American Idol's Kelly Pickler

<http://www.usiouxfalls.edu/mwca/conference/>

**NCPTW '07 CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

Celebrating History: Dancing Backward, Forward, and All Around  
October 19-21, 2007

Thomas Building, Penn State, University Park, PA

<http://www.outreach.psu.edu/conference/peer-tutoring/>

2007 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of peer tutoring at Penn State. We want you to join us to celebrate your own peer tutoring histories. Let's dance.

Let's think, too. After all, any celebration involves planning, analyzing, problematizing, interpreting, theorizing, and preserving. The dance of peer tutoring requires unity of thinking and feeling through writing and speaking. Let's join in what rhetorician and compositionist Louise Wetherbee Phelps calls "the dance of discourse."

We invite tutors, administrators, and faculty who take the rhetorical stance of peership to submit proposals addressing the dance of peer tutoring in writing through history:

**Writing Center:** What is the history of your writing center—and of your theories, practices, and relationships? What institutional moments made your center what it is today and inform where you are headed?

**Personal:** What is your own history with tutoring? How do you create history in your interactions with writers, instructors, directors, staff, community members, theories, and your own writing? What led you to writing center work, and how does that work affect where you are going?

**Community:** How have you applied your writing-centered scholarship within the communities of which your writing center is a part? How have other communities affected your writing center? And what about the history and progress of the NCPTW community itself? What have you learned from past conferences?

**Millennium:** Do you remember the year 2000 when many conferences and journals addressed a theme of looking backward and looking ahead? What came of it? Those of you who were in writing center work at the millennium might inspire us by returning to what you did at the 2000 NCPTW or did with other looking-back-and-looking-forward projects. Seven years later, do you see progress?

**WCRP:** How have you used the Writing Center Research Project at the University of Louisville? If you have used the WCRP archives or contributed to them, what did you learn? How does historical scholarship inform your tutoring and teaching?

**Alternatives:** Feel free to present on anything that has to do with peer tutoring in writing. If you seek response to a project that has little to do with history or dancing, use us.

What can the NCPTW community learn from your history? How can you engage your audience with the problems and solutions in your history and avoid mere show and tell? Let's dance, together.

NCPTW encourages tutor-led, interactive presentations. We also invite submission of proposals by email, though hard copy mailed through a postal service is welcome also.

**Please include the following information with your proposal:**

Name and title of contact person

Address, phone number, and email address

Format: interactive workshop, panel discussion, skit, presentation of a paper, performance art, poster session, etc.

Time required (25, 50, or 75 minutes)

Intended audience

Participants and their presentation titles

Description in around 200 words

Abstract of 50 words, for the program

Equipment needed

**Please send completed proposals here:**

Desiree Ballanco <ncptw07@psu.edu> or

Desiree Ballanco, NCPTW '07 Staff Assistant

Center for Excellence in Writing

206 Boucke Building

Penn State University

University Park, PA 16802-5900

Questions? Call Desiree at 814-863-6313.

**Proposal Deadline: May 11** (post-dated)

**Notification: June 5**

## International Writing Centers Association

An Assembly of the National Council of Teachers of English



### ***IWCA Update*: The International Writing Centers Association newsletter**

**Purpose:** *IWCA Update* is published twice per year: one issue in the Winter/ Spring semester (late January/early February) and the second in early Fall semester (late September/early October). The newsletter is circulated to all current members of IWCA and *Update* contributors. The purpose of *IWCA Update* is to provide IWCA members with the most current information about the organization and its work. *Update* is also dedicated to providing for writing center professionals a forum in which a wide range of information and writing can be found, work that is important to the field and might not otherwise find publication. Finally, *IWCA Update* strives to provide for writing center professionals up-to-date announcements, calls for proposals and/or submissions, information on awards, discussion/review of publications, & information on IWCA, IWCA regional, and other writing-related conferences.

**Deadlines:** Submissions for the summer/fall issue should be received by no later than June 31<sup>st</sup>. Submissions for the winter/spring issue should be received by no later than November 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Submissions**

#### **Guidelines:**

- Short articles, fiction, nonfiction, and conference reviews should be no more than 1500 words.
- "One Question" pieces should be no longer than 500 words (These pieces are designed to provide readers/writers with an opportunity to ask a question of our readers that can be followed up on WCenter).
- CFPs should be no more than 250 words (for the winter/spring issue, CFP deadlines should be no earlier than February 28<sup>th</sup>; for the fall issue, no CFP deadlines should fall before October 31<sup>st</sup>).
- Conference, book, grant, award, and other public announcements should be no more than 100 words.
- Personal and hiring announcements, job postings, and new resources/facilities announcements should be no more than 50 words.
- Poetry, book reviews, short text selections, and other submissions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you have other materials you would like to submit, please do so. The editor is very much willing to work with you.
- Please include links to further information, should these constraints prove problematic.

### **Submitting a**

#### **piece:**

- All submissions should be sent via email. Send your piece to: [danko@calumet.purdue.edu](mailto:danko@calumet.purdue.edu) by the appropriate deadline.
- Each submission should be sent separately.
- Please include your full name, as you would like it to appear in the newsletter, current title/position, institution, and complete contact information in the email.
- Each electronic submission should be in an MS Word document attached to the email *AND* pasted into the email message itself.

**If, for any reason, you would like to submit a piece for consideration and cannot meet these guidelines, contact Nita Danko, *Update* Editor, to make other arrangements.**

**Please feel free to email or call if you have any questions.**

**PURDUE**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
**CALUMET**

### **Department of English and Philosophy**

**The Writing Center**  
***IWCA Update***  
**c/o Nita Danko**  
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