

Concurrent Session 1

8:45-10:00

A WRITING CENTER: TUTOR-NURTURED OASIS	<i>Sydney Boyd</i>	Aspen
FIND THE OASIS AMIDST THE DESERT	<i>Jennifer Lowry</i>	Aspen
SIFTING THE SANDS	<i>Gina Barker and Michael Madson</i>	Aspen
DEFINING THE LIMITS OF A WRITING CENTER AS A SUPPORTIVE TOOL TO ESL STUDENTS	<i>Milko Markov</i>	Bannock
LEAVING THE OASIS	<i>Lucas Brown</i>	Bannock
WHEN ROLES COLLIDE	<i>Elizabeth Chilbert</i>	Bannock
A NONTRADITIONAL OASIS	<i>David Scott</i>	Cottonwood
VIRTUAL OASIS	<i>Kathryn Denton</i>	Cottonwood
WHO VISITS THE WESTMINSTER COLLEGE WRITING CENTER AND WHY?	<i>Paula Jo Porter</i>	Cottonwood
BENEATH THE SANDS	<i>Alisha Kamph</i>	Spokane
PERPETUATING EXCELLENCE	<i>Joyce Adams, Mary Black, and Megan Long</i>	Spokane
O COME, ALL YE FELLOWS	<i>Melissa Root</i>	Whitepine
TO APPROPRIATE, OR NOT TO APPROPRIATE?	<i>Clare Duignan</i>	Whitepine
WHAT HAPPENS TO PEER TUTORS AFTER COLLEGE?	<i>Trenton Olsen</i>	Whitepine

Session 1a, Aspen Room

A WRITING CENTER: TUTOR-NURTURED OASIS

Sydney Boyd (University of Idaho)

A writing center is generally thought to have a welcoming warmth and an open atmosphere. To call it an oasis would almost be instinctual, but to do so would be to fall into an easy trap. Certainly all writing centers should be an inviting place, but boundaries ought to be maintained. As a female tutor in a writing center, I learned this through experience. A writing center is not an oasis in relation to gender.

FINDING THE OASIS AMIDST THE DESERT: AVOIDING AUTHORITY AND APPROPRIATION IN TUTORING ELL STUDENTS

Jennifer Lowry (Boise State University)

In this presentation I look at the vast desert of research and discuss how the conflicting research in regards to the tutoring of ELL students helps to perpetuate Writing Center tutors' fears of tutoring ELL students. I pay particular attention to the issues of authority and appropriation in the tutoring of ELL students. I hope to offer suggestions for avoiding this fear and ways to help make the Writing Center an oasis for both the tutor and the ELL students who come into the Center seeking refuge from the classroom dynamic.

SIFTING THE SANDS: GENDER AND TUTORING

Gina Barker (Weber State University) and Michael Madson (Weber State University)

In the Writing Center oasis, social norms become secondary to the learning process. As part of this neutral zone, tutors must offer refreshment to sun-beaten, weary students of all genders. But how do tutors address gender if they do not understand it? An often tabooed topic in the Writing Center, gender's effects on tutoring brings unavoidable dynamics between tutors and students. As Rafoth suggests, those who try to avoid the subject altogether "come across as insensitive and insecure." Through addressing gender, tutors can hurdle its hardships and work in an academically refreshing environment.

Session 1b, Bannock Room

DEFINING THE LIMITS OF A WRITING CENTER AS A SUPPORTIVE TOOL TO ESL STUDENTS

Milko Markov (Westminster College)

Westminster College is experiencing a growing ESL/NNS student population. However, with no specially designated ESL academic program, the only available resource for the NNS students on campus is the Writing Center. The twofold danger that arises from this situation is that the center may become a substitute for such academic programs and that the role of writing consultants will transform from that of peers to that of teachers. The Westminster College Writing Center experience reveals that without contradicting writing center philosophy, it could supplement the learning process of ESL students, but should not be used as substitute for ESL academic programs. This case study will prove instructive for other small colleges facing similarly limited resources.

LEAVING THE OASIS: TRANSITIONS FROM THE WRITING CENTER TO THE CLASSROOM

Lucas Brown (University of Idaho)

While I was at the Writing Center, I saw it as an oasis, where a student's writing got noticeably better after a single session. As I transitioned to the classroom, I fully expected the skills I had learned while tutoring to make the shift successfully. However, I soon realized the classroom was more like a desert than I had hoped. The expectations placed upon me felt different, and one-on-one time was frustratingly difficult to schedule (at most I would get fifteen minutes per student). Shifting from a one-on-one relationship to a one-on-twenty-six made most of the skills I had picked up at the Writing Center feel worthless or obsolete.

WHEN ROLES COLLIDE: ON BEING A WRITING CENTER TUTOR AND COMPOSITION INSTRUCTOR

Elizabeth Chilbert (Boise State University)

This presentation creates a parallel between *Seinfeld's* George Costanza and one writing center consultant. Like Costanza afraid of his worlds colliding, Elizabeth is afraid her world of peer tutoring will collide with her world of teaching composition. The presentation reflects on the struggle to keep roles separate, using a psychological study by Benzion Chanowitz and Ellen J. Langer as an explanatory guide to defensive responses.

Session 1c, Cottonwood Room

A NONTRADITIONAL OASIS: RE-EXAMINING LABELS IN THE WRITING CENTER

David Scott (Boise State University)

The Writing Center is a space in which collaboration holds a certain kind of restorative promise for writers. The metaphor of an oasis, therefore, seems apt. This presentation will explore and challenge the limits of that particular metaphor by examining a particular type of writer: the nontraditional student. Much like the oasis tag, the label of “nontraditional” brings with it preconceptions of its own, some of which have inadvertently strengthened by the academic scholars wishing to serve this demographic. By focusing on the nontraditional student, and questioning certain generalizations made about this group, I hope to show that the inclusive nature of the Writing Center can offset such limiting notions.

THE VIRTUAL OASIS: MEETING STUDENTS WHERE THEY WORK

Kathryn Denton (University of New Mexico)

Although UNM has offered online writing center (OWC) services for several years, the tutoring center just recently began to promote these virtual services. Faced with the challenge of working within the existing framework of UNM's OWC, I have often turned to metaphors in my work. These metaphors serve as opportunities to envision subtle changes, both in the overall look of the OWC and response styles in communicating with student users. This presentation examines the changes that have resulted from this central metaphor. An evaluation of student feedback provides a discussion of whether these changes have led to the successful creation of a virtual oasis. Furthermore, this paper evaluates whether this metaphor will inform larger changes, or whether other metaphors may be equally useful.

WHO VISITS THE WESTMINSTER COLLEGE WRITING CENTER AND WHY?

Paula Jo Porter (Westminster College)

The Westminster College Writing Center serves a diverse student population who seek assistance with a wide range of subject matters. Students range from English Majors to Nursing Graduate Students and everything in between. I analyze a year of writing center business in terms of which student populations come to the writing center and what classes they look for help with: I further examine reasons for specific student groups being highly represented and why they focus on certain classes. Nursing students visited the Writing Center more than any other group. The culture of writing in nursing and anxiety over technical aspects of writing explain this general trend. My research ultimately indicates that a Writing Across the Curriculum approach is already being implemented at Westminster College, particularly in the Writing Center.

Session 1d, Spokane Room

BENEATH THE SANDS: AN INDIVIDUAL'S COLLABORATION

Alisha Kamph (Boise State University)

Acting as compass, Alicia Koundakjian's "Speaking the Written Voice" helps to guide you, and me, through my own process of becoming Consultant. Entering the Center as Writer, I walked into my earliest consultation sessions carrying the tools I'd established for my writing persona; as I quickly discovered, my personal writing tools were inadequate and unable to contribute to productive collaborative sessions. With this realization, I stopped bringing my writer-self into consultations, and, therefore, I began to discover another persona. This paper examines how, independent of my writer-self, I pieced together a new persona—a persona that learned to collaborate, a persona that could effectively make discoveries alongside others, and a persona that, inadvertently, unearthed an oasis between the selves.

PERPETUATING EXCELLENCE

*Joyce Adams (Brigham Young University), Mary Black (Brigham Young University),
and Megan Long (Brigham Young University)*

By using student feedback and the input of the advisors in the lab, techniques will be tested and evaluated for their usefulness as well as changes made to the lab to make it more user-friendly and more of a refuge for the incoming students. A survey method will be used with student feedback being anonymously linked to advisor feedback on the same session. We believe that through these methods we will be able to begin to get an idea of the ideal response pattern to a student coming in, seeking refuge in the writing center oasis.

Session 1e, Whitepine Room

O COME, ALL YE FELLOWS

Melissa Root (Naropa University)

What makes the Naropa Writing Center an appealing place for the graduate students who staff it to visit in between classes and beyond shift hours? What do these students, from different disciplines and backgrounds, share in common beyond being a writing fellow? Does the physical space itself or the people who inhabit it make this a spiritual home on the Naropa campus? With all the divergent viewpoints, pedagogies, and personalities, the NWC staff presents a microcosm of community within the university at large. I would like to explore this phenomenon and the bonds that make it possible. At the same time, I would like to consider the question of inclusivity and exclusivity. Who is a part of this oasis and why?

TO APPROPRIATE, OR NOT TO APPROPRIATE?

Clare Duignan (University of Utah)

Tutors of L2 writers struggle with appropriation, viewing it as a "directive" strategy. Is a suggestion a guide for a writer or a fix for a paper? This essay suggests that a balance should be struck between empathetic commentary and strategic correction within the peer-tutor relationship.

WHAT HAPPENS TO PEER TUTORS AFTER COLLEGE?

Trenton Olsen (Utah State University)

Peer tutors at Utah State University have often praised the Writing-Across-the-Curriculum program, not only as a valuable service to their fellow students, but for helping to develop their own writing abilities and benefiting them in their professional development. The analysis of both quantitative data and qualitative feedback from former peer tutors reveals not only that the academic performance and educational attainment of tutors is higher than the average graduate of USU, but that the skills developed from their experience in the program set them apart from their peers, making them more valuable and successful in the professional world.

Concurrent Session 2 10:10-11:10

THE RECEPTIONIST MONOLOGUES	<i>Ashley Christensen, Ashley Linford, and Audrey Merket</i>	Aspen
MOTIVATING TOWARD REVISION	<i>Elisabeth Monson</i>	Bannock
CARRYING THE CARAVAN	<i>Christopher Bentley</i>	Cottonwood
LEARNING THE TRICKS OF THE TRADE ROUTE	<i>Sarah Sheranian</i>	Spokane
PEERCENTERED PANEL	<i>Alisha Kamph, Samantha Sturman, Sara Welch, and Sarah McGuire— moderator</i>	Whitepine

Session 2a, Aspen Room

THE RECEPTIONIST MONOLOGUES

Ashley Christensen (Utah State University), Ashley Linford (Utah State University), and Audrey Merket (Utah State University)

Chaos cannot exist within an Oasis, which is why Writing Centers have receptionists. Through monologue, USU Writing Center receptionists discuss their thoughts on how they help create a comfortable atmosphere. A panel discussion will follow, inviting questions from tutors and directors who are thinking of having receptionists in their writing centers.

Session 2b, Bannock Room

MOTIVATING TOWARD REVISION: REJUVENATING THE WEARY WRITER

Elisabeth Monson (Brigham Young University)

By asking effective questions and giving proper verbal encouragement, writing tutors lend direction and provide the necessary tools to help the student refuel and revise as they finish their writing process journey. The path to a well written paper is exhausting; a common trait among students is an overwhelming sense of tiredness for the writing process. This apathetic attitude is often merely a feeling of exhaustion as the student views the daunting, time-intensive task of revision. Peer tutors can create an oasis of encouragement within each of their tutoring sessions and thereby motivate the student in the revision process.

Session 2c, Cottonwood Room

CARRYING THE CARAVAN

Christopher Bentley (Weber State University)

Travelers always have a certain fondness of their home base: a place familiar and comfortable. Similarly, the home base of the writing center can be a welcoming and cheering place for struggling students. But what happens to those students who don't know that the writing center is designed to help them? Such students often are left out in the desert to wander alone. In this presentation, tutors will learn the power of bringing the writing center to students in the capacity of satellite centers, and how to make these centers as comforting as the base camp of the main writing center.

Session 2d, Spokane Room

LEARNING THE TRICKS OF THE TRADE ROUTE: THE WRITING CENTER AS A WATERING HOLE FOR SELF-REGULATION

Sarah Sheranian (Brigham Young University)

The writing process is very much like traveling a new trade route: even with setbacks and course corrections, it offers great rewards in the end. Experienced writers develop self-regulatory processes that smooth the roadblocks along the way; however, novice writers often lack these process skills and experience failure. Writing Centers can serve as pit-stop oases by teaching students environmental, behavioral, and personal processes that experienced writers use everyday. Then, novice writers will have the tools necessary to travel the rest of the trade route on their own.

Session 2e, Whitepine Room

PEERCENTERED PANEL: BLOGGING AROUND THE CENTER

Alisha Kamph (Boise State University), Samantha Sturman (Boise State University), Sara Welch (Boise State University), and Moderator Sarah McGuire (Boise State University)

Writing consultants work in a variety of spaces, at centers or through online services. These spaces promote comfort and efficiency, but may not leave space for discussion beyond the feedback given on a written work. Is a blog for writing tutors an oasis that provides us with an opportunity to share our experiences and receive feedback on our consultations? Can we visit and leave renewed? How can this opportunity to communicate in a space outside of the center and consultation affect us as consultants? This panel will discuss writing center blogs as spaces and oasis, including a discussion of our experiences with PeerCentered.

Concurrent Session 3 11:15-12:30

CENTERING PEER-REVIEW	<i>Jack Newbill</i>	Aspen
COMPLICATING VIEWS OF THE WRITING CENTER AS SANCTUARY	<i>Anne Ritter</i>	Aspen
GRAB FEET, HOLD TO FIRE	<i>Jared Odd</i>	Bannock
LESSONS LEARNED FROM INSPIRATIONAL TEACHERS	<i>Charlotte Clark</i>	Bannock
THE BUDDHA AS TUTOR	<i>Troy Omafray</i>	Bannock
DIGITAL OASIS—GRADUATE OASIS	<i>Donna Evans, Patrick Johnson, and Kris Kellejian</i>	Cottonwood
BREAKING DOWN WRITER’S BLOCK	<i>Miranda Burningham</i>	Spokane
ENGINEERING INTRIGUING INTRODUCTIONS	<i>Stephen Griffiths</i>	Spokane
TECHNO-SAVVY RESEARCH	<i>Bentley Snow and Asenath Rallison</i>	Spokane
STYLE GUIDE FOR TUTORS	<i>Alyson Bowers and Kate Rouse</i>	Whitepine
TROUBLE SPOTS FOR STUDENT WRITERS	<i>Lorene Nance, Amanda Price, and Rebecca Richards</i>	Whitepine

Session 3a, Aspen Room

CENTERING PEER-REVIEW

Jack Newbill (Boise State University)

This session explores the question: is it possible to conduct peer-response groups through the Writing Center? This session builds on both peer-response research and writing center studies by Peter Elbow, Anne Ruggles Gere, McAndrew and Reigstad, Ben Rafoth, Muriel Harris, and others. Audience will be invited to share anecdotes and experiences concerning writing groups, and to participate in mock small-group workshops. Feedback resulting from these workshops will be compared with feedback from actual student workshops to see what benefits can be gained by adding a tutor to the group. Discussion will also be given to feasibility of conducting groups through the center.

COMPLICATING VIEWS OF THE WRITING CENTER AS SANCTUARY

Anne Ritter (Washington State University)

This presentation will discuss how the metaphor of “Writing Center as Oasis” becomes complicated when dealing with 1) multilingual writers’ expectations, and 2) perceptions of the Writing Center by some instructors of ESL students. It will address the views of both tutors and instructors, as well as invite a discussion of how this metaphor can be best utilized within the Writing Center.

Session 3b, Bannock Room

GRAB FEET, HOLD TO FIRE: ENCOURAGING INQUIRY IN OUR SESSIONS

Jared Odd (Utah State University)

We as writing center tutors too often enable mediocrity in our patrons’ writing. As long as we’re honest and tactful, we have more rights and responsibility than we might think. Because writing is an act of inquiry, we shouldn’t be afraid to ask our patrons tough questions about what they’re saying in order to challenge their views and encourage them to dig deeper into themselves and their subjects. This will show them that writing is rewarding work.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM INSPIRATIONAL TEACHERS

Charlotte Clark (Brigham Young University)

We all remember teachers who have influenced us throughout our lives. We still may think about them and glean wisdom and strength from their example and teachings. As writing tutors, many of us have the desire to be influential like the teachers we remember so fondly, but in just a few minute conference session, is that type of influence possible? This session will explore some simple principles that will help your students become passionate about writing because of your example and direction.

THE BUDDHA AS TUTOR: PEDAGOGY AND THE METAPHOR OF THE THREE JEWELS

Troy Omafray (Naropa University)

Buddhism offers a rich example of the nature of the human being and the nature of education. How might the Buddhist model of the "three jewels" (the teacher, the material, and the learning community) as refuge or oasis aid in re-forming a model for imagining the peer tutor encounter? If Buddhism is a science of the mind, as the Dalai Lama and other Buddhist teachers explain, how can it contribute to the process of providing a refuge for the learner? Can the Buddhist model of the three jewels function secularly so as to not offend the preferences of our diverse educational populations? Teaching at Naropa University has provided me with opportunities to explore these questions. My presentation will reveal how I have come to understand and use the Buddhist notion of education in my tutoring encounters within the context of the writing center and classroom.

Session 3c, Cottonwood Room

DIGITAL OASIS—GRADUATE OASIS

Donna Evans (Washington State University), Patrick Johnson (Washington State University), and Kris Kellejian (Washington State University)

Since 1982, Washington State University's (WSU) Writing Center has provided an oasis for student writers, most who are undergraduate students located on the Pullman campus. Until recently, distance students submitted drafts to the Online Writing Lab (OWL), thus accessing similar tutorial help. However, the OWL's aging software and a growing demand for graduate and professional writing assistance motivated expansion. This panel presents the creation stories of two new oases: an eTutoring alliance, serving distance education students; and the Graduate and Professional Writing Center (GPWC), welcoming non-degreed and degreed graduate and professional writers.

Session 3d, Spokane Room

BREAKING DOWN WRITER'S BLOCK

Miranda Burningham (Utah State University) and Cynthia Harmon (Utah State University)

Everyone has a unique style of writing, a distinct voice that displays a personal connection with the words on the page. Yet what few people realize is that beginning the writing process is equally revealing of a writing personality. Some people brainstorm by making lists, word webs, outlines etc. Others write better at a certain time of day, in a specific setting, or perhaps using a favorite writing utensil. Yet even more distinguishing is the individuality of writer's block, whatever prevents writers from putting forth their ideas on the blank page before them. Our presentations will focus on brainstorming techniques and particularly diagnosing the different forms of writer's block and ways in which to "break down the block."

ENGINEERING INTRIGUING INTRODUCTIONS

Stephen Griffiths (Brigham Young University)

Writing a good introduction can be one of the most important parts of a student's paper; the reader bases his or her first impression upon the opening paragraph. I suggest five ways to write an enticing first paragraph: tell a story, refer to a quote, cite a fact, make a controversial statement, or cater to the audience. While some genres have less flexibility—science policy papers are more structured than personal essays—these five suggestions can improve any kind of student writing. Most importantly, this introductory paragraph presentation will include real student writing samples from several disciplines.

TEHCNO-SAVVY RESEARCH: HELPING YOUR STUDENTS FIND THE NEEDLE IN THE ELECTRONIC HAYSTACK

Bentley Snow (Brigham Young University) and Asenath Rallison (Brigham Young University)

Students often perceive research papers as horrible experiences, where they are stranded thirsty in a desert, and completely disoriented. When this happens, rather than pursuing research through appropriate methods, they can be tempted to fabricate their findings, plagiarize, or perhaps to twist them. By familiarizing and equipping students with useful research abilities, these temptations may be averted. Writing tutors can provide an essential role in this process; through their examples as efficient and honest researchers, they can convince students of the viability of true research, and thus convert the students into serious and proficient researchers themselves, especially through electronic mediums.

Session 3e, Whitepine Room

STYLE GUIDE FOR TUTORS—AIDS FOR WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Alyson Bowers (Utah State University) and Kate Rouse (Utah State University)

For a writing tutor, knowing how to cite within MLA style is very easy. However, guiding students in other citation styles? This can be somewhat challenging and scary. Citing “Across the Disciplines: a Reference Handbook” helps cure the ineptitude of every writing tutor by including APA, Chicago, Turabian styles as well as specific style guides for student writing within the field of anthropology, political science, psychology, business, computer science, biology, engineering, physics, and others. Just one glance will help the tutor not only know how to correctly cite different sources properly, but also help the tutor look knowledgeable to fellow students.

TROUBLE SPOTS FOR STUDENT WRITERS: THE DESERT SURROUNDING THE OASIS

Lorene Nance (Utah State University), Amanda Price (Utah State University), and Rebecca Richards (Utah State University)

After surveying professors, students, and peer tutors, to discover common writing struggles for students, we put together twelve handouts that address these trouble spots in writing. Covering issues such as comma rules, thesis development, support and validity of evidence, and documentation styles, our handouts are a helpful resource for students and peer tutors alike. To make our handouts as user-friendly as possible, we have incorporated techniques such as mnemonic devices, visual aids, and concise explanations of topics. These creative additions are designed to both help students better learn and remember the information as well as to help peer tutors better teach difficult information. Better yet, students can take the handouts with them after a conference and use the handouts as a tool to improve their own writing outside of the tutoring session.

LUNCH, Ballroom, 12:45-1:30