



JUST WRITE!



Quarterly Newsletter of the University Writing Center at UCF



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A Note From Our Editors:

We welcome you to the second edition of *Just Write!*, a newsletter sponsored and organized by the University Writing Center! This edition was created and edited by Brittany Herrmann, Mekenzie McElroy, Jeanette Simanek, and Jarrett Webster. We wanted to thank our peer-tutors and the Director of the Writing Center Professor Weaver for all of their support! Our purpose is to create a sustainable dialogue about writing for all students at UCF. Thank you for being a part of our community at the UWC. We strongly believe that everyone has the aptitude to write! This newsletter supports writers and students in our community at UCF and eagerly promotes writing-related events. We proudly promote that we should collaborate as a community in all our writing endeavors. We are grateful for the opportunity and the ability to create, write, read and dream.

DIRECTORS WRITE

By Professor Matthew Bryan,
Assistant Director of the UWC

A couple of decades ago, when I was myself an undergrad starting here at UCF, I struggled to choose a major. I enjoyed math, so I considered going into engineering. I had recently gotten into 3-D modeling as a hobby, and so I thought about studying computer graphics. And I loved the literature I read in my English classes and, even though it only ever seemed to progress in fits and starts, I was passionate about my personal writing.

**PROFESSOR
BRYAN HAS BEEN
AN INSTRUCTOR
AT UCF FOR 11
YEARS.**

So I sat in front of the Reflecting Pond, actually reflecting. All three of these paths seemed interesting, and all would allow me to continue to do something I cared about. What finally settled it for me was the role that I knew collaboration would play in some of these degrees. I loathed working in groups, and so I chose the one path that seemed like it would rely the least on collaboration. That's how I decided to study writing.

To anyone working in writing centers, such a view of writing as a solitary act is, of course, misinformed. I pictured myself writing based purely on my own ideas and inspiration before submitting work that, I was sure, would receive the sort of high marks and adulation it deserved. I outlined and planned incessantly, but had nothing resembling a coherent process. Those planning documents would get tossed aside when it came time to write and, motivated by a deadline, I could make myself finish something. Without the perspective of a reader earlier in the process, submitting drafts to a teacher or workshop felt a little like trial and error to see what would work.



It was only in graduate school where I learned the value of a regular writing group (a subject UWC Director Debbie Weaver explores in the inaugural issue of this newsletter) and came to appreciate the generative role of talking about writing. Teaching writing and learning more about research into writing helped me see the ways that collaboration isn't simply a part of the writing process that writers can opt into; rather, it's intrinsic, and that collaboration happens actively between individuals and with texts, whether we recognize it as such or not.

Recently, I conducted some research that I wanted to share with others, but had no idea how to shape it into an actual piece of writing. Where would it go? Who else would be interested? I mentioned my struggle to a previous UWC director, and he reminded me of that advice that it's taken me far too long to incorporate into my own writing practice: "Why don't you try talking with someone about it?" Now, in my current writing and research, I'm struck by the ways that having a conversation with someone can help me to focus my ideas for a project, or even spur new ones altogether. Writing, I've found, leads to reading and talking, and reading and talking tend to lead to more writing. So much for choosing a path free of collaboration.



WRITERS WRITE

Scholarship Essays During Midterm Season: The Stress of it All By AIMEE RHODES

With midterm season and just general pandemic stresses like online class and mental health, my parents had no problem drilling into my head that I needed to apply for scholarships-- especially since each year seems to get more expensive regarding my education. Having so many things to do is incredibly stressful, but my strategy has always been to prioritize what needs to get done first. I won't deny I needed to take some mental health breaks, but I also kept telling myself that if I don't put in the work now, then when would I? I let my worries furnish adrenaline and got to work.

Generally, most scholarship applications require students to include their academic and professional goals as well as extracurricular involvement. The future is scary, and the fact that I had to talk about my own future makes it more daunting of a task. I utilized the resources I had available to me like professors, current and previous, even the Writing Center. One of my professors helped me create a plan to ensure I manage my time adequately. They gave me a well-needed pep talk about how far I've come and how much potential I have. The Writing Center helped me brainstorm ideas and smooth out the few sentences I had managed to come up with. The amount of helpful advice I was given motivated me to keep

pushing through.

I wrote everything down, everything and anything I could think of--deadlines, questions, ideas, who I was meeting, when I was meeting them. My desk was a colorful flurry of sticky notes covered in writing that poured from the nearest pen I could grab whenever something came to mind. Even my computer was full of words, ideas, plans, and brainstorming material. I use Google docs religiously. Just like I dumped my schedule on paper, I unloaded my scholarship essay writing on paper. Well, electronic paper that could catch the occasional grammar mistake with an angry red line that was basically telling me, "What on earth are you trying to say?!" It was my messy brain dump, yet it was always painful to start the process over and over again, only to have to hack down the mess of overgrown weeds I'd written. Eventually, I'd make it through. After rereading and revising for what seemed like forever, I finally had a polished scholarship essay.

Each time I hit submit, a feeling of relief washes over me. There's a bittersweet feeling to it all; I have to wait to see if the work I put in is worth it. Nevertheless, I'll continue to keep an eye out and apply for more scholarships in the hopes that I can reap the fruits of my labor.

TUTORS WRITE

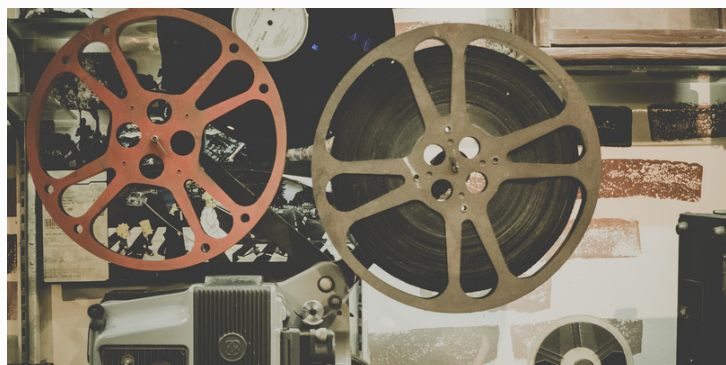
FROM WRITTEN TO READ

By Ryan Hill

Ryan has been a peer-tutor at the UWC for two years! Schedule an appointment with him today!

Listening to the gentle harmony of piano notes set against coffee shop ambience, I tab in on the screenwriting software. The cursor jumps to the midpoint of the page. Without taking a beat to confirm that these are indeed the proper margins for script format, my keystrokes materialize the main character's name. A quick tap on the Enter key lurches the cursor forward to the next line, right where the character's dialogue should go. This is their last appearance. Their last line. Their mic-drop-moment.

At the pace of honey trickling from a jar, I search through the deepest of my creative trenches to pluck the perfect string of words. Finally, I extract a fitting combination of phrases to bookend this character's arc and close out the story. I swipe at the period key, reveling in the rush of relief and pride and fulfillment.



Handing in this script to my workshop class the next day, I was languishing in anxiety, self-doubt, and fear. Each week, a batch of students submit a certain amount of pages they've written for their respective feature-length film script so everyone else can give constructive feedback. When I'm the one giving feedback, it seems so sensible and obvious that it's a beneficial and necessary phase of the writing process. But when I'm the one meant to receive it, that rational understanding of the utility of feedback becomes shrouded in dread and worry.

Writing is initially an intimate, solitary endeavor. The audience and author are one in the same. There's a comforting security in that. That's likely why it's so hard for me to cross that barrier of sharing my work--of inviting others to peer at the vulnerabilities I imbue my words with. I begin to second guess those creative decisions. I wonder not if I did find that "perfect" string of words, but how distant the slop I jotted down is from that string of words. I agonize over if my story will come off as trite, or confusing, or uninspired, or any other adjective imposter syndrome feeds me.



But all that melts away when the feedback actually happens. Every single time. Invariably. Without fail.

Always, that fear of being scrutinized transforms into gratitude for being supported. The advice my peers offer gives me insight on how my work is being received, which in turn guides and drives my revision efforts. The collaborative atmosphere of this workshop-style class renews, liberates, and bolsters my creative spirit, thereby allowing me to refine my execution so that it is more aligned with my vision. And at times, it allows me to refine my vision so that it becomes more profound and more impactful than any iteration I myself could craft alone.

After all, that's the goal of storytelling. To impact the soul. To excite the emotions and enchant the mind. To express yourself, and to connect with those who can find themselves in that expression.



STEPS 2 SUCCESS

MASTERS IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

Writing in Rhetoric and Composition is like a box of chocolates: you never know what you're going to get. In other words, each writing situation is different. Every professor and assignment asks you to explore different processes, conventions, and modalities than the one before it. Therefore, if I had any piece of advice to give for writing in graduate school, it would be these two things: 1) Be open to possibility and 2) Write to discover. Yes, writing is meeting requirements. However, it is more about the connections you make *while* writing, between content and the world around you, that matters. In this sense, you never know what you are going to get; but you also never know what you're going to *discover*. If you leave different than when you first sat down to write the assignment, you are doing something right.

-MALLORY HENDERSON

AD/PR

A press release, also called a news release, is a document sent out to media outlets by a PR professional describing a client's newsworthy event or announcement. Here's some things to remember when writing a press release:

- Always remember reporters are moving quickly and may not have time to read your whole release. The most newsworthy parts of your story should be presented first. Give the reader the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How all in the first paragraph (This first paragraph is called the lead!).
- Use Associated Press Style (AP Style) when writing.
- Get to the point. No fluff.
- Fact check everything. A reporter should be able to use your press release verbatim for whatever they write, and so it has to be right.
- Use quotes in your press release. This gives credibility to your news release and saves the reporter time from trying to find quotes on their own.
- Close your press release out with a boilerplate (a.k.a. a standardize summary about your client)

-KELLY DRISCOLL

CREATIVE WRITING

Workshop classes can feel overwhelming when you're getting so many different opinions on a creative piece. It's best to remember that in the end, your writing is your own. That means that it's up to you to decide which feedback you listen to. You can reject, accept, or half-and-half any note you get from classmates or teachers— and don't be afraid to experiment!

**DON'T BE AFRAID TO
EXPERIMENT!**

Workshop classes are a place to foster a creative environment where you can see the opinions and views of others, and how those could positively affect your writing. It's important to keep an open mind when getting feedback, and remember that writing stems from the world around you— it's a collaborative effort. No author is an island. Your teachers and peers are there to help by offering suggestions, but don't feel guilty for not wanting to accept some; just consider each one fully before making your choice.

-AMARA KEIZER-QUINTANILLA

COMMON PROJECTS

Research Papers

JEANETTE SIMANEK

Writing a research paper can be daunting. Many writers, myself included, become overwhelmed by all the components that go into making a good research paper. Figuring out what exactly your professor is looking for in your paper can be confusing, but pinpointing the type of research paper you're writing can help narrow your focus. The two main types of research papers are argumentative papers and analytical ones; both come with different approaches to the research and how you should present it in your paper. An argumentative paper is just as it sounds: the writer presents a claim in the form of a thesis and uses primary and secondary sources to back up that claim. An analytical research paper differs slightly in that its main goal is to dissect a topic and analyze the different components of that particular topic. While both research paper genres include many instances of overlap, determining what type of research paper you're writing can help focus your analysis.

Now that you've thought through what type of paper you're writing, let's talk about the thesis statement. Thesis statements do not have to be set in stone; more often than not, a thesis statement will change as you continue writing your paper. You may find, for example, that your thesis statement focuses too heavily on something that isn't integral to your argument or analysis, so you edit it to fit your paper's overall direction. Instead of a thesis that reads: "Corporations should provide more work-from-home

opportunities and six-hour workdays so that office workers have a better work-life balance and are more likely to be productive when they are in the office", you find that your paper has stronger evidence regarding a shorter work week's impact on employee loyalty rather than the impact on work-life balance, and adjust the thesis statement accordingly in the middle of writing your paper.

Another thing to consider when writing a research paper is the intended audience. This can perhaps have the biggest impact on how you should write a research paper. Yes, your professor is one member of your audience, but not the only member. Think about how your analysis would be received by the members in the field you are researching: Would they agree with your claims? Would they disagree? If you think they would disagree, that doesn't necessarily mean you're on the wrong track! Maybe you need to dedicate a significant portion of your paper to addressing counterarguments, for example. It might also help to think of your paper as an oral presentation. How would your voice change to meet the demands of different audiences? Your writing, to an extent, should change in that same way.

With all this in mind, it looks like you're ready to get started! If you get stuck, scheduling an appointment with a Writing Center tutor is a great way to try out your work on a real live audience member!



What have we seen in
the UWC?

INQUIRY SPOTLIGHT

What are we researching at the UWC?

Multilingual Writers

BY BRIANNA LASHWAY



Starting out as a tutor at the UWC this past fall, I wasn't expecting the influx of writers with English as their second language. I realized quite quickly that there wasn't a handbook or guide on how to approach tutoring multilingual or international writers. Thankfully, I had guidance from Professor Weaver and Professor Bryan which proved to be really helpful. Even though I felt a little more confident in my abilities to help multilingual writers through their help, I felt as if I could have been doing more--I just didn't have an inkling about where to start. That's when the seeds of our inquiry project began to form. I decided to team up with Emily, Mallory, and Marhian because we were all interested in how we could better our tutoring practices to help multilingual writers succeed in their writing overall.

In my experience, I learned that it takes a varied sort of approach when tutoring multilingual writers. Valerie Balester sums this up with this statement: "Effective tutoring should start from the premise that critical thinking is a social construct, not always well defined, tied in complex and sometimes opaque ways to cultural and disciplinary rhetorical practices" (195). This is very important to consider when tutoring all writers that come in for a session, but especially applicable to students from different backgrounds and cultures than our own. That's why I felt it was important for each of us to bring what we were interested in to the table.

Emily's interest was founded in redesigning a few of the UWC's Valued Practices, specifically tailored to tutor instruction and how we can utilize our practices to meet the needs and understand the challenges that multilingual writers face. Mallory's focus looked to revamp another part of the UWC, but instead of Valued Practices, her main interest fell on resources. Mallory's main idea was to create a space for writers to have agency through the use of resources. These resources would hopefully give multilingual writers the appropriate tools needed to develop their writing in and outside of sessions. Marhian's approach centers around the collaboration and relationship between writers and professors. That is, the standards that institutions impose upon what is academic English. She proposes for us as tutors to rethink and redefine what is considered the English standard in order to make sure we are not stripping multilingual writers of their identity. Finally, my stance looked at higher order versus lower order concerns and finding ways to better train tutors in how we should navigate these concerns in regard to multilingual writers.

As you can see, our approaches are wide-ranging and all across the board. At first, we wondered if this was too broad, but we soon realized that there is no one right way to tutor multilingual writers. In order to promote linguistic diversity and create a safe space for multilingual writers to thrive, our project intentionally takes a diverse approach in the hopes that we can better ourselves as tutors and ultimately aid multilingual writers to be the best versions of their writer selves.



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APPOINTMENT WITH
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RESOURCES AND EVENTS

Publication Opportunities:

Convergence Rhetoric: convergence-rhetoric.net

- Submissions for the Fall issue due August 15th, 2021

Cypress Dome: cypressdome.org

- Early Bird submissions (including feedback from editors) begin October 1st-31st 2021, open submissions begin November 1st-December 31st

Stylus: writingandrhetoric.cah.ucf.edu/stylus/

- Currently accepting submissions for the 2021 issue, check with your ENC 1101 or 1102 professor.

Imprint: writingandrhetoric.cah.ucf.edu/imprint

- Submissions open Summer 2021; keep an eye out for updates!

Florida Review: floridareview.cah.ucf.edu/

- Open submissions all year!

Tutor's Choice Flash Fiction Contest:

<https://forms.gle/HA2LEPkNhSR3GVeH9>

- Submissions are due June 4th, 2021.

Future Events (Look out for dates on social media!):

UWC:

- WriteWithMeWednesdays 6PM-7PM:
<http://bit.ly/UCFWWMW>


Cypress Dome:

- Monthly Open Mics @cypressdome
- Webinar launch party for issue 32 of The Cypress Dome literary magazine!

THE CYPRESS DOME
ISSUE 32
OFFICIAL LAUNCH PARTY
WEBINAR

**TUESDAY,
APRIL 20, 2021
3:00 P.M.**

GUEST AUTHOR
NATHAN HOLIC



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JOIN US FOR
AN EVENING OF
UCF'S
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WRITING AND
ART!