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Keep Calm and Write On!

Writing Center Welcomes Students with Expanded Services and Space



By Nirvani Persaud

New to campus and looking to work on an essay? Want to tackle MLA or APA style, boost your reading skills, or polish a research paper? Visit the Campus Writing Center!

The CWC, located on the first floor of the Kurt R. Schmeller Library building, has expanded its free services for QCC students in credit-bearing and BE courses. The Center's well-trained tutors (most of whom have BA or MA degrees) focus on specific issues students may wish to address in their writing, and reading comprehension.

Student sessions last up to fifty minutes and students can come without an appointment, make a one-time appointment, or schedule a weekly visit. Tutors can assist with coursework as well as scholarship essays, personal statements, and resumes.

In addition to in-person tutoring, the CWC offers TigerWrite, its online tutoring service. Through TigerWrite, students may submit paper drafts 24/7 and receive feedback within 48 hours.

The Center adheres to a student-centered philoso-

phy with "writing... best completed in a collaborative dialogue," CWC director Stefan Spezio states. Tutors do not focus on a paper being "100% error-free" after one draft, but on: process over product; helping students meet assignment requirements; and expressing their ideas "as clearly as possible," he says.

Fall semester services have expanded to include a variety of workshops, including: MLA, APA and Resume Writing; Grammar, Reading Strategies, and CATW Workshops; and Conversation Hour.

Writing Center Manager Joe Labozzetta invites professors to visit the Center or to contact him to schedule an in-center class visit, which helps introduce students to Writing Center services. "When faculty send students here, they will get a better 'first draft' on which to read and comment," he states.

The Writing Center also offers support services in the CWC computer lab, where BE and ATB students complete their required lab hours. The lab, in Humanities 236, is outfitted with new computers and learning software. It is now open Monday-Saturday, with on-site writing tutors to assist students.

WRITING CENTER, LEARNING CENTER, ENGLISH DEPARTMENT HOLD ELL OPEN HOUSE

HIGHLIGHT SERVICES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS



“Do you dream in English yet?”

That was one of the questions posed by Dr. Jilani Warsi to the 30-plus English language learners who attended a joint Open House on September 13 hosted by the Campus Writing Center, English Department, Liberal Arts Academy and the Student Learning Center.

CWC Director Stefan Spezio started the proceedings by welcoming the students and introducing members of the departments across campus who had come together in the CWC’s newly expanded space in L-118.

English Department Faculty Julia Carroll, David Rothman and Jilani Warsi discussed the benefits of practicing speaking English through low-stakes

social gatherings like this semester’s Conversation Hours hosted by the CWC and conducted either by English faculty or CWC tutors.

Dr. Rothman described seeing ELL students grow more confident about speaking up in his classes after they get involved in campus activities, such as Conversation Hour, and meet other students with whom they can practice English.

After hearing from English Department Faculty, as well as from representatives from the Student Learning Center, and the Center of International Affairs, students enjoyed pizza, played board games with faculty and chatted with other QCC students from their respective learning academies.

--Christina Denny



Prof. Rothman (l) enjoys a friendly board game with students attending the Open House.



Event presenters (left to right): Stefan Spezio with Professors Carroll, Rothman and Warsi.

CWC HOURS

FALL 2017

MON-THURS: 9AM-8PM

FRIDAY: 9AM-5PM

SATURDAY: 10AM-3PM

CWC BY THE NUMBERS



From July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017:

4451 Students tutored in the CWC (some of whom came multiple times for multiple services)

1108 Students who came for help with a WI assignment

162 Class visits hosted by the CWC

29% Returned on their own after attending a class visit

70% Percentage of English 101 students who received at least a B- or higher after visiting the CWC

24/7 When students were able to submit paper drafts through the online TigerWrite system!



WRITING CENTER VOICES

Q & A with CWC Director, Stefan Spezio

By Nadine Cavanaugh, with Maya Grant

Stefan Spezio is the new Director of the Campus Writing Center here at QCC. He supervises overall program design, establishes department policies, oversees budget, determines hiring, and supervises all daily operations of the center. You can reach him at sspezio@qcc.cuny.edu or 718-631-6663.

Q: Where did you go to school and what did you study?

A: I went for my undergrad and graduate degrees at SUNY New Paltz, and I have a BA in English and Philosophy and an MA in English.

Q: Before obtaining the position of Director of the CWC, what was your prior experience with writing centers?

A: Immediately prior to working at QCC, I was the director of the Academic Enhancement Center at St. Francis College, which is in Brooklyn Heights, for 3 years. I started in writing centers about 8 years ago when I took the position of a tutoring assessment coordinator at Dutchess Community College in Poughkeepsie, NY. Prior to that I was an instructor teaching composition and writing classes for several years, and I continued to do that while I was tutoring.

Q: What drives your passion for tutoring?

A: I had tutored in the past, and I have always been someone who fellow students came to for feedback, and I enjoyed doing that. And having taught in a classroom, I enjoyed the idea of working with students in a collaborative atmosphere where the focus was on improving their writing ability... So when I'm sitting down with a student, I'm not worried about making this particular paper the absolute perfect example of writing, but I'm looking at the paper and using it as an opportunity to help the student review his/her process ... so they can utilize those skills in the future.

Q: What are some things you noticed about the CWC that stand out from other places where you have worked?

A: It's Queens, so it is so linguistically and culturally diverse, which I think is a major strength. The Writing Center here has a strong reputation in terms of working with so many departments on campus and just the sheer number of students we get to see on a daily basis, and the way we work with them... we have a number of different services we offer.

Q: What do you want our students to know about the CWC? What would you like professors to know about us?

A: I think the biggest misconception that students have about Writing Centers, and learning centers in general, is that they're here as a way to help deal with a skill deficit, as in if I'm doing poorly in a subject, I need to go here. And while that's a good resource... we're not here to work with one kind of student, we're here to work with every student.

Students [also] often think they can't come to a writing center if they don't have a piece of writing in hand, that they have to have a draft; and I think a lot of what can help a less experienced writer develop their writing skills is to meet with a tutor in that brainstorming process. Bring your assignment, talk with your tutor, and use them as a sounding board [for] developing a set of ideas you can flesh out into a draft.

We value [the professors'] support, and we want to work with their students in every possible way. We are very interested in seeing all the different kinds of assignments on campus... we have tutors who are comfortable, ready, and prepared to help with papers in any number of subjects.

Q: What do you think makes a successful tutoring session?

A: One where the student has felt heard, and walks away from the session feeling as though they have feedback they know how to apply and a plan to move forward.

Q: What are your goals for the CWC?

A: I want to try to get as many students as possible on campus to know what kind of services we offer, and that they can take advantage of them all. We're a support center... and the idea is that we're working as another area where students can continue developing their writing and reading skills.

Contributors

This first edition of *The Campus Writer* was brought to you by: Jonathan Cajas, Nadine Cavanaugh, Christina Denny, Ngozi Enoch, Maya Grant, and Karen Gregov, Joe Labozzetta, Robin Levine, and Nirvani Persaud.

We invite your questions, news, success stories, and ideas for future issues! Please email them to us at and put "Newsletter" in the subject line.

Local and Global Grammar Errors to Avoid

By Prof. Jilani Warsi

Students whose first language is not English often make errors in their written work. These errors can sometimes make it very difficult for the reader to understand the writer's ideas and thoughts. It is important to note that there are two types of errors: local and global. Local errors usually do not impede comprehension, but global errors cause confusion for the reader. What follows are examples of both types of errors:

Local Errors

A local error violates one of the following grammar rules, but an intelligent reader can still understand the writer's intended meaning:

Subject–Verb Agreement: The verb must agree with the subject.

*“The college have addressed the issue of attrition.”

Corrected sentence: The college has addressed the issue of attrition.

Prepositions: Certain prepositions are used before certain nouns.

“I am learning many things on the course.”

Corrected sentence: I am learning many things in the course.

Word Forms: Word endings indicate certain parts of speech.

“I have been working hardly.”

Corrected sentence: I have been working hard.

Global Errors

Global errors have a negative impact on readers, making it extremely difficult for them to comprehend the writer's intended meaning. What follows are some examples of global errors:

Fragments: Fragments are incomplete thoughts, which confuse the reader. In your written work, do your best to avoid fragments. Consider the following example:

“Many businesses and educational institutions in the area.”

Corrected sentence: Many business and educational institutions in the area have offered scholarships to qualified students.

Run-on Sentences: These are two or more sentences run together without using proper punctuation and/or conjunctions.

“Maria came from Ecuador she studies at a junior college in Queens after she graduates she plans to move back to Ecuador and start her own practice.”

The reader does not know where one idea ends and another begins. Run-on sentences can be extremely confusing for the reader.]

Corrected sentence: Maria came from Ecuador. She studies at a junior college in Queens. After she graduates, she plans to move back to Ecuador and start her own practice.

Syntax: Words have specific places in a sentence. Mislacing or dropping them completely can cause a great deal of confusion for the reader.

“He is easy learning computer science.”

Corrected sentence: He is learning computer science easily.

As a college student, your goal is to minimize the occurrence of global errors so that your reader can easily understand what you mean. It is possible that some local errors will continue to appear in your written work. However, you should work to eliminate both types of errors to ensure your reader can follow your thoughts without difficulty.

–Excerpted with permission. For more examples and types of local and global grammar errors, see Prof. Warsi's blog: <https://jilaniwarsi.blogspot.kr/2017/05/local-and-global-errors-in-esl-writing.html>

FACULTY CORNER

Each issue, we will feature writing tips from QCC instructors. This month, English Professor Jilani Warsi shares a selection from his blog *Language and Linguistics*.

Dr. Warsi dedicates his blog to discussing ways to better enrich the learning environment of English Language Learners.

–Maya Grant

CAN YOU JUST PROOFREAD THIS FOR ME?

Why Tutors Can't Edit or Proofread Your Work By Karen Gregov and Christina Denny

Most students want to turn in papers that are as error-free as possible, and the Writing Center is ready to help you with any kind of writing assignment. We cannot simply correct your paper or mark up all your errors, however. That's proofreading, not tutoring!

As an academic support service, our first goal is to enhance your learning. That's why one of the first steps in a session is to help you see whether your paper is fulfilling your professor's requirements to the best of your abilities. What if a paper has flawless grammar, but goes off topic or leaves out key points? Following the assignment carefully ensures that you stay focused on the concepts important for your specific course.

Another problem with proofreading is that it does not strengthen your writing skills for next time. Tutors focus on the writer, not just what is written. We will guide you to the biggest weakness in your paper--maybe the thesis statement or missing citations or common syntax errors--and discuss that underlying issue. We might ask a lot of questions to help you brainstorm ideas, use handouts and examples of similar errors and ways to fix them, or give you time to make changes on your own so we can discuss them together. These strategies should lead to a more polished paper, but more importantly, they will boost your knowledge and confidence as a writer.

Remember that CWC tutors are always here to guide you, but then it's up to you to take our advice and express your own unique voice and ideas in each paper. And even though we can't edit or proofread for you, we can help you learn how to proofread your own writing. Just ask!



resolve

Definition: Verb form. To commit to an action or settle a decision.
Sentence: I was nervous about my essay, so I **resolved** to visit the Campus Writing Center to learn how to improve the final draft.

B.E. SMART: VOCABULARY WORDS TO KNOW

apathetic

Definition: Adjective. Having no emotion, feeling, or concern.

Sentence: My classmate seemed **apathetic**, but I soon learned that she actually cared a great deal about passing the class.

daunting

Definition: Adjective. Appearing difficult to complete, intimidating.

Sentence: For international college students who leave their native countries, it can be **daunting** to adjust to language and norms in a new place.

--Ngozi Enoch, Karen Gregov, Christina Denny

CWC EVENTS - SEPTEMBER 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
17	18 Conversation Hour 12-1pm Reading Strategies Workshops 12:10-1pm 1:10-2pm	19 Classes follow a Thursday schedule CWC open 9 am-8 pm	20 No classes CWC open 9am-6pm	21 No classes CWC open 9am-6pm	22 No classes CWC open 9am-5pm	23 CWC open 10am- 3pm Reading Strategies Workshop 12:10-1pm
24	25 Conversation Hour 12-1pm Reading Strategies Workshops 12:10-1pm 1:10-2pm	26 Grammar Workshop 10:30am-12pm Conversation Hour 12-1pm 4-5 pm Reading Strategies Workshops 1:10-2pm 2:10-3pm 3:10-4pm	27 Conversation Hour 12-1pm Research Paper Workshop 12:30-2p English Grammar Clinic (Sentences) 1-2:30 pm Reading Strategies Workshops 1:10-2pm 5:10-6pm	28 Reading Strategies Workshops 9:10-10am 1:10-2pm Conversation Hour 12-1pm 3-4 pm	29 No classes CWC open 9am- 5pm	30 No classes CWC open 10am- 3pm Reading Strategies Workshop 12:10- 1pm

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE CAMPUS WRITER



TIGER WRITE IS READY TO ROAR.

The Writing Center's online tutoring system is ready to give students feedback on their writing!

VISIONS AND REVISIONS. Learn our top tips for reviewing your paper's first draft.

MEET THE STAFF. Get to know some of the tutors and administrative staff who help provide support to the QCC community.

ARE YOU A GRAMMAR GURU? Do you have what it takes to answer these tricky grammar questions?

WRITING CENTER VOICES. Q & A with Academic Resource Center Manager Joe Labozzetta, who has been working at the CWC since its inception in 2006.

OCTOBER EVENTS @ THE CWC. An updated calendar of workshops and events.

CWC EVENTS - OCTOBER 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 Conversation Hour 12-1pm Reading Strategies Workshops 12:10-1pm 1:10-2pm	3 Conversation Hour 12-1pm 4-5 pm Reading Strategies Workshops 1:10-2pm 2:10-3pm 3:10-4pm	4 Conversation Hour 12-1pm English Gram- mar Clinic (Verb Tenses) 1-2:30 pm Reading Strategies Workshops 1:10-2pm 5:10-6pm	5 Reading Strategies Workshops 9:10-10am 1:10-2pm Conversation Hour 12-1pm 3-4 pm	6	7 Reading Strategies Workshop 12:10- 1pm
International Tutor Appreciation Week						
8	9 College closed No tutoring	10 APA & MLA Style Workshop 12-1pm Conversation Hour 12-1pm 4-5 pm Reading Strategies Workshops 1:10-2pm 2:10-3pm 3:10-4pm	11 Conversation Hour 12-1pm Research Paper Workshop 12:30-2p English Grammar Clinic (Under- standing Articles) 1-2:30 pm Reading Strategies Workshops 1:10-2pm 5:10-6pm	12 Reading Strategies Workshops 9:10-10am 1:10-2pm Conversation Hour 12-1pm 3-4 pm	13	14 Reading Strategies Workshop 12:10- 1pm
15	16 Fundamentals of Grammar Work- shop 10:30am-12pm Conversation Hour 12-1pm Reading Strategies Workshops 12:10-1pm 1:10-2pm	17 Conversation Hour 12-1pm 4-5 pm Reading Strategies Workshops 1:10-2pm 2:10-3pm 3:10-4pm	18 Conversation Hour 12-1pm English Grammar Clinic (Count & Non-Count Nouns) 1-2:30 pm Reading Strategies Workshops 1:10-2pm 5:10-6pm	19 APA & MLA Style Workshop 12-1pm Reading Strategies Workshops 9:10-10am 1:10-2pm Conversation Hour 12-1pm 3-4 pm	20	21 Reading Strategies Workshop 12:10- 1pm