

Activity 1. Write Advice

Review a student paper and write advice, focusing solely on content, rather than adhering to EWC format or guidelines. This allows the tutor education coordinator to offer personalized feedback while assessing strengths and areas for improvement in order to tailor the process accordingly.

Activity 2. Describe Your "Idea of a Writing Center"

Explore how writing center theory informs our work at the Effective Writing Center by reading Steven North's "The Idea of a Writing Center" and Muriel Harris' "Talking in the Middle." Write about your own "idea of a writing center" and discuss an "ideal" writing center, relating both the readings and previous experiences to the topic.

Activity 3. Think About Strategies

Read Ben Rafoth's "Why Visit Your Campus Writing Center?" Then Write about how an ideal writing center might translate into actual practice (and practical strategies) when addressing 2-4 specific writing concerns, including, but not limited to assignment management, thesis development, reorganization, integrating research, or wordiness.

Activity 4. Apply a Tutorial Hierarchy to Student Advice

Review the EWC's tutorial hierarchy (higher-order revisions before lower-order revisions) and learn strategies for quelling the tutorial urge to "fix everything" and ensuring that advice is focused.

Activity 5. Consider Tone in Online Advising and the Importance of Positive Feedback

After reviewing strategies for maintaining a friendly, collegial tone while still offering specific and directed advice, read "Across the Drafts" by Nancy Somers and discuss why positive feedback might be particularly important in an all-online writing center like the EWC. Come up with at least three specific techniques for ensuring feedback is positive, detailed, and above all, honest.

Activity 6. Discuss Strategies for Advising Writing Online in a Diverse Academic Community

Writing advisors at UMUC work with a linguistically and culturally diverse community of students. Although this diversity is one of the most interesting and enjoyable aspects of the work, it also poses challenges when tutoring in a virtual setting. In this module, reflect on the challenges and create strategies for respecting the backgrounds of all writers while meeting their writing needs. Read three articles:

1. Cynthia Linville's "Editing Line By Line."
2. "Responding Online" by Ben Rafoth
3. "Looking at the Whole Text" (excerpt) by Jennifer E. Staben and Kathryn Dempsey Nordhaus

Then respond and discuss how they might adapt these strategies into different tutoring scenarios.

Activity 7. Revise Your Advice, Using the EWC Template

Review the EWC standard template and revise their advice from Module 1, adapting it to the EWC template.

Activity 8. Review On-Shift Policies

Activity 9. Review the Guide to the EWC Database

Activity 10: Advise sample papers through the EWC Database