

# THE WRITING LAB

N E W S L E E T T E R

Volume 34, Number 7

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

March, 2010

## — FROM THE EDITOR —

This issue takes us out of the wintery doldrums with an article exploring how to enhance writers' ability to reflect, another article on writers transforming themselves into avatars, and one more about releasing anxiety that arises when being evaluated as a writer. Magin LaSov Gregg writes about the productive processes of discernment and contemplation for writers and ways tutors can help. Russell Carpenter and Meghan Griffin explore uses of the virtual world of Second Life for writing centers, and Allyson Jones learns the importance of letting go of her fear of evaluation when meeting with a tutor.

To honor professionals in our field, the Awards Committee for the IWCA Outstanding Service Award offers an overview of the accomplishments of previous winners in order to help those interested in nominating the next winner of this award. Although I feel humbled and not a little embarrassed by having an award named in my honor in a publication I edit, I do hope you will consider nominating an outstanding colleague for this important award.

Finally, to help others interested in similar projects, I have begun collecting lists of online work done by some of our writing centers. On page 13 you'll find a listing of some writing centers' promotional videos, and I invite others to send me their URLs to expand that list. In the future, I hope to collect two other lists, one of multi-media instructional materials (podcasts, videos, PowerPoints, etc.) and another of text-based writing resources. If you wish to have your materials in these lists, please send URLs to me: harrism@purdue.edu.

◆ Muriel Harris, editor

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## SEEKING THE SPIRITUAL: AN ADAPTATION OF CONTEMPLATION AND DISCERNMENT IN THE WRITING CENTER

◆ Magin LaSov Gregg  
Louisiana Tech University  
Ruston, LA

Until I became a writing consultant, I held a predominantly cognitivist attitude toward the teaching of writing. This attitude emphasized deadlines, outlines, and rationality. Yet gradually, through my work with first-year students and non-native speakers, I discovered that exclusively cognitivist approaches ignore aspects of the writing process that are not easily quantified, such as intuition, emotion, and mood. In contrast, the pedagogy defined by Kristie S. Fleckenstein in "Creating a Center That Holds: Spirituality Through Exploratory Pedagogy" offers centering strategies to allow writers access to knowledge that exists outside the boundaries of cognition. Expanding here on Fleckenstein's model of exploratory pedagogy, I suggest the monastic practices of contemplation and discernment as two possible centering methods that writers or writing consultants may adopt to access, understand, and apply knowledge that is not explicitly rational. This essay contends that secularized versions of discernment and contemplation may heighten reflection in both the writer and the writing consultant.

Fleckenstein coined the term "exploratory pedagogy" to describe a style of teaching that, at its core, evokes a spiritual center. She grounds her study in an allu-

*continued on page 2*

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sion to William Butler Yeats's "The Second Coming," in which the poet describes the chaos of a world in which "[t]hings fall apart" (187) because the world has lost its spiritual center; she suggests that things also fall apart in writing when writers are disengaged from their feelings and emotions and are subject to pedagogies that rely exclusively on cognitivist approaches. Alternatively, exploratory pedagogy consciously integrates meditative practices to guide the emergence of individual knowledge and personal truth. "Thus," Fleckenstein notes, "something as mystical as inspiration is no longer a matter of chance or genius" (28). Indeed, the pursuit of inner truth held tantamount by Fleckenstein's model may seem well placed within expressivist theory, but I argue that my adaption of contemplation and discernment veers from conventional expressivism because each monastic practice encourages the dismissal of personal experiences, such as negative emotions, that may increase anxiety and obstruct meaningful writing. In order to form writing, contemplation and discernment rely on collaboration between the writer and the writing consultant to refocus attention on the quality of internal truth—as it is discovered through contemplation—and on the meaningful strands of personal narrative, as experiences are filtered through discernment. Both practices affirm the writing center as a collaborative Burkean Parlor in which the presence of others is required for the creation of writing (Lunsford 49). Although contemplation and discernment may be derived historically from monasticism, both practices may be adapted in the writing center as secular strategies that navigate the murky emotional processes of writing and revision.

The sixteenth-century Spanish mystic John of the Cross offers one of the most famous definitions of contemplation in the third stanza of his visionary work, "Living Flame of Love," where he notes that "pure contemplation lies in receiving" (Kavanaugh 688). Such a state, John tells us, may be reached through the practice of becoming "silent and detached from discursive knowledge and gratification" (688). Similar definitions of contemplation appear in the fourth-century writings of the desert ammas and abbas, the late fourteenth-century anonymous mystical text *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and in the twentieth-century books of the American Trappist Thomas Merton. More recently, the late psychiatrist and spiritual writer Gerald G. May defined contemplation as a "receptivity to the thoughts, feelings, sights, sounds, and other sensory perceptions that each moment brings" (par. 3). To extend May's supposition, the contemplative writer and writing consultant cultivate a capacity to receive the feelings and emotions that arise during the consulting session, but refrain from immediate judgment that could dismiss this knowledge.

To promote contemplative practice among writers, I have successfully employed the following strategies with writers during tutorials:

- journaling
- stream of consciousness listing
- discussion of meditative practices

Streamlining these practices into contemplative applications diverges from the typical ways in which journaling, listing, and meditation may be used in the writing center. As one example, I offer the story of James, a senior with whom I consulted on law school applications. Like many law school applicants, James had dreamed since childhood of becoming a lawyer; yet his first draft of a personal statement described his goals in nebulous terms. He struggled to articulate not only the concrete reasons why he wanted to attend law school but also his admiration of the lawyers who had worked with women in the neighborhoods in which he was raised by a single mother. James, who often hid his impoverished roots from his peers, told me that he wanted to uncover how witnessing compassionate lawyers in his childhood had solidified his interest in justice and his own resolve to practice law. At first, I did not know how to respond to this goal; however, after digesting May's essay on contemplation, I turned to Jeff Brooks's "Minimalist Tutoring: Making the Student Do All the Work." Following the model provided by Brooks, I asked James to spend a few minutes silently contemplating and journaling in response to the question, "What are the reasons why I want to attend law school?" Then I stepped into the hallway.

When I returned to the room, we did not discuss the content of James's journal, but we did talk about how the act of journaling helped James feel more comfortable not knowing the form his final draft would take. Drawing from both May and John of the Cross, I encouraged James to acknowledge the emotions that arose in this process and to be attentive to this knowledge.

James said that the process of listing responses to goal-prompts reduced his anxiety and made writing less "intimidating." After the session, he continued to journal and write stream-of-consciousness lists that explored his reasons for attending law school; his lists focused on the reception of this information, what John of the Cross calls the act of "receiving." In turn, I encouraged James to think of himself as using contemplative practice to excavate his personal history for insight into his childhood impressions of lawyers. As memories surfaced, James added germane information to his essay. Eventually, his heavily-revised essay earned him a spot at his first-choice law school in Mississippi.

When his acceptance letter arrived, James appreciated first-hand the effects of contemplative practice within a writer's life. Contemplation is similarly affirmed by the experiences of contemporary writers. For instance, Kathleen Norris nimbly connects the benefits of joining contemplation with writing in her 2008 book, *Acedia & me* [sic], where she notes that the "activities of walking, baking bread and washing dishes" transform her writing by providing a space for reflection and revision (191). Like James's practices of listing and journaling, Norris's practices of baking and walking free her conscious mind to receive emotional, intuitive, and largely subconscious knowledge. Some writers with whom I have consulted also used long walks, as well as work with puzzles, as contemplative activities.

For other writers, contemplation is more counter-cultural. Norris, in *Acedia & me*, includes a reference to a notebook entry by F. Scott Fitzgerald in which he describes boredom in contemplative terms, as not "'an end product' but as an important and necessary 'stage in life and art,' acting like a filter that allows 'the clear product to emerge'" (41). Likewise, the French poet Charles Baudelaire famously lauds contemplation in *The Flowers of Evil*, where in "Elevation" he extols the glory of such a state:

Beyond where cares and boredom hold dominion  
Which charge our fogged existence with their spleen,  
Happy is he who with a stalwart pinion  
Can seek those fields so shining and serene:  
Whose thoughts, like larks, rise on the freshening breeze,  
Who fans the morning with his tameless wings,  
Skims over life, and understands with ease  
The speech of flowers and other voiceless things. (11)

Following Baudelaire, may we dare suggest to our iPod-attached, Facebook-addicted writers that comfort with "voiceless things" may be good not only for their thinking but also for their writing? I think so.

The effect of contemplation is deepened when writing consultants embrace the practice in order to nurture their own objective capacities for reflection and responsiveness within a tutoring session. After reading Norris's book, I began a secular practice of contemplation, while sitting atop a bench on our university's campus. My meditation resembled the model suggested by Donald R. Gallehr in "Wait, and the Writing Will Come: Meditation and the Composing Process." Unlike Gallehr, I meditated not just to improve my own writing, but to improve my effectiveness as a writing consultant. Yet, like him, I found that a daily practice of contemplation allowed me to "move away from a rational identification with the writing to a detached intuition" (28). Every day, for a period of 20 minutes, I sat and released thoughts as they came; I let them go without judgment or attachment. In time, my attention toward writers sharpened. Instead of feeling the temptation to engage in a power struggle, I found myself relaxing into a natural

*“ [There is] an important distinction between contemplation and discernment; while contemplation cultivates a writer's openness and receptivity, discernment fosters a filtering of emotions in order to reach a decision. ”*

flow during tutoring sessions. Through contemplation, the distinction between “novice and expert was blurred” (Gillespie and Lerner 61). In place of the traditional tutor-pupil hierarchy, the student and I became two writers working together to create space for writing to emerge. Having fully embraced the practice of contemplation, I found myself ready to engage with writers in an adaptation of a second practice, discernment, which served as a tool for filtering and revision.

The word *discern* is derived from the Latin *discernere*: *dis* meaning “apart” and *cernere* meaning “to separate.” *Discernment* means a “separating apart of knowledge.” Discernment may also be understood as a cognitive filtering of information to achieve greater clarity. One method for discernment, introduced by Ignatius of Loyola, the sixteenth-century founder of the Jesuits, is called the *Examen*. This spiritual practice attempts to filter knowledge and attain clarity by encouraging a reflection on the emotions that may arise in a decision-making process. The Latin word *examen* refers to the pointer on a scale, or tongue on a balance, and is meant to recall the movement of the arrow when an item is placed on a scale, as the device weighs the item—or, in this case, as an individual internally weighs the emotions related to a set of choices. In classical spirituality, the *Examen* described “that human capacity for distinguishing right from wrong, drawing us toward right or better moral action,” as theologian Elizabeth Liebert notes in her book *The Way of Discernment* (4). Discernment invites both the writer and the writing consultant to engage in an analysis of right action to improve both meaning and clarity. In the writing center, a practice of discernment may be adapted when writers are asked to speak candidly about the feelings, moods, or intuitions that arise in the revision process. Discernment may be applied after the writer has engaged in a practice of contemplation and may, then, help the writer be more mindful of the value of intuitive or emotional knowledge.

Questions for discernment that I have used in the writing center are adapted from those of Ignatius, who asked his followers to reflect upon moments in which they felt consolation and desolation. Specifically, I have asked writers five basic questions:

- What do you like best about your writing?
- What do you like least?
- What emotions arose as you read your work?
- To what part of your writing did you feel most connected?
- To what part of your writing did you feel least connected?

These questions differ from standard questions that are frequently employed within the writing center to assess writing because they focus intently on the emotional process of writing and not the cognitive process. Rather than ask writers what they think, I encourage them to answer in response to their feelings and to acknowledge the value of deliberative reflection and avoid hasty judgments. For writers, the power of discernment manifests when they separate their negative feelings from their abilities to write with clarity and authority. In some cases, the questions enable low-confidence writers to understand that merely feeling badly about their writing does not mean that they are ineffective writers.

Not all writers find the above questions helpful, but I became convinced that they were worth asking when I began working with Maria, an international student who described herself as a “horrible writer” the first time we met. In contrast to her self-criticism, Maria’s feminist interpretations of Latin American literature reflected a high level of originality. Over a period of weeks, we met to address higher- and lower-order writing concerns; importantly, we also spoke about her experiences of learning how to write in her native Latin America, and later, in an ESL program in the United States. Her anxiety about writing was limiting, and it became clear that Maria needed to let go of worries that diminished her authority. I encouraged her to take walks and to keep a journal about the emotions writing conjured for her, as practices of contemplation. Maria responded to my suggestions with a skeptical laugh, but told me she would “try anything” to improve her writing. We then began to discern her emotions about writing, many of which were unconsciously associated with shame. As she dis-



cerned her emotions, Maria discovered that the writing process aroused within her feelings of fear and anxiety, which she released in contemplation. Her story highlights an important distinction between contemplation and discernment; while contemplation cultivates a writer's openness and receptivity, discernment fosters a filtering of emotions in order to reach a decision. Through our adaptations of contemplation and discernment, Maria was transformed: "I feel more confident," she told me on the last day we met, a marked contrast to her original description of herself as a "horrible writer."

Prior to her work in the writing center, Maria's view of writing resembled the world of chaos envisioned by Yeats in "The Second Coming." For her, things had fallen apart as she struggled against language and cultural barriers in an educational system that overwhelmingly favors native speakers. Through contemplation and discernment, Maria and I mended a writer's tattered self-esteem. I later learned that she had earned an "A" on her final paper. Centering strategies opened Maria to receive emotional and intuitive knowledge that served as cornerstones to her realization of authority. The discernment of this knowledge allowed her to discover that negative emotions about writing did not truthfully characterize the quality of her writing or her ability to write effectively. For both Maria and me, this separation of personal perception from actual reality was no small miracle. ♦

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### IWCA/NCPTW: PROPOSAL DEADLINE EXTENDED

For the joint International Writing Centers Association and National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing Conference, on Nov. 4-6, 2010, in Baltimore, Maryland, please note the deadline has been extended. Due to the snow emergency in the Mid-Atlantic region, the new deadline is March 22, 2010. Proposals can be submitted at <[http://www.mawcaonline.org/iwca/CF\\_Program.html#proposalform](http://www.mawcaonline.org/iwca/CF_Program.html#proposalform)>.

## MURIEL HARRIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD FOR THE IWCA: HISTORY & ANNOUNCEMENT

*“Leadership should be born out of the understanding of the needs of those who would be affected by it.”* —Marian Anderson

In the 1970s, when many were focusing on the singular desire to “be myself” or to “discover me,” Robert K. Greenleaf (1977) put forth the concept of the servant leader. Although the notion of leading while also serving is certainly an ancient one, Greenleaf articulated the characteristics of servant leaders: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others, and community building. While leaders may choose to follow this philosophy in their behaviors, often they emerge as others recognize their qualities.

The career of Muriel Harris as editor of the *Writing Lab Newsletter*, Professor Emerita of English, and Director (retired) of the Writing Lab at Purdue University and her contributions to the writing center community exemplify this pattern of servant leadership. As Michael Pemberton (2003, 22) noted in his “The *Writing Lab Newsletter* as History,” it was at the 1977 CCCC session that a critical mass of people interested in writing centers gathered at a session that featured Harris, Joyce Steward, Janice Neuleib, and Mary Croft and wrote their names and addresses on an impromptu sign-up sheet so that Harris could organize a newsletter to “continue the conversation.” From the initial mailing of 49 to the current list of well over 1,000, the *Writing Lab Newsletter* has been the primary means of communicating among writing center professionals. Propelled by the *Newsletter*, many others began joining Harris in building the community, which quite naturally resulted in the formation of The National Writing Centers Association (later renamed the International Writing Centers Association). A formal constitution was written and edited at the first board meeting at NCTE in Denver in 1982, building on the designation as an assembly of NCTE.

One of the first acts of the nascent group was to establish an award recognizing individuals who have made significant contributions in the service of writing centers. Appropriately, the first recipient was Muriel Harris in 1984. The inaugural award was spontaneously decided by the entire NWCA membership. The Outstanding Service Award was renamed in honor of its first recipient, and tribute has been made to others on a periodic basis for their ability to listen, empathize, persuade, steward, and support others. As NWCA grew and then became international, the number of nominees increased as well. At the same time, the fair and equitable handling of those nominations by an independent committee became more important than ever. Each new recipient becomes part of a committee and adds essential new perspectives to the selection process.

Each of the recipients has made significant, varied, and continuing contributions to writing centers. Joyce Kinkead served as the first executive secretary of the National Writing Centers Association (that later became the International Writing Centers Association), helping to build the infrastructure of the promising organization and solidify it over an eight-year period; she also served for six years as co-editor of the *Writing Center Journal*, one of the two publications of the National Writing Centers Association, along with Jeanette Harris, the second NWCA President. Kinkead and Harris, along with Jeanne Simpson, believed that NWCA could expand the tiny early professional network into a larger and more broadly supportive organization. In addition to initiatives such as writing center starter kits, statements about the profession and principles were developed, notably a position statement authored by Simpson that was widely circulated and frequently used by others in need of such a statement. Simpson was also instrumental in forming the first writing center organization (that later became the East Central Writing Centers Association). Lady Falls Brown saw the power of the Internet to continue community building, and developed WCenter, the very valuable online listserv for conversations about writing centers and tutoring that continues to be the mode for daily discussions among writing center people across the nation and the globe. Byron Stay built the NWCA Press out of thin air to ensure that scholarship, research, and practice had a forum for publication. A pioneer in writing centers in the secondary schools, Pamela Farrell Childers edited the first publication on this topic and has continually reached out

to teachers in the schools. She has mentored dozens of people as they build and expand high school writing centers and has ably presented the work of writing centers to our European colleagues. Al DeCiccio saw the need to engage tutors directly in our professional conversation and led in the creation of the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, a thriving conference that now attracts hundreds of tutors to present and share their work; likewise, with Joan Mullin, he also served as co-editor of the *Writing Center Journal*.

The combination of historical awareness and of new achievements has steadily strengthened the committee and provided a diversity of perspectives needed to maintain objectivity when considering nominations. Each time the committee meets, they learn more about colleagues nominated for the award and about the values of the writing center community.

Any member of the writing center community may nominate. We encourage nominators to follow the guidelines and to offer high quality materials to support the nominations, commensurate with the work of the servant leaders to be recognized. Well-researched and carefully written nominations are key to sustaining the integrity of this award. Over the 25-year history of the award, the candidates have been noteworthy.

Writing centers enjoy strong community and growing scholarship. But these resources did not and could not come into existence without the work of servant leaders. Nor will writing centers thrive without continuing the tradition of encouraging and recognizing servant leaders, and that is the goal of the Muriel Harris Outstanding Service Award.

It is time once again for a servant-leader to be recognized. The committee issues a call for this career achievement award, and, in fact, the call for nominations ends this article. In order to remain objective, committee members do not nominate or provide support for nominations; in addition, they are excused from review and deliberation if a nominee is located at a committee member's home campus. The most recent recipient of the award chairs the selection committee and presents the award at an appropriate future IWCA Conference. Although the award was first given 25 years ago, the recipients continue to be active in the writing center community—even when retired. Their work on this selection committee reflects a spirit of service. In that spirit, please read carefully the guidelines below and consider making a nomination.

## IWCA MURIEL HARRIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD INSTRUCTIONS FOR NOMINATIONS

Named after its first recipient, the Muriel Harris Outstanding Service Award recognizes outstanding service that has benefited the international writing center community in significant and broad-based ways. The award is given at every other IWCA conference. All nominations should be submitted electronically to Al DeCiccio, chair of the committee, at [adeciccio@svc.edu](mailto:adeciccio@svc.edu) and include the following:

- A letter of nomination that includes the name and institution of the nominee, your personal knowledge of or experience with the nominee's service contributions to the writing center community, and your name, institutional affiliation and e-mail address.
- Detailed support documents (maximum of 5 pages). These may include excerpts from a curriculum vitae, workshop or published material, stories or anecdotes, or original work by the nominee.
- Other letters of support (optional, but limited to 2)

All materials must be received by Al DeCiccio, chair of the IWCA Muriel Harris Outstanding Service Award committee, by July 1, 2010. The winner of the Award will be announced at the 2010 IWCA/NCPTW Conference, in Baltimore.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Director of the Tutoring  
Learning Center  
University of Wisconsin-  
Stevens Point

The Director of the Tutoring-Learning Center (TLC) is in charge of the campus tutorial center, which includes content-area, writing/reading, reading in the disciplines, and technology tutoring. This position requires the incumbent to supervise all phases of the unit's operation, including professional staff supervision, budget management, maintaining the physical facility, and overseeing programs and technology.

Ph.D. in a relevant discipline preferred; Ed.D. or ABD considered (must show proof of completion prior to consideration for indefinite appointment). For a complete description of the position's requirements and responsibilities, please visit the UWSP Job vacancy list found at <http://www.uwsp.edu/equity/>.

Submit Academic CV, cover letter, names and contact information of three references, and a statement of candidate's philosophy of learning (2 pages or less) to Dr. Maureen Giblin, Chair, Search and Screen Committee, Tutoring-Learning Center, 018 LRC, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, WI 54481, [mgiblin@uwsp.edu](mailto:mgiblin@uwsp.edu).

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## EXPLORING SECOND LIFE: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN VIRTUAL WRITING CENTERS

◆ *Russell Carpenter*  
*Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY*  
*and*  
*Meghan Griffin*  
*University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL*

We encountered writing center work the way many in our profession do: first as students visiting the centers on our undergraduate campuses, then as tutors ourselves, then in graduate coursework on writing center theory and pedagogy, and later as professional practitioners. Our experiences with writing center work during our education and careers have shaped us as, you might say, writing center natives.

We (Russell and Meghan) proudly claim our native status—brought up on the process-centered, collaborative approach to writing. Unlike contemporary writing center clients, however, we cannot claim to be what Marc Prensky calls digital natives, “‘native speakers’ of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet” (1). Coming from a doctoral program in Texts and Technology, we both may be early adopters but remain “digital immigrants” nonetheless, for we were not “born into the digital world,” as Prensky says (1). Yet as we work to keep our writing centers responsive to a student body that is increasingly savvy with technology and in some cases geographically dispersed, we look to electronic spaces to explore new options for writing center practice. The “virtual world” called Second Life<sup>1</sup> offers such an opportunity.

The interpersonal connection created between tutors and students is essential to writing center practice. Fostering that connection through synchronous and asynchronous chat, e-mail platforms, and submit-and-respond systems can be challenging. In early MOOs<sup>2</sup>, tutors would pass objects like sodas or coffee to students, a gesture that was intended to put the student at ease and simulate the rapport established in physical encounters; these systems, however, never quite captured the immersive experience of the face-to-face encounter. Second Life, unlike previous technologies, provides a mutually engaging, visually stimulating, immersive virtual world where interpersonal connection is maintained.

The representation of physical space in Second Life maximizes the social aspects of the immersive environment. Students and tutors can sit virtually in comfortable lounge chairs or hold group tutoring sessions in spacious rooms without interruption. But in Second Life, it's also possible to meet on the beach or in a lounge—traditional writing center spaces are no longer required. Students writing on the Holocaust, for example, can teleport with their consultant to Second Life's National Holocaust Museum for brainstorming. Thanks to technology maintained by Damani Corp (a contractor for building in Second Life), writing center tutors can pull up a whiteboard and display handouts or other resources during a consultation. In this sense, Second Life does far more than simply imitate the face-to-face tutoring experience; Second Life allows for entirely new consulting practices.

### AN INTRODUCTION TO SECOND LIFE

Imagine a virtual space as rich as our physical spaces where students and faculty from around the world can interact on a regular basis. Second Life, an immersive, multi-user virtual world launched in 2003, is the primary virtual world for academics in the United Kingdom and has increased in popularity and usage in the United States in recent years. It is now being used in a variety of teaching activities, at times as a meeting place for students or as a place for training and simulation. While students in the humanities may explore museums and cultural history in Second Life, students in medical fields may visit to simulate patient diagnosis and treatment.



Different from Blackboard or other online courseware systems that rely primarily on text, Second Life is a highly interactive synchronous environment where visuals remain the primary form of communication, expression, and interaction. Some U.S. academic institutions, including East Carolina University and Harvard University, have constructed entire campuses in Second Life, replicating the look and feel of real-life campuses with buildings, offices, desks, and doors. These virtual spaces highlight the advantages of immersiveness—the feeling of being surrounded or submerged within the virtual space or actively believing that you are in the virtual space.

While some sites have constructed traditional architectural forms, other Second Life projects are open and break from traditional building notions, like Bowling Green State University's Second Life Writing Center, which does not use walls or doors. At the University of Central Florida, we created a Second Life University Writing Center (SLUWC), which grew out of traditional architectural notions into an open space for collaborating and distributing visual forms of composition, such as digital videos or interactive displays. The space not only includes two areas where academics from around the world can congregate and share ideas in a public forum, but also offers innovative tutor training and simulation that complement discussions on gender, persona, and culture. As part of their ongoing training, consultants completed scavenger hunts at UCF's SLUWC to explore their new surroundings and tutor roles in the virtual world.

Consultants collaborating in the SLUWC for the first time in the spring 2009 semester were surprised by the realistic interactions they experienced. Consultants seemed taken with the social nature of the space, as several reported being approached by other avatars—the figure or form one takes in the virtual space—and having conversations through voice or chat features. Most consultants put a great deal of thought into their appearance and the ethos their avatars would convey in online interactions. Consultants working at the UCF UWC were asked to discuss their experiences in a training session held in Second Life:

Working in Second Life was one of the more memorable parts of my time at the UWC. Although there seem to be a good amount of kinks to work out in the program itself, I can see how something like Second Life could enhance the consulting process. Consultants and students could simultaneously view a paper in a virtual setting, which would eliminate some of the time-wasting hindrances like 'go to pg 7, second paragraph from the bottom, third line down...' that happen in current online consultations.

In viewing student writing in Second Life, students and tutors simultaneously see cursors and arrows on the screen, cutting down on the kind of hindrances this student has described. Another undergraduate consultant reported that the well-constructed SLUWC (complete with handouts!) made Second Life seem legitimate as a place of learning. Even while Second Life consultations could just as easily take place on the beach outside, something about the public virtual structure made it more recognizable and relatable for people transitioning into the platform. This familiarity, in combination with the avatar interaction, also makes the experience more personable than the current Online Writing Lab (OWL) chat.

Second Life offers the potential for rich and engaging experiences quite different from more traditional web-based course management systems. Many universities and organizations have established roots in Second Life by building campuses, teaching areas, and displays for various groups. Islands (the term for all Second Life real estate) have been constructed through the financial backing of institutions or substantial grants, enlisting the time, energy, and technical knowledge of many contributors. One organization that is developing Second Life spaces for writing center use is Educational Support Management Group (ESMG). Unique in its mission of providing individualized spaces designed especially for writing center usage, ESGM is currently the only company allowing writing centers to capitalize on the opportunities in Second Life for a fraction of the price of a full island and without dedicating hundreds of hours to building. In response to ESGM's invitation to test their facilities as part of a pilot program, we ventured into Second Life to explore cutting-edge adaptations of technology for writing centers.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Academic Director for Effective Writing Center University of Maryland University College

This is a 12-month faculty administrative appointment. The successful candidate will be responsible for leading and managing all functions and aspects of the Effective Writing Center (EWC) and for helping to develop the strategic role of the EWC within the University. Candidates should have knowledge of writing center, composition, and online pedagogy and theory. The candidate should also have experience using a variety of digital media.

Requires Masters degree in relevant field; Ph.D. preferred. Requires established record of writing program administration and a record of teaching excellence: at the minimum, two years experience teaching writing (online preferred) and two years experience working in a writing center with supervisory responsibility or two years experience working in a WAC/WID program with supervisory responsibility. Preferred experience includes working with adult students in higher education settings, excellent communication and interpersonal skills, and evidence of capacity to work across departments.

For a full description, please visit <<http://www.umuc.edu/facultyrecruit>>, and search for "Academic Director, Effective Writing Center." Review of applications to begin March 12. Position start date is July 1st.

## TAKE NOTE

### COUNCIL OF WRITING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

Call for Proposals  
July 11-18, 2010  
Philadelphia, PA

Theme: "Conversations toward  
Action"

Plenary Speakers: Keith Gilyard,  
Michael Delli Carpini, and Joseph  
Janangelo

Conference: July 15-18, 2010  
Workshop: July 11-14, 2010  
Institutes: July 15, 2010

Join us for all or part of a week of workshops, institutes, and presentations that will foster conversation, connection, and shared thinking about how to put ideas into motion. CWPA is eager to welcome the voices of people who participate in "writing program administration" writ large and who engage in myriad ways in the work associated with it. This could include work with writing centers; multiple sections or instructors of writing courses; work with community writing programs; course and program assessment; considering how to effectively make connections with others in the classroom, on campus, and beyond; or any other work that is related to writing instruction or program direction.

For proposal types and further information about the conference, see the conference website: <<http://www.drexel.edu/wpa2010/>>. Final proposals are due no later than Wed., April. 21. Submit by Wed., March 24, for expedited review.

Questions about proposal formats or WPA 2010 should be directed to Linda Adler-Kassner: [linda.adler-kassner@emich.edu](mailto:linda.adler-kassner@emich.edu), conference chair; and/or Eli Goldblatt: [eligold@temple.edu](mailto:eligold@temple.edu), local chair. Questions about mentoring project sessions should be sent to Joe Janangelo: [jjang@luc.edu](mailto:jjang@luc.edu) or Sheldon Walcher: [sheldon.walcher@usm.edu](mailto:sheldon.walcher@usm.edu).

### STUCK ON NEWBIE ISLAND: THE STORY OF MEG UNPLUGGED

While Russell already had a year's experience and an avatar in Second Life, I (Meghan) was a "newbie." I study technology and its impact on the classroom but operate on the collaboration model—usually involving someone far more technologically savvy than I. Because I did not want to embarrass myself (I'd heard horror stories about Second Life newcomers losing their clothes in meetings), my first step was to purchase *Second Life for Dummies*. I learned that it is considered rude to refer to Second Lifers as players (the preferred term is "residents") and that I could exchange my U.S. dollars for Second Life's "Linden dollar" (\$L), the currency used to purchase everything from real estate to clothing, event tickets, or specialized avatar animations.

Following the book's guidelines, I set up my free account. What *Second Life for Dummies* didn't tell me is how uncool my chosen name—Meg Unplugged—would be in an identity economy where literally any self-construction is possible. In Second Life, one can take the form of a white fox or a dragon, or sport fairy wings and a tail. If my name didn't reveal my newbie status, it would have become apparent as I fumbled through "Orientation Island," bumping into walls and furiously trying to click the unclickable. A friendly stranger in leather chaps offered to show me around. She led me to several shops in Second Life where I could change my appearance, and I acquired an entirely new body free of charge, added outfits to my inventory, and then complemented them with different hair and varying eye colors. Eventually, I was ready to tour ESMG's virtual writing center.

I met Russell's avatar and ESMG staff members Jezzy Writer and Landau Shippe, a former writing center administrator, at their virtual writing center hub. Immediately, I could see that ESMG focuses on the community built across writing centers. I was surrounded by 15 university writing centers positioned adjacent to one another as neighbors. While first-life geography requires that we build community through professional conferences, publications, and listservs, Second Life allows for simulated face-to-face chats with fellow tutors across university campuses. Here, it was clear that best practices could be shared between universities in new ways. I imagined staff meetings and workshops where tutors from across the world could explore solutions to common consulting challenges in real-time. In subsequent meetings, ESMG provided an in-depth orientation to Second Life itself. Landau walked me through the basics of enabling voice capabilities, the fundamentals of on-screen displays, as well as tips and tricks for maximizing Second Life functionality. Landau explained how to hide and view local chat boxes (for text-based communication), adjust voice volumes (for microphone-enabled communication), extend my line of sight (how far I'd like to see into my surroundings), and organize my inventory (which includes clothing, notes, and landmarks) from within the virtual world. Despite my status as a digital immigrant, I quickly felt comfortable in Second Life. Thanks to a friendly stranger, a patient colleague, helpful ESMG staff, and Second Life's user-friendly design, I was immersed in the experience within four or five hours spread over a few days.

### RUSSELL'S SECOND LIFE

I've explored Second Life for about a year now as "YumYum Ballyhoo." Like many others in this vast and complex virtual space, I jumped in without really knowing what to expect. I found myself lost and confused for the first few days. Without a real destination, it wasn't until my third or fourth visit that I started to understand how to navigate. I also encountered colleagues with similar interests in building and writing in Second Life. Together, we collaborated on a pilot version of the SLUWC and attended several in-world conferences. The world that once seemed so distant and unfamiliar changed into a more inviting space where serious work and complex interaction were taking place. Outside of class, I quickly began to associate with colleagues in Second Life. I explored academic spaces—like

campuses and museums—that were taking shape online. Before I knew it, I found myself scheduling meetings with other faculty members within this new space. My “second life” has allowed me to connect visually with writing center administrators throughout the country. Rather than reading about their practices, I’m able to see them enacted. I experience community with other writing centers in the virtual simulated space rather than traveling to physical campuses or searching for dispersed websites. Educational Support Management Group, currently the only such support group available exclusively for writing centers, offers us the support necessary to explore the full potential of this vast space. While many of us have embarked on our own expeditions, it’s reassuring to know that we now have in-world experts to help us construct our spaces, if we choose to accept this challenge.

### ESMG’S VIRTUAL WRITING CENTER

For many, Second Life is user-friendly and relatively intuitive; however, the task of building spaces in-world can be cumbersome. Enjoying Second Life as a user requires little technical expertise; to build, however, requires scripting and programming experience along with a great deal of patience. Most writing centers lack in-house technical expertise or the commitment of intensive technical support from university departments. For centers interested in pursuing the latest in tutoring technology, ESGM provides the technical expertise to customize virtual spaces for each writing center while allowing practitioners to focus on the work of writing support. Perhaps more importantly, ESGM also offers a community of fellow Second Life writing center practitioners that share information and best practices to make the transition as seamless as possible. Each writing center space we toured displayed a distinct personality. ESGM customizes each center with plush furniture, wall art, tables, and more. Second Life writing centers can be designed to mirror each school’s physical facilities or to transcend the limits of university budgets and space. The writing centers we saw were equipped with white boards for drawing or displaying videos, websites, or note cards. In real-time, we conversed with ESGM director Landau Shippe about the possibilities of tutoring in Second Life. With so much to see and hear, we realized how immersive the Second Life writing center consultation could be.

In addition to the many positive aspects of ESGM services in Second Life, we want to emphasize that many of the technologies employed are developmental. ESGM is committed to training writing center directors on the use of their interactive tools, but centers inevitably must train their own users with philosophies appropriate for their students and consultants while working in this virtual frontier. White boards and presentation areas will require training, especially for tutors new to residency in Second Life. Smart boards allow consultants and students to write and draw in a public setting, which is especially helpful for brainstorming sessions where visuals can guide the prewriting process. They also display videos, web pages, and note cards, allowing tutors to discuss other forms of composition and media. However, tutors new to Second Life will likely face a learning curve that requires not only the relatively easy user-experience of Second Life, but also the expertise of operating ESGM’s various applications for enhancing the in-world tutoring experience. We would caution that while tutoring in Second Life offers new opportunities for interacting in virtual space, there are costs in time and money.

Writing center directors should be prepared for a comprehensive training experience followed by the responsibility of training one’s own writing center staff. ESGM does provide tutor support, and suggests practices such as having first-time users call in advance of their tutoring session so that avatars can be teleported to the center upon login. These and other time-saving tips can help to minimize usability issues, but familiarity with Second Life is ultimately required before writing center tutors begin consulting in-world. Our experience, however, is that ESGM staff members Landau Shippe and Jezzy Writer are exceptionally responsive to questions and quick to provide support, stemming from their appreciation for both writing center work and the particularities of the Second Life tutoring

## NEWS

### Middle-East-North African Writing Centers Alliance (MENAWCA)

The MENAWCA was founded in November 2007 and aims to foster communication among writing centers and provide a forum for concerns for writing centers in the region.

Membership of the MENAWCA includes directors and staff of writing centers at universities, four-and-two-year colleges, and elementary and secondary schools in the region, as well as those persons interested in writing center theories and applications.

The MENAWCA website can be found at <<http://menawca.org>>.

If you are interested in joining MENAWCA or participating in the mailing list, please contact Maria Eleftheriou at [meleftheriou@aus.edu](mailto:meleftheriou@aus.edu).

experience, and they have helped many writing centers offer engaging virtual experiences for their tutors and students.

Along with a technological learning curve, an additional aspect to consider in Second Life tutoring is privacy. While existing e-mail and chat technologies may not foster a sense of immersion, they do allow for certain privacy safeguards. In Second Life, space is essentially public. It is possible for avatars to “res in” (a Second Life term for the way an avatar appears in its environment) mid-consultation or to interrupt a group session. While ESMG provides guidelines to reduce this issue within writing center spaces, this characteristic of Second Life is not entirely avoidable. But before we discount Second Life for these environmental quirks, consider the bustling, face-to-face environment of most brick-and-mortar writing centers where multiple sessions occur simultaneously. A completely quiet session without interruption or distraction would be quite abnormal in traditional writing center spaces.

Writing centers interested in creating a presence in Second Life purchase packages beginning at \$650 per calendar year for a tutoring facility with single session capabilities. For busier writing centers, multi-session capabilities are available for an additional fee of \$199 per station. Because use of ESMG facilities is not limited to the one-to-one consulting model, packages including classroom space for larger groups begin at \$899 per year. Each of these price points includes use of the tutoring center at the ESMGSL property, one hour of student or tutor training, and unlimited access to weekly classroom seminars presented by ESMG staff members. These annual fees are paid by the college or university rather than by individual students. Once a writing center has established the tutoring space through ESMG, students create free Second Life accounts to visit the virtual writing center. Customized packages are available for those that require additional flexibility and include entire island building and management. ESMG’s prices are competitive, considering that other text-based platforms sell for about \$1,200 per calendar year. For more information, visit ESMG<sup>3</sup> online or teleport to their SLURL and take a look around.

In the same way that writing center directors will train tutors, tutors also should expect to troubleshoot as new residents acclimate to the interface during consulting sessions, even if they are digital natives. But in our writing centers we are, after all, initiating students into a new writing environment analogous to that of the virtual environment in Second Life. As students work with their tutor on actions such as how to sit down at a conference table in this new virtual world, they also learn how to develop complex academic ideas coherently. The Second Life tutoring experience mirrors the long-standing position of writing center practice that tutors and students are, in fact, co-learners in the consulting experience. ♦

Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Begin to explore Second Life at <<http://secondlife.com>>.

<sup>2</sup> Multi-User Domain Object-Oriented

<sup>3</sup> Visit ESMG online at <[http://esmsgsl.com/Home\\_Page.php](http://esmsgsl.com/Home_Page.php)> or <<http://slurl.com/secondlife/Maplegrave/153/7/56>>.



Work Cited

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## WRITING CENTER PROMOTIONAL VIDEOS

This sample of writing center promotional videos may offer suggestions for P.R. videos your writing center could produce. In the future, we would like to expand this list and offer two additional lists:

- Writing center multi-media programs (e.g., podcasts, videos, PowerPoints, etc.) that offer instructional content.
- OWLS with your own handouts on various writing skills written in your writing center (e.g., not links to other OWLS)

If you'd like to add your promotional videos and/or materials for the planned future lists, please e-mail the URLs to me, Muriel Harris: harrism@purdue.edu. Please indicate in which category you'd like your URL to be listed and include the title of the materials and the name of your institution:

- Promotional videos
- Multi-media instructional materials
- Text-based instructional handouts in OWLS

- **American University of Paris:** <[http://www.ac.aup.edu/~writelab/pages/writing\\_lab\\_consultation.html](http://www.ac.aup.edu/~writelab/pages/writing_lab_consultation.html)>
- **Appalachian State University:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etfBzjdDrHk>>
- **Boise State University:** <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_O2Qf9KVH50&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_O2Qf9KVH50&feature=related)>
- **Broom Community College:** <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBVBX38\\_mUM&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBVBX38_mUM&feature=related)>
- **Concordia University:** <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wo5N\\_gWrWWQ&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wo5N_gWrWWQ&feature=related)>
- **DePaul University:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDv2ssf8iyA>>
- **Everett Community College:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vre-Ey4qKs&feature=related>>
- **Fullerton College:** <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ku2aXxFF\\_Bc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ku2aXxFF_Bc)>
- **Harvey Mudd College:** <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kx\\_Vqdm9HsQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kx_Vqdm9HsQ)>
- **JR Tucker High School:** <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K\\_WeDp1pW8&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K_WeDp1pW8&feature=related)>
- **Kent State University—Stark:** <<http://ksutube.kent.edu/playback.php?playthis=7zjlrkr7>>
- **Montgomery College:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZbL2JRnK5w>>
- **St. Michael's College:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iuSFZM03XvQ&feature=related>>
- **Northwestern Michigan College:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wJFicIFH08>>
- **Syracuse University:** <<http://wc.syr.edu/media/wcvid.mov>>
- **Taylor University:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCDRTKaeH5Y>>
- **University of Alaska—Anchorage:** <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRc2\\_U4xJeU&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRc2_U4xJeU&feature=related)>
- **University of Colorado—Denver:** <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMu45\\_8Dk8U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMu45_8Dk8U)>
- **University of Hawaii—West Oahu:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oI-qoMCX8uE>>
- **University of Maryland—University College:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfDjbgmCbG0>>
- **University of New Hampshire:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRlnSuEduE&feature=related>>
- **University of Vermont:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WDIEGft8w&NR=1&feature=fwp>>
- **Virginia Tech University:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T89abFP0lsU&feature=related>>
- **Wagner College:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q1h4NGPxcHk&feature=related>>
- **Warren Wilson College:** <<http://www.warren-wilson.edu/~writingcenter/>>
- **Western Illinois University:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXK8Z79NOBk&feature=related>>
- **West Virginia University:** <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWFPeN\\_83Bg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWFPeN_83Bg)>
- **Yuba College:** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCe9BhGxgFY&feature=related>>





## TUTOR'S COLUMN

### LETTING GO OF HOLDING BACK

◆ *Allyson Jones*

*Utah State University, Logan, UT*

I have a confession to make: Before this semester, I'd never been to the Writing Center. I mean, I had been there, to the location—in fact, I'd been both a tutor and an observer at two different centers, so it had been the place of my work. But I'd never taken my work there, never been the tutee. I was sure that if I showed others my work I would be found out, be exposed as a fraud. If my boss realized that writing was difficult for me, that I didn't churn out a perfect first and final product, that I (gasp) couldn't really write, there would go everything—grad school, my position teaching Freshman Composition, my job in the Writing Center, and most of all, my self-esteem. My fear was that bad writing meant I was a bad person.

Sufficiently humbled by my first semester of graduate school, I realized the ridiculousness of my anxiety and decided that this was the semester in which I would conquer my fear and finally overcome my pride and hypocrisy. I was telling my students that writing has worth, even if the process is difficult, yet I was acting like a “highly apprehensive writer,” or “one for whom anxiety about writing outweighs the projection of gain from writing” (Daiker 105). And so I scheduled my appointment and waited with great anticipation, or more realistically, trepidation.

The day of my session, one of my students mentioned in class that she went to the Writing Center the day before and it was “pretty much the coolest thing ever.” I walked from my office on the fourth floor to the Writing Center on the first. The receptionist introduced me to my tutor, Courtney. I knew the drill, so there was no need to explain, but however familiar I may have been with the tutorial process, I still felt the need to justify and apologize for this “ill-formed offspring of my feeble brain,” to quote Anne Bradstreet (124). I rushed to explain the flaws, of which I was well aware, and my fears, which I—of all people—did not understand.

Here was my major problem: my attitude. As Donald Daiker explains, “One's attitude toward the act of writing . . . clearly affects not only how one writes and how often one writes, but even how others evaluate that writing” (106). My poor attitude hurt the quality and quantity of the writing I produced, but poor Courtney, to whom I was randomly assigned, felt pressure: I was her co-worker and she had to make me feel better about my work before she could help me, whether or not I deserved to be encouraged.

We finally began to get to the text; I read the paper, a personal narrative for one of my classes, aloud, cringing fairly often—perhaps even more often than necessary. The paper was, ironically, about unpacking boxes of books while reflecting on how reading has changed who I am. I reflected upon my situation and realized that if I would calm down, writing might have a chance to transform me as well.

Courtney sat comfortably, patiently listening and watching. She was sitting in the same type of chair I was—same height, same shape. She was looking at the same paper I was, not her own likely superior piece. We were equals. Yet as soon as I finished reading, I felt the need to repeat my justification and apology once more. However, Courtney began with positive feedback, just as I try to do when I tutor or grade.

In the course of the tutorial, I found that I had been holding myself back from hearing good things about my writing when I attempted to fence out the corrections and suggestions that I feared would come from another reader. In reality I want corrections and suggestions, just as I want praise. But I hadn't allowed myself to hear either. It is true that “For students who do not share their writing with

others . . . the writing teacher is likely their only potential source of praise” (Daiker 107). In that case, the teacher is also the only source of critique. A visit to the Writing Center provides more of each, resulting in better writing. Isn’t that also my goal? The key is to remember that the praise and the critique are about my writing—they are not judgments about me. And surprisingly, I found that the tutorial actually built my confidence.

Courtney and I continued talking, and I didn’t even realize that we had slipped smoothly from “this works” to “this needs work.” Courtney provided clear, motivating feedback and used personal examples to show me how she related to my narrative as a reader and writer. She pointed out a rhythm I hadn’t previously recognized in my use of book titles and proposed that I emphasize it throughout the piece to improve the flow. Before I knew it, I was ready to be on my way; I was ready to revise and implement my new ideas and direction. Instead of fearing that bad writing meant I was a bad person, my experience in the Writing Center showed me that bad writing meant I was a person—a human who uses process to review and improve.

After revising, I turned in the final draft of my narrative. I was pleased with the resultant success both in my grade and in my new identity as a much more open and cooperative writer. I was able to look at my writing as a product or creation of the person I am, not a reflection or definition of the person I am. The constructive comments became just that, constructive comments. I also came away from the whole ordeal and process with a new belief: Every tutor should visit the Writing Center as a client at least once, if not once a semester. Sitting on the other side of the desk evokes sympathy and understanding. As Nancy Sommers states, “[F]or any writer learning how to receive and accept critique, how to read comments not as judgment about one’s limitations as a human being, or about one’s failings as a writer, is not simple.” We must see feedback “as instruction, not merely as judgment” (253). Switching seats helps remind those of us who are tutors that we need to be comfortable in either chair; we are both readers and writers, tutors and tutees. We are human, and we have the ability and opportunity to help each other.

And you know what? When I took this article to the Writing Center, I felt not one jot of anxiety about sharing my writing, even with a tutor I had never before met. The tutorial was productive and painless, and, dare I say it, even fun. And really, you should be grateful, as there used to be a forced and boring paragraph right about here that neither you nor I are missing. ♦

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- Sommers, Nancy. “Across the Drafts.” *Re-Visions* 58.2 (2006): 248-257. Print.





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## CALENDAR FOR WRITING CENTER ASSOCIATIONS

**March 5-6, 2010:** Florida/Southeastern Writing Centers Association, in Fort Lauderdale, FL

**Contact:** E-mail: [swcaflorida@gmail.com](mailto:swcaflorida@gmail.com); conference website: <http://backtothetutor.blogspot.com/>.

**April 8-10, 2010:** East Central Writing Centers Association, in Lansing, MI

**Contact:** E-mail: [ecwca2010questions@gmail.com](mailto:ecwca2010questions@gmail.com); conference website: <http://writing.msu.edu/ecwca>.

**April 9-10, 2010:** Pacific Northwest Writing Centers Association, in Monmouth, OR

**Contact:** Katherine Schmidt: e-mail: [writngcenter@wou.edu](mailto:writngcenter@wou.edu); phone: 503-838-8234. Conference Web site: <http://www.wou.edu/las/humanities/writingctr/PNWCA.php>.

**April 9-10, 2010:** Mid-Atlantic Writing Centers Association, in Newark, DE

**Contact:** Melissa Ianetta and Barbara Gaal Lutz ([lutz@english.udel.edu](mailto:lutz@english.udel.edu)). E-mail: [MAWCAconference2010@english.udel.edu](mailto:MAWCAconference2010@english.udel.edu).

**April 10-11, 2010:** New England Writing Centers Association, in Boston, MA

**Contact:** Kathryn Nielsen-Dube: 978-837-3551; e-mail: [Kathryn.nielsen@merri-mack.edu](mailto:Kathryn.nielsen@merri-mack.edu); conference website: [www.newca-conference.com](http://www.newca-conference.com).

**May 25-28, 2010:** European Writing Centers Association, in Paris, France

**Contact:** E-mail: Ann Mott: [amott@aup.fr](mailto:amott@aup.fr). EWCA website: <http://ewca.sabanci-univ.edu/eng/>.

**November 3-6, 2010.** International Writing Centers Association/National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, in Baltimore, MD

**Contact:** Barb Lutz and John Nordlof. E-mail: [IWCAconference2010@english.udel.edu](mailto:IWCAconference2010@english.udel.edu); conference website: <http://www.mawcaonline.org/iwca>.