



WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER

Member of the NWCA:NCTE Assembly
Information Exchange Agreement

Vol. VIII, No. 7 (March 1984)

In a previous issue of the newsletter I suggested the possibility of occasional "theme issues" devoted to one topic, a suggestion that flew like the proverbial lead balloon. The unanimous vote of people who responded to this suggestion was to maintain the present mix of articles on diverse subjects, reviews, queries, and so on. Since then I've tried not to let single topics or concerns dominate any issue, but this month the newsletter was in danger of getting top-heavy with announcements. The solution was to place them in an extra few pages at the back of this issue.

Other recent suggestions from newsletter readers concern the directory of writing labs and learning centers being compiled (see the February newsletter and page 11 of this issue). To make the directory more useful, several people have already suggested that labs and centers describe their tutor training programs, list job openings for tutors, and indicate present or future plans for expansion. Since the form for the directory (included in the February newsletter) does not contain sections that address these concerns, you may want to consider using the open-ended last question to respond to any or all of these suggestions.

Most important of all, keep sending your suggestions, articles, reviews, announcements, queries, names of new members, and yearly \$5 donations (in checks made payable to Purdue University, but sent to me) to:

Muriel Harris, editor
WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER
Department of English
Purdue University
West Lafayette, In.
47907



FROM WRITING LAB TO INTERDISCIPLINARY ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER: COST-EFFECTIVE GUIDELINES

In recent years, two self-evident truths abound on our campuses: 1) there is a definite need for writing labs to expand and offer additional tutorial services; 2) this need often falls victim to an ongoing academic budget crunch. As colleges and universities search out areas for cut-backs, it's imperative that Writing Lab Directors produce cost-effective means to expand their lab's services, rather than accept cutbacks in funding. At Penn State-Behrend we've enjoyed a healthy rapport with and support from our administrators who've encouraged us to forge ahead with plans to expand our Center. This rapport, in part, results from our efforts to provide means of expansion that are "cost effective," i.e., inexpensive yet productive steps resulting in additional staffing and services. This paper will delineate means through which Centers can expand services without requiring heavy injections of capital.

The first step in an expansion program necessitates that the Director and the current staff investigate the areas in which expansion is desirable and can feasibly occur. There are some immediate cautions within this phase. Don't try to jump too far too quickly. A writing lab which announces tutorial expansions into every discipline across the college's curriculum is likely to lose credibility during that crucial evaluation period when a scrutinizing eye is determining the effectiveness of the tutorial services offered. Labs considering expansion should formulate and conduct a type of Needs Assessment. Basically this procedure attempts to identify areas for which tutorial service is in greatest demand. Such a Needs Assessment can be conducted from two approaches. Students using the Center are surveyed, asking

them to identify disciplines in which they would utilize additional tutorial help. It's also possible to announce such a survey and allow students to drop into the Lab to fill out a request questionnaire. The other avenue is to address faculty, especially those faculty teaching freshman and sophomore courses. Questions should be designed to delineate the actual tutorial service required. For example, the professor who has 140 students in his beginning psychology section can help to distinguish whether his students need aid in study skills, writing competence on essay exams--areas already served by writing labs--or whether his students need tutorial help in grasping the tenets of basic psychology. If the latter is the case, the Director can begin to establish a priority list of disciplines which might be added to the Center.

At Penn State-Behrend, we have moved our Center from writing and study skills, into the areas of math/calculus, chemistry, and computer science, after determining the need through the above process. We have requests for additional expansion, but we are proceeding carefully for several central reasons which this paper will continue to address: 1) we are attempting to expand into these disciplines without requesting additional capital for support; 2) we are determining the most cost-effective means of providing tutors for the expansion; and 3) quite frankly, as in most universities, there is only so much space available in which to expand without appearing to imitate the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Once a selected and limited number of expansion areas is determined and with additional considerations for space and time, the Director undertakes the task of staffing the new discipline.

To provide tutors in a cost-effective manner, the first place a Director should look is to the faculty itself. If the Director demonstrates that a significant number of students are requesting tutorial aid, say, from three different sections of computer science, then he can approach and ask the faculty member to come on staff at the Center, perhaps for a certain number of hours during one day of the week. There are basically two appeals to enlist the aid of the faculty. The professor can be asked to donate his time. Before immediately balking at such a suggestion, consider first that the faculty member might actually want to

meet with students having difficulties. Secondly, consider that all faculty normally undergo a yearly review process. Donation of one's time to a tutorial center may be credited to the professor during his yearly evaluation in the categories of service to the university or scholarly activity. Moreover, this time in the Center is more than just an extension of the professor's office hours since he is likely to encounter students from sections other than his own, including students interested and involved but not currently enrolled in his discipline.

Yet another possibility, which we have used at Penn State-Behrend, is to grant a faculty member a course reduction for a specified number of hours as tutor. In institutions where this procedure is applicable, the professor, the Director of the Center, and the appropriate Dean arrange a contractual agreement scheduling the faculty member as tutor in lieu of one or more courses. The arrangement is subject to renewal or revision on a semester or yearly basis.

There are the obvious advantages, as Writing Centers expand, to staffing the Center with representative faculty from the new disciplines offered, but there are likewise cautions. The Director must carefully approach faculty. He needs and expects to staff the Center with those faculty who have demonstrated a rapport and willingness to work with students who are not always the best in their studies. Faculty who conceivably see service to the Tutorial Center as only a means of reducing their teaching load must be encouraged to understand the expectations of their work and commitment to the Center.

These two means of acquiring faculty in an expanded Center can be argued as cost-effective: the first as completely voluntary; the second as in-kind service. As college administrators begin to grant more faculty reduced teaching assignments for involvement in research projects or in faculty governance, time must also be appropriated to the Tutorial Center which has demonstrated its value to students. With careful scheduling and utilization, even space limitations are manageable as the Center expands. The room that functions as a computer science center on Thursday afternoons may easily become the Psychology

center on Friday mornings. Don't forget that Saturdays and even Sundays are days when the Center can be open, with proper planning. Dormitory residents have been known to do some semblance of academic work on weekends, and certainly, our libraries, science labs, and computer rooms are busy on these days.

Before moving on to a discussion of student tutors in expanded centers, there is an additional consideration in providing cost-effective faculty-staff tutoring: additional training for the staff of the Center. This idea is especially feasible in currently popular disciplines. A writing tutor--staff or faculty member--may begin to study basic computer programming or English as a second language for his own benefit and development. That particular tutor can be asked to bring his additional expertise to the Center for the E.S.L. or computer student. Ultimately the tutor, the Center, and the students will all benefit from the possibility of this individual interdisciplinary approach.

One of the most exciting ideas being investigated at Penn State-Behrend is Student Internships in our Center. Director Michael Tkach is currently developing a program to establish credit internships for outstanding senior majors. Similar to any internship, the student will be granted academic credits, from one to three, for serving as a tutor in his major field within the Center. The number of hours per week depends upon the number of credits chosen. Director Tkach will supervise and train the student for his role within the Center; the student will have a faculty mentor in his major to whom he reports and for whom he will write a paper discussing his experience and function as a tutor at the conclusion of his internship. Again, there is an obvious cost-effectiveness to such a program. Internships must be co-ordinated and established with the In-Charge faculty in the particular major and must normally be approved by a program committee within the university. Among students, there is a great deal of enthusiasm for this type of credit internship, especially for those majors planning on graduate study. Such a program is also a means of expanding the Center's hours into the weekends and evenings, again making the greatest use of space and time limitations. In addition, excellent students in their junior and even

sophomore years are enthusiastically donating their time for basic tutoring in their majors. These undergraduates see voluntary work as a practical contribution to their education, a worthwhile extracurricular activity, and a preparation for the credit internship in their senior years. As interest grows for this type of program, though, a caution is advisable. The Director must remember not to over-expand, over-extend the functions of the Center. The results of the Needs Assessment should have focused a limited number of areas for expansion, and immediate concentration should remain within this focus. The Director's time commitment, itself, is an important consideration as he assumes the responsibility not only for the co-ordination and operation of an expanded Center, but also for the training of tutors.

Another avenue for providing upper level students as tutors is to search for outside funding to pay outstanding seniors an hourly wage. Herein the Director assumes another responsibility as he becomes a researcher and a proposal/grant writer. The proper investigations may turn up surprising possibilities. For example, the Veteran's Administration has paid hourly wages to a veteran-tutor working with veterans. Additionally, many universities receive outside funding coming into a Basic Skills Budget or an Educational Opportunities Program Budget. These monies can oftentimes be allocated to the hourly wages of tutors in the Center, if particular criteria are fulfilled.

Also, during the time of expansion, there are at least two additional means of providing minimal financial support for the Center. Neither of these requires the Director to approach an Administrator with hand outstretched. Every college has student organizations, including honor societies, fraternities, and sororities, which are eager to undertake a campaign for the support of a university activity. The Tutorial Center should become the focal point of an on-going fund-raising project. Now the Director assumes the role of Center Advocate and Public Relations contact with the group in question. He can advise the group of the Center's need for funds to support the expansion or ask the group to undertake a fund-raiser to provide needed supplies, anything from textbooks to Apple computers. As the Center expands into a

discipline, chemistry for example, and utilizes the chemistry faculty member along with the chemistry major, the Director may involve a campus organization, the Chemistry Club, in the Center, requesting the Club to provide the necessary basic chemistry texts or simply to conduct a campaign culminating in a gift or donation for the Center's use.

If, by this time, the Director has any hours left in his day, with the approval of the Administration he may consider going outside the immediate university for financial support. In his presentation to the Writing Centers Association Fourth Annual Conference, Thomas Nash reported the successful efforts of Tom Waldrep at the University of South Carolina whose center opened its doors to business writing problems within the community, and thereafter received financial support from local business.¹ Wherever appropriate, the Center Director may provide similar service without specific charge but with the acceptance of donations. At Penn State-Behrend, our lab has assisted alumni with job applications, resumes, and other diverse written projects. When the alumnus responds to the annual fund drive for the whole university, we think it's appropriate to remind him of our service and to ask him to designate some part of his gift for the support of the Center.

These methods of eliciting support for the Tutorial Center are not meant to, nor will they, produce thousands of dollars or even hundreds of dollars in a given year's time. They do, however, remind students, outsiders, and alumni of the Center's needs, and they demonstrate to the Administration that the Director is involved in the financial support of the Center.

A word must be offered about the Center's Director at this point. The moment that a Writing Lab commits to expanded services, the Director's responsibilities escalate. He is now concerned with the integration of additional disciplines, staff training in areas outside his own discipline, additional programs both within and without the university, and he will eventually if not immediately become involved with the budgetary affairs of the Center. For these reasons, when there is a commitment to expansion, the Director's position must become a full time position WITHIN the Center. In many of our institutions, the

Writing Lab Co-ordinator is also a half-time English faculty member. While it might be an ideal to keep the Director in the classroom, the practical and time-consuming tasks involved in expanding a Center will certainly argue against the somewhat popular "half-time here, half-time there" practice. Each Director must establish this position if the expansion is to be meaningful and productive.

In conclusion, the suggestions discussed within this paper for the careful and cost-effective expansion of writing labs into Academic Support Centers will hopefully generate additional ideas and methods appropriate to individual schools. With the success of writing labs and with the frequently encountered requests of "can't you provide a tutor for. . .," it is certainly difficult to overlook the need for growth. The careful and cost-effective expansion of the writing lab under the leadership of a concerned director will benefit the education of our students and will contribute to their retention. Ultimately, the expanded center will enhance the overall quality of education in our universities.

Michael D. Chiteman
Behrend College
The Pennsylvania State
University

¹Thomas Nash, "The Writing Center: Life at the Frontier," PROCEEDINGS Writing Centers Association Fourth Annual Conference, Ohio Dominican College, May 1, 1982, pg. 110.



A CONCISE HANDBOOK FOR THE WRITING LAB--A BOOK REVIEW

If you need a concise handbook for reference--one that explains the basics and contains no exercises--for your writing lab, I recommend Edward P. J. Corbett's Little English Handbook: Choices and Conventions, 4th edition (Scott, Foresman, 1983). It is a no-frills book, which covers the common problems that writers have.

As the subtitle indicates, Corbett

presents the conventions of usage so that the writer can make responsible choices. In other words, the text is not prescriptive, but it does make the writer aware of the problems a reader might have with his writing.

Corbett covers the standard fare found in most handbooks--grammar, style, paragraphing, punctuation, mechanics, the research paper, and letters and resumes. The section on the research paper includes documentation both for the MLA and the APA formats and a sample research paper.

This handbook can be used as a quick reference guide for the writing lab because it answers the basic questions lab students or tutors have. Since it does not deal with the more subtle problems of writing, it is less confusing than a book that tries to cover all the rules. Its brevity also makes information easier to find than in a longer handbook.

Susan Glassman
Southeastern Massachusetts
University



THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENTAL ENGLISH
AS MEATBALL

On my desk right now, in the third week of the semester, is a complaint/request from a new instructor (call her Marie) in an occupational program that requires a fair amount of awareness and intelligence in its students. Marie sent us a complaint that a certain student, on the basis of an essay written in her course, was a substandard writer and in need of remedial work. She wanted to drop him from her course and put him in a remedial writing class. My technical assistant gathered the data on the student's placement test and found that he was reading at the 12-13 grade level and that his writing test placed him in college composition. Included in the packet of materials from my T.A. was the essay that the student had written for Marie. I read it. In general it made sense, and the grammar and the presentation were acceptable. It was ordinary college composition fare. But the guy wasn't a great speller, and Marie had circled all his misspellings: words like their (spelled thier) and man (which he spelled mon). I could see her aggravation level rising as she progressed through the paper and her comments became more aggressive.

Clearly, Marie doesn't understand our students or the state of American education today. She expects literate and correct English (!) and feels that spelling errors of this simple type are enough to warrant moving a person out of a degree-credit course and condemning him to developmental writing.

Of course, our developmental writing courses are not set up specifically to teach English spelling, especially since no one has yet devised a way to do that with adults. Nonetheless, I have to respond to her. And I am in the ironic position of having to defend this student as a qualified college writer, even though he can't spell the word man.

Matthew Skulicz
Erie Community
College/City Campus



COMPUTER SOFTWARE FOR RESUME WRITING

RESUME WRITER is a computer software program that offers students assistance with writing their resumes. The program asks for information in all the appropriate categories (identification, job objective, education, work experience, publications--using MLA format, and references, plus the option of having up to twelve other sections) and then formats the user's options into a resume ready to print out. To assist the user there are on-screen help menus, a provision to save information on a work disk for later use, and a 42-page manual which contains sample resumes. Various sections of the resume can be customized to the individual user's need, and printing formats can be changed.

The program runs on an Apple II+ and //e, with 48K, Applesoft Basic, and one or more disk drives. It is presently configured for the Epson, NEC, and Star Gemini printers and can be modified for other printers as well. Owners can make their own back-up copies of the disk. For purposes of previewing, prospective purchasers can request an information packet which includes sample screens and resume outputs. The cost of the program is \$100 (including shipping costs), a price that can be guaranteed only until June 1, 1984. Order from Datametrics, Inc., 108 Mohawk Lane, West Lafayette, IN. 47906 (317-463-1172).

COMPUTERIZED INSTRUCTION IN WRITING AT THE
ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY: PRACTICE,
EDITING, AND MOTIVATION FOR THE
ENGINEERING STUDENT

Even before our engineering students can tackle report and memo-writing or other forms of business and technical communication, many need to learn writing basics. Their difficulties may range from sentence fragments, punctuation errors, and other microstructural considerations to larger problems, such as effective paragraphing, organization, and thesis formulation.

Unfortunately, many of our technically-oriented students erroneously believe that writing is unimportant--that a good engineer need not know how to write effectively. And as many of them learn the truth, motivational problems complicate the students' frustrations; after all, it is difficult for an individual talented in computer science, say, or statics and dynamics, to take her or himself beyond writing anxiety to writing improvement.

Computerized instruction for writing may be the key for our often beleaguered students and their instructors. Its greatest advantage is its flexibility: students can practice basic skills with interactive programs designed to give them instant feedback and encouragement, while providing enough instruction and "hints" for each problem to keep the exercise from merely being a "teletextbook." The more advanced student can work at revision, perhaps, and better organizational skills within laboratory or memo formatting techniques with a different type of computerized program set-up. And it puts into a familiar context--the microcomputer--the writing skills with which many of our students, unfortunately, remain unfamiliar.

Features of the Programs--"Fine Tuning" to Our Students

In response to the needs of our students and with my desire to provide more cost-effective, innovative, and pedagogically-sound methods of instruction, I have written, designed, and implemented part of a series of computerized programs to help our students learn to write more effectively. Coherent in their goals of providing substantial, challenging exercises for basic skills (disks on the comma, parallelism, dialect English versus "standard" usage, verb endings, subject-verb agreement, etc.),

the series also includes other, more advanced programs in paragraphing, revision, business communication (memos, report writing), technical lab reports, and style. The student will be able to compose his or her own sentences in the revision programs.

As Director of the Basic Writing Program at IIT, I have reviewed many of the software products available on the market; much of it is rote, graphically-weak material which offers little in addition to what we can already do with a textbook. But when the graphics have been strong, they have been too strong: they detract from the purpose of the program, and distract the student from her or his purpose in self-motivated learning.

It is crucial, therefore, to balance a valid pedagogical context with the interactivity and graphics capabilities of the computer without allowing the program to become a surrogate video game. This is a central problem in designing CAI for English composition--the explanatory and interactive portions of the program. Several screen "pages" of information and explanation are important for retaining that humanism we feel is essential to any student's success; besides, writing is not a rote, "plug-in" process. Integrating the instructional sections with the interactive portions of the program, therefore, provides better possibilities for student response and program feedback than might other programs which arbitrarily separate "learning" and "question" portions of the package. To heighten the usability of each program, I build in additional sentence problems and randomize them, so a student can repeat the program many times for practice and come up with different sentences to work with.

Another feature involves extensive program branching for students who do not get the answer on the first or second try. In each of these, the "hints" become more directive, and reinforce the lesson the student has gone through before the exercise. There is positive reinforcement for correct answers which also restates what the student has done ("Good work, ___! You have revised the sentence well; the original sentence phrases were not parallel.") When the student is incorrect, gentle regret and

Careful repetition of rules and "hints" enable the student to try again.

Programmed into each disk are periodic updates for the student on his or her progress, detailing the percentage of problems that were correct or incorrect. During the diagnostic pre-test and evaluative post-tests that accompany each disk, the student is referred to portions of the package she or he might want to review for help with particular aspects of the writing process.

I try to keep my technically-oriented students in mind when designing the content of example sentences or introductory, background information. For example, in the comma program (part I), the student learns:

A comma may separate two items in a series:

 X , Y

The "X" and "Y" appear in different colors, with the comma flashing. But writing instructors who see themselves as "purists" might be offended by the use of symbols instead of words; the student, however, is often comfortable with things technical, and finds it reassuring to be introduced to the CAI lesson with symbols s/he recognizes immediately. Besides, words are introduced soon after:

 Hello, there!

Here, too, the comma flashes to reinforce the point of the lesson before the student is given a problem of his or her own to solve.

This same technical orientation is reinforced in the sentences I write and their content:

 She ran to the classroom, found her best friend, and told him about her "A" in biophysics!

(I have underlined the commas here to illustrate what the student is required to do--place the comma appropriately. After that is done correctly, the commas flash to underscore the response, while the text reinforces the lesson.)

So far then, we have reviewed the various ways in which good CAI for English composition might motivate our students: its inherently technical properties and their association with the things our students do

best, and the "internal" characteristics of programming specifically with our students' needs in mind. Here are some other sources for the motivation which can make CAI appropriate for our less-able, technically-oriented writers who "hate English":

--the student can work on his or her errors in private, for as long as the student may wish;

--the student can work in a "non-threatening" atmosphere, as most of my students enthusiastically champion the use of the microcomputer for learning;

--the student is more likely to persevere in repeating exercises or composing programs on a micro.

And these are just a few of the motivational factors behind CAI for writing that help to explain its success with students who are often hesitant to approach more traditional methods for improving their writing skills.

We've all had students tell us, "I've always hated English, I can't write, and it's not important, anyway." CAI instruction supports the professional's contention that writing is essential, whether for the literary critic, engineer, architect, or scientist. Having programs on the "main menu" of a microcomputer center, for example, tells the student that English composition is as important a subject as the chemistry, physics, mathematics--and yes, computer science--she or he already studies with the help of a microcomputer. Using CAI for help in writing raises the subject to the same level of seriousness as the students' more favored disciplines--if it can be taught with the help of an Apple 2+, I've had students say, well, then, maybe it's important!

Student Responses and Conclusion

Using CAI as more ammunition for my persuasive arguments about good writing in all disciplines has helped me change a few minds. In fact, it has made a good number of my engineering students more than willing to try, once and for all, to overcome the comma splice! Here are some of their comments:

"It's a good method for learning because it's fun and interesting to work with the computers."

"I can recall the mistakes I made and why they were wrong."

"Very interesting--it make (sic) me sure that I'm paying attention to English and writing."

"Interesting and helpful is a way to say it mildly. It was great."

The prevalence of CAI at the grade-school, high-school, and university levels testifies to its great potential for helping writers write. We cannot overlook the strong motivation CAI often provides the student writer for whom the skill has seemed unnecessary, frustrating, or simply a bother. Obviously, these motivational concerns work for all students, and CAI for writing will soon move beyond its infancy. But I do not purport to dictate how to teach the writing process to any student or instructor through these programs. I assume that our students will still have access to tutors and writing instructors. Presumably, each individual instructor will have his or her own methods and attitudes towards writing pedagogy, and will unite the series in his or her own way in teaching that writing is a process, not a plug-in formula, and that some of the exercises will allow for composing while others will feature prescribed sentences. While it is unrealistic to expect that CAI should allow for all contingencies, good CAI still allows for instructor input in tying together the various aspects of the writing process, and doesn't presume to be the one, single answer to learning for everyone.

But CAI for writing, at its best, is exciting for both teacher and student: its one-on-one, instant feedback, its instant appeal for the technically-oriented student, and its success as a learning/teaching method may have given us the motivational solution for students who have feared or disliked writing--those same students whose writing skills are essential to a professionally-oriented, technical career.

Deborah Holdstein
Illinois Institute
of Technology

THE WRITING LAB'S IMAGE

After working very hard to have the writing lab concept approved by the administration and gathering materials to involve every student, remedial through gifted, I was somewhat surprised to hear

that some students resisted being sent to our lab at Perry Meridian High School because they thought it was for "dummies."

HOW COULD THEY BELIEVE THAT? HOW COULD I CHANGE THEIR MINDS?

The following strategies developed:

1. Visit the English classes to explain the lab procedure. Tell the students that the lab was not "just for dummies." Some of them didn't believe me.

2. Improve the classroom teacher's attitude toward the lab. Some teachers resented the pull-out format,* but those who presented the lab as an opportunity to improve writing skills, as a place to go for help with writing, eliminated their students' fears of being stigmatized. Still a few doubters remained.

3. Get the students PHYSICALLY into the lab. Once in the lab, they would receive positive reinforcement and encouragement, and their attitude toward the lab would change. This was most effective as the students' self evaluations reveal. The lab's philosophy is one of building confidence: students should leave feeling better about their ability to write, or at least about their ability to improve with practice.

4. In early November of 1983, the lab was made the center for all writing contests; and as Advanced Placement Coordinator for our school, I also made the lab the center for AP information. Both of these functions improved the lab's image. "Dummies" don't enter writing contests or take AP examinations!

Victory? Yep.

Kathy Martin
Perry Meridian High
School

* the pull-out format: Students come to the lab from English class. Occasionally, study hall or homeroom time is used. This option eased the teachers' concern about losing too much classroom instruction time.

VISIBLE LANGUAGE, a journal which focuses on the visual dimension of language, publishes articles concerned with research and ideas that help define the role and properties of written language:

- .How we create and organize written language
- .How we process and interpret written language
- .The relation of writing and abstract language
- .The distinction of written language from speech
- .How writing systems evolved through time
- .The relation of writing to other graphic systems
- .The relation of literacy to the human condition

Among the back issues of particular interest are the following:

- ."Visual Cues in Word Recognition and Reading" (Vol. XV, No. 2)- includes articles on visual factors and eye movements in reading, visual components of the reading process, and reading disorders.
- ."Spelling Research" (Vol. X, No. 4)-includes articles on English orthographic patterns, phonological relevance of spelling pronunciation, and theories of learning to spell tested by studies of deaf children.
- ."The Spatial Arrangement of Text" (Vol. XV, No. 1)-includes articles on layout for instructional text, typography and spatial cues that facilitate textbook learning, information mapping, and patterned note-taking.

Back issues are available at \$5 each, and regular subscription rates are \$15/year; however, the editor has offered newsletter readers a special reduced subscription rate of \$12, as an introduction. For subscriptions, back issues, and a list of other special issues of VISIBLE LANGUAGE still in print, write to Merald E. Wrolstad, editor; VISIBLE LANGUAGE; Box 1972; CMA; Cleveland, Ohio 44106.

WRITING CENTERS CONFERENCE

You are cordially invited to attend the Sixth Annual Conference of the Writing Centers Association: East Central, to be held on May 4 - 5, 1984, at the Raymond Walters General and Technical College of the University of Cincinnati.

The theme of the conference is "Writing, 1984." The conference will include panels and workshops on such topics as using computers and writing across the curriculum, with an emphasis on discussion and participation among those attending the conference. Mary Croft, from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point is the featured speaker. There will also be a materials exchange table.

For further information, please contact:
Phyllis A. Sherwood
Raymond Walters College
955 Plainfield Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45236

SEPARATION OF NWCA AND WCA: EAST CENTRAL

The Executive Board of the Writing Centers Association: East Central, serving as temporary board to the fledgling National Writing Centers Association (NWCA) in 1983, voted that a separation of funds between the two organizations commence following November 21, 1983. On that date, the newly elected board of the NWCA in Denver elected Joyce Kinkead, treasurer. Hence, all National dues should be forwarded to Ms. Kinkead, Utah State University, Department of English, UMC 32, Logan, Utah 84322. Make your \$1.00 checks payable to NWCA, but continue to send your regional dues (\$5.00) to the representative of your regional organization.

Further action of the East Central board resulted in a vote that "\$1.00 per member of the WCA: EC, of those members who paid dues between March 17 [1983] (Special Interest Session at 4 C's) and November 21 [1983] (NWCA meeting of NCTE), go to the National Writing Centers Association." Thus the East Central group has contributed \$100.00 to the National and has transferred \$49.00 (the total of \$1.00 checks received) to the NWCA treasury.

Kathy Osterholm,
Treasurer
WCA: East Central



CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

The New York College Learning Skills Association is hosting its Seventh Annual Symposium on Remedial/Developmental Education at Grossingers, N.Y. on April 1-4, 1984.

Keynote Speaker: Martha Maxwell

Presymposium Institute Leaders: Frank Christ on Microcomputers and Edward Kelly on Program Evaluation

Special Workshop Leaders: Larry Dolaz, Susan Leffler, Curtis Miles, Jay Sommer and Alfred Pasteur

For registration and any information contact: Anne Parsons Learning Skills Center SUNY at Brockport, N.Y. 14420 716-394-2471



MIDWEST ABCA CONFERENCE

The Midwestern Regional Conference of the American Business Communication Association will be held at Iowa State University, in Ames, Iowa, on April 18-20, 1984. Inquiries about the program and housing should be sent to:

Carol David Dept. of English 203 Ross Hall Iowa State University Ames, Iowa 50011 515-294-5411



PROCEEDINGS FOR SALE

A limited number of copies of the Proceedings of the Writing Centers Association Fifth Annual Conference, Purdue, 1983, may be ordered from Kathy Osternolm, Department of English, Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Clarion, PA 16214. Please make out checks for \$10.00 to W.C.A.; East Central. Copies of the Proceedings from the third and fourth annual conferences (1981-82) are also available at \$3.00 per copy.



NINTH ANNUAL RHETORIC SEMINAR Current Theories Of Teaching Composition

PURDUE UNIVERSITY May 28-June 8, 1984

EDWARD P.J. CORBETT LUIS MILIC WALTER J. ONG, S.J. LINDA FLOWER GENE MONTAGUE D. GORDON ROHMAN JAMES KINNEAVY FRANK O'HARE ROSS WINTEROWD JANICE M. LAUER RICHARD E. YOUNG

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE SEMINAR

Dr. Janice M. Lauer Rhetoric Seminar Purdue University Department of English West Lafayette, IN 47907 (317) 494-3740



CONFERENCE ON MICROCOMPUTERS

The Instructional Resource Center of the City University of New York announces its national conference, "Microcomputers and Basic Skills in College," to be held in New York City, April 13-15, 1984. Talks and software demonstrations will be given on the uses of microcomputers in postsecondary basic skills instruction in the following subjects: writing, English as a second language, reading, speech, mathematics, and other areas of developmental education.

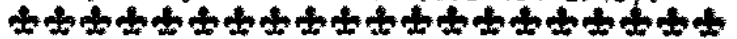
For additional information or registration forms, write to:

Geoffrey Akst, Conference Chair Instructional Resource Center City University of New York 535 East 80th Street New York, New York 10021



SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

A five-week summer institute for secondary school teachers, entitled "Shakespeare: The State of the Art," will take place from June 25 to July 22, 1984 at the University of Maryland, College Park. For information on stipends, application requirements, and the program, call or write: The Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies, Rm. 1116, Francis Scott Key Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742 (301-454-2740).



The Writing Resource Center at Ohio Wesleyan will be thirty years old in 1985 (or 1988, depending on whether one counts the date when it was voted into existence or the date when it actually began functioning). As part of our anniversary celebration, we would like to invite guests from other venerable writing centers. Therefore we are looking for other writing centers more than twenty years old (?), more than ten years old (?), or whatever we come up with! All we know from our old records is that our "Writing Clinic," as it was called at that time, was that it was modelled on the English Tutoring Program at Dartmouth.

Still for sale are five remaining copies of our "tutor training manual" plus "comprehensive packet for setting up a writing center" for \$3, one-half the cost of duplicating and mailing.

Ulle Lewes
Writing Resource Center
Ohio Wesleyan Univ.
Delaware, Ohio 43015

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Anyone who is involved in a research project that is being conducted in a writing center and who is interested in reporting on the project either at NCTE or MLA should contact me. I am presently planning programs for both conferences and need panelists to report on current research projects. In order to participate in these programs, you need to be a member of NCTE and MLA. Those who are interested should send me a brief description of their research project and should indicate which conference they would prefer.

Jeanette Harris
Department of English
Texas Tech University
Lubbock, TX 79409

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

Computers and Writing ---
Research and Applications
April 12-14, 1984
University of Minnesota

For further information contact: Computers and Writing Conference, Composition Program, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

DIRECTORY OF WRITING LABS BEING COMPILED

The February 1984 issue of the WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER included an announcement of a directory of writing labs now being compiled. Also included in that issue of the newsletter was a questionnaire to be completed in order to be included in this directory. If you wish to have your lab or center listed in the directory and don't yet have a copy of the questionnaire, please send me a stamped, self-addressed envelope. All questionnaires must be received before June 15th. The price of purchasing the directory will depend on costs for copying and mailing and will be announced in a future issue of the newsletter, along with ordering information.

Please send requests for copies of the questionnaire, along with your stamped, self-addressed envelope, to me: Muriel Harris, Department of English, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907. If you have further questions, please write or call me (317-494-3723).



CALL FOR PAPERS

The Midwest Writing Center Association announces its annual conference which will be held on October 19-20, 1984, at Rockhurst College in Kansas City, MO. The theme of the conference is "Language and Learning: The Road to 1994." To submit a proposal, please send a 150-word abstract for a 20-minute paper, or a 50-minute demonstration workshop, or panel discussion addressing this theme. Persons interested in participating should send their proposals to: MWCA

c/o Calvin Evens
Rockhurst College
5225 Troost Avenue
Kansas City, MO 64110

We extend an invitation to all secondary reading and writing teachers to come to this conference because last year's participants suggested that the presentations were helpful to secondary teachers as well as college teachers and lab instructors.
