



JUST WRITE!



Quarterly Newsletter of the University Writing Center at UCF



NEWS & FEATURES

Directors Write
PAGE 1

Writers Write
PAGE 2

Tutors Write
PAGE 3

Inquiry Spotlight
PAGE 4

Steps2Success
PAGE 5

Common Projects
PAGE 6

Flash Fiction
PAGE 7

Events & Links
PAGE 9

JUST WRITE!



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS:

We welcome you to the fourth edition of *Just Write!*, a newsletter sponsored and organized by the University Writing Center! This edition was created and edited by Mekenzie McElroy, Jarrett Webster, and Lindsey Wright. We wanted to thank our peer tutors and the Director of the University 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.

Also, a huge thank you and welcome back to campus! We know things haven't been entirely the same but we appreciate all of you! You've worked endlessly to make this semester a positive experience creating multi-modal events, excelling in classes, and visiting the writing center! There are many of us tutors physically in the writing center for the first time this semester! We're excited to see what the rest of Fall 2021 brings and look forward to reading you next Spring!

In this edition, we are proud to present the winner of the second Tutor's Choice Flash Fiction Contest. This outstanding submission was evaluated by a panel of tutor judges through a series of several reads to ensure the fairness and legitimacy of this contest.

Thank you to all of the wonderful submissions we hope that you write for us again! Please review the next submission deadline at the end of this issue! There is more to come!

FROM THE EDITORS:

MEKENZIE MCELROY, LINDSEY WRIGHT, AND JARRETT WEBSTER



DIRECTORS WRITE

By Deborah Weaver
Director of the UWC



In our return to campus this fall things look a little different. Yellow signs with Knightro ask students to mask up. They are posted all over our center as well as on the doors leading into Colbourn Hall. Boxes of masks are handy at the reception desk for any visitor who forgets theirs. Tutors and writers sit on opposite ends of the tables sharing documents over computers, avoiding passing papers back and forth.

It is obvious some things have changed around campus, that we are still navigating a pandemic, trying to stay as safe as possible. Yet, the community of practice, the community of learning that occurs in the Writing Center is very much the same. Our tutors work diligently to consult, write newsletters, host workshops and events, blast social media, mentor newbies, and cultivate their knowledge about writing center scholarship. Here, tutors are invested, assume responsibility, and are eager to improve their work environment. Not a week passes without someone coming up with an idea to better market our services or consider tutoring practices that will help writers feel more inclusive, giving them reasons to return.

In a world that feels chaotic on most days, where I worry if there is not enough time to reverse the damage we have done to Mother Earth, when hope seems buried underneath the binders stacked on my bookshelf, I look out into the center. The tables, staggered for social distancing purposes are full, and I overhear a tutor ask a writer to tell them more about an assignment. I smile, leave my office, and stroll up to the front desk overhearing several conversations. A buzz throughout the center signals tutors and writers are working to solve problems. I feel lucky to work with so many caring, thoughtful, and smart tutors. People who want to make a difference, who continue to impress me with their enthusiasm and commitment to the work they do. As I walk back to my office, it occurs to me that hope isn't that far away or buried. It is right outside my door.





When I was considering my career, I had to think, what is a way I can combine theater, art, and creative storytelling? At the time, it seemed impossible, but now I'm realizing that this is indeed possible. My journey as a creative writer began with my series Mermaid Hazel and the Adventures of the Atlantic, the story of an adventure-loving mermaid who strives to teach children about acceptance, diversity, and caring for our planet. Being that this is my first work, I did choose to self-publish through Kindle Direct Publishing, a service provided by Amazon. The next step in my process was to broadcast my work to the public, but how was I going to do that? Being that I'm studying writing, not marketing, I needed to get creative with how I would share my story with others.



I then thought back to that dream I once had of combining all of my interests, and believe it or not, it was now the answer to my question. It was certainly a leap of faith, but I made the decision to purchase a realistic mermaid tail, craft a seashell top by hand, and ultimately bring Hazel the Mermaid to life. This element of theatrics and costume design that I had brought into the mix was just what I needed. I then reached out to places around where I lived to see where I could promote my story, and I was directed to attend some of the city's children's events.

My adventures began of getting into my full costume and reading to children, and I can honestly say that this emphasized why I am so passionate about what I do.

When I would do my readings dressed as my character, the wonder and amusement from children that I encountered was obvious. Typically, after I would finish reading my story, I would give kids time to ask questions, and admittedly the number one question was, "Are you a real mermaid?" Seeing the joy it brought children to have a mermaid reading them a story that highlighted the importance of accepting others made me realize how influential children's literature can be.



My goal as a writer is to inspire a sense of wonder within younger generations, and furthermore, leave them with a message that in my opinion holds a great importance. The main message of most of my stories is to treat others how you would like to be treated and to keep an open mind and an open heart when interacting with others. Although I had other mediums available to convey this message, children's literature spoke to me the most, because I strongly believe a short and simple picture book can sometimes be an underestimated power. Using colorful imagery and loveable characters, I feel children can truly take away a lot of information from what they choose to read.

Overall in my continuing career, I plan to add more to the Mermaid Hazel series in hopes of leaving a positive impact on generations to come, one that inspires children to practice kindness and acceptance in their everyday lives.

TUTORS WRITE

FROM WRITTEN TO READ

By Abigail Turner

Abigail has been a tutor here at the UWC for two months! Make an appointment with this wonderful Grad today!

Nothing beats a pen gliding across paper. Alright, maybe a few things, but not when it comes to writing. I am sitting in the most comfortable chair in the least comfortable position possible tucked away within the corner of a coffee shop. I rip out a page and ball it up--no good. I shouldn't be so harsh on myself, I mean this isn't even for a grade, and yet I still care. It's just that something about the last line picks at me wrong. What do I want this poem to say?

I start writing again. Is it possible to be thoughtless and full of thoughts at the same time? That is what happens when I write poetry. All the thoughts trapped inside of me coming out so fast, it is like I am barely processing them. It doesn't quite make sense, but this is the way I write best.



Hmm, I don't love this line, but I think I can tweak it with fresh eyes later. The next few verses tumble out of me nearly subconsciously. I read back on what I have written as if I am someone else or like reading some of my favorite poet's works. I love the unique rhythm poetry has, reading like a song to the soul while exposing my inner thoughts to those who read my words. Many people say it is helpful to write in order to process your thoughts, and when it comes to writing poetry, I could never agree more.

I take my pen to write an exclamation point next to this last poem, meaning if I ever published a book, I would want it to be in there. I write 'build' next to the one before that, so I can go back to work on certain lines I may want to change.

I say that I wish to publish someday, yet I find it so hard to have others read my work. Sometimes I even find it hard to read my own work. That is the nice thing about poetry. The words are going to mean something a little different to each person based on their life and experiences.



Before I know it, I have pages of my book filled with inky scribbles, and the coffee shop is closing soon. I remember a time where I only came to coffee shops to chat with friends or study, but now I almost always come for this. The coffeeshop noise somehow blends with the music coming through my earbuds like the songs were written to be heard as such. I read over my favorites one last time. Alright, maybe I was being a little too critical towards my writing. Each line dips into the next and I feel captivated by each one. I get my things together, excited to go home and read them to my biggest fans.



INQUIRY SPOTLIGHT

From Valued Practices to Values and Practices

BY LINDSEY WRIGHT



When I first became a tutor in the UWC in 2019, I was given a list of 20 valued practices to work toward in my tutoring sessions. While this was helpful in giving me something to work toward within my sessions, it also perpetuated the idea of a checklist, as if each practice was something that needed to happen in a session in order. In the writing center, all of our sessions are individualized to the writer, so it makes no sense to have a checklist. So, over the course of the past year, we as tutors have worked to define our values in a different way. Here are some thoughts about those changes:

"I love that our words turn into action- it's how we evolve." -Jarrett Webster, second-year tutor

With this new values and practices list, rather than having a checklist of what to do in a session, tutors are able to focus on the individual, rather than getting through a checklist.

"The new values and practices sheet has helped me focus not on the practices themselves, but rather on the values we want to promote in the UWC." -Mekenzie McElroy, second-year tutor

Additionally, by having us tutors create the new values and practices in collaboration, rather than having them handed down from an administrator, we were able to take ownership of our work in the UWC and create a descriptive, rather than prescriptive, sheet describing writing center sessions here in the UCF writing center.

"These changes were long overdue and overall, brought tutors closer to one another, and to our directors because they allowed us to feel heard, which is so rare to find in a workplace nowadays. The practices address current issues and provide guidance as to what to do in a session, guidance that for a long time was much needed." -Leia Silva, third-year tutor

This fall is the first semester that we are implementing this new sheet. Our new tutors have never seen the old, checklist version, so they are able to think about sessions as individualized from the beginning and focus on values, rather than a prescribed checklist.

"As a new tutor, one value in particular that I've seen and practiced is collaboration. I've found that the "peer" part of being a peer tutor shines through in nearly every session. Through collaboration, we help writers see that the work they create is their own, and even with our assistance, their voice is ultimately what is reflected after a collaborative consultation. Collaboration is not control; rather, it is a value and practice the writing center holds dearly due to its presence in and influence over productive and constructive sessions." -Nina Lopez, first-year tutor

"UCF accepts all students from all kinds of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. With the diversity section on the values and practices sheet the WC provides, I know how to effectively help writers deal with the barriers of the American academic system. This portion of the sheet asks tutors to have a conversation about intercultural differences and how they impact a writer's work. This has influenced me to have an honest conversation with writers about these kinds of things. I feel when a tutor can initiate that conversation, the session only benefits the writer even more." -Sadie Hughey, first-year tutor

Our new values and practices sheet is a living document, and we have already identified some changes we would like to make for future semesters. We will keep growing as tutors by continually reassessing ourselves, our values, and our practices to best help the writers of the UCF community.



SOCIOLOGY

Clarity and concision are most important when writing sociology research papers; you want the reader to understand what your research is saying and why.



When writing your Literature Review, outlining can help to organize how you want to present the previous literature to the reader. Typically, it's easier to organize your literature by related themes or findings. Your result should be as straightforward as possible, only explaining the results of the tests you ran. Your Discussion should focus on what the results mean in relation to your overall research.

-DONNISE BOWENS

ENGINEERING

Most people do not see engineering as a writing-intensive discipline. However, drafting technical documentation is critical to presenting the design process of an idea to others within the engineering field. When writing these technical documents, being clear and concise is crucial. The purpose of engineering documentation is to convey your designs such that other engineers could reasonably replicate them. Before beginning to write, consider questions such as: What is the purpose of this design? How could this idea be implemented? and Why should engineers use this design over similar alternatives? Engineering writing, in essence, is not much different than many forms of argumentative writing. Think of the mathematical theory as evidence to convince engineers to consider your ideas. This style of engineering writing may not be so common in the classroom, but it is very common in the industry with project proposals and design reviews. Join extracurricular projects to become more familiar with the style and try utilizing some of these strategies.

-ZACH WHITE

**STEPS
2
SUCCESS**

BIOLOGY

Writing in biology can be difficult, but it is important because it is a way for scientists to convey their findings and ideas with the world.



Like any science, biology writing should seek to reflect the scientific method in a manner that can reach the general public or a broader scientific audience. Writing in the field of biology should aim to be professional, unbiased, concise and organized, and evidence-based.

-LESSIE FARRIS

COMMON PROJECTS

Poetry

JARRETT WEBSTER



Poetry is observation and recreation more often than anything else. We each have the capacity to create and explore the bounds of language. The most important idea to grasp in the beginning is that failure is subjective. Art has always been about pushing the limits of those who came before and uniquely pushing our own limits as well. We explore language by finding ways to create rhyme no matter how silly. I've written the line: "I hate you, I love you, I hate this feeling for you." Allow me to say that I also thought that was a killer line! We all start somewhere, and if you're interested even a little bit in exploring expression in different forms, you should start now. Right where you are is perfect, even as you read. Look around you- find the clock hanging on the wall and write about Time. Remember a fond or painful memory and conjure up some of those images onto the page. Think about your routine, your schedule with work or school, write about what you do-- what you know.

Poetry is not some mystical and mysterious entity that is constantly taunting and evading our every analysis. I've been writing essays on poetry for a few years now, I think in the beginning because there weren't as many words to read! I now know that there are a few skills and techniques to look for when reading a poem (and therefore to attempt when writing your own).

A few poets to read!

Danez Smith ~ Ilya Kaminsky ~ Lucille Clifton ~ W. H. Auden ~ Hindi Noor ~ Claude McKay ~ Louise Gluck ~ A. E. Housman ~ Sylvia Plath ~ Charlie Harjo ~ T. S. Eliot ~ Ezra Pound ~ Tracy K. Smith ~ Terrance Hayes ~ Monica Youn ~ Vero Silva ~ Guillaume Apollinaire ~ Emily Dickinson ~ Walt Whitman ~ Frank O'Hara ~ William Shakespeare ~ John Keats ~ W. B. Yeats ~ Dylan Thomas ~ Bob Dylan ~ George Watsky ~ Mark Doty ~ Marianne Moore ~ Elizabeth Bishop ~ Diana Chang ~ Mitsuye Yamada ~ Sui Sin Far ~ Allen Ginsberg ~ Gregory Corso ~ Yone Noguchi ~ Anni Liu ~ Aubrey King ~ Gwendolyn Brooks ~ William Carlos Williams ~ John Donne ~ Moliere ~ Maya Angelou ~ Edgar Allen Poe ~ Ruyard Kipling ~

Many professors will tell you to be super familiar with a list of nearly 200 terms of literary and rhetorical devices. This feels like an insurmountable goal and many of us (who write daily) don't even know half of them. You just gotta start with one or two. Metaphor is a pretty big one to know, and being able to identify Imagery is also important from the start. For those of you who might be wondering what either of these are, Metaphor is when you compare two unlike things, while Imagery is any language that evokes the senses (Hearing, Tasting, Feeling, Seeing, and Smelling).

Now that you've got two terms down, and a couple of ideas about what to write, you can start observing and recreating the world around you! Pick up something to write with and start with a line. I'll do it too-

The sound of my keys clacking as I write remind me of tap dancer.

Typing out rhythm with their feet buoyant and free.

What did you come up with? Did you make a metaphor like the comparison of tap dancing and typing? Did you create a sort of sound using an onomatopoeia like the word clacking? Or did you explore some other terms you know? Either way I'm sure it is an interesting and perhaps even goofy line. I hope you keep writing and continue exploring or testing out some other devices. There are plenty of online resources and tons of poets to read. Start where you are!

Oranges by Kiara Almanzar

It was all she had left of her.

A grocery list on the fridge. A list of items checked off in the delicate thin blue pen her mother would always carry around. The list had mundane things: Rice, plantains, milk, flour. But at the very bottom in a scrawled up last-minute decision was: oranges - for Karina.

Karina didn't know how to feel about the grocery list, but her mother didn't leave much else. Her mother left her a smaller list, one with items including several unpaid therapy sessions and a house that was too big, too empty. She left the dishwasher full and the unmade bed. She left the plants parched and an old wedding ring on the bedside table. She left the inkling memories of a relationship that had left Karina's mouth with a bittersweet aftertaste at the funeral. She left a ghost in her presence, the faint reminder that someone lived here once too.

She also left the grocery list on the fridge. The oranges, stacked right at the bottom, reminded Karina of that same, bittersweet feeling.

Karina remembered the warm winter air, the sun shining down her skin in cascades of color. Florida winters were always beautiful like this: cold without feeling, warmth without commitment. Her mother was a bit the same. On the off weekend when Karina was visiting her mother while her doting father worked, her mother had taken her to one of the large Florida orange groves. She had only been six then, and every tree looked like a skyscraper from her short legs.

Her mother had smiled that day, even laughed. Together, they picked oranges in a rare alliance that left Karina bleeding for more moments of this woman who didn't seem to be her mother.

They were happy in that time; but when they got home, her mother went back to her rancid rage, the oranges becoming a mess of pulp in the garbage disposal. She didn't know what triggered it—whether it was the bag of oranges slipping from Karina's fingers, the lingering smell of cigarette smoke, or the vast emptiness of the home she lived in—but a switch was flipped, and her mother was back to remembering her anger. Karina thought she could save her, this quiet admission, but the truth was that it never mattered. And she had cried, as children do when their parents are angry, but she remembers the moment as the day her resentment grew, the day she began to dread weekends with her mother. The day she stopped eating oranges all together, feigning an allergy for her favorite fruit.

Karina thinks her mother's rage followed her, even after all these years. Even as she drives to the grocery store with the list in hand.

Karina skips the rice, the plantains, the milk, and the flour. She goes straight to the produce section, bagging four oranges before pausing at her fifth. Right there, she splits an orange with the careful tenderness of someone with practiced intent. Her mother had taught her the trick, gentle arms placed over hers as she peeled it. It was a delicate way of splitting the fruit in two by removing the stringy white layer she hated. Even with fruit, her mother managed to break the barriers.

It was all she had left of her.



Kiara Almanzar

C O N T E S T W I N N E R

Writer Bio:

Part-time pop music enthusiast and full-time bookworm, Kiara is a junior hoping to graduate with a bachelor's degree in AD/PR and sociology. Her passion for the arts, both written and unwritten, has led her to frequent concerts, museums, and even gardens. Kiara hopes to one day publish a best-seller book.

Honorary mentions

- "Layered"
- "Your Flame Burned Bright"
- "Channel Orange City"
- "Muse"
- "The Wanderer"

Writers' Gala

Previous and Future winners of writing/ open mic contests will be invited to read or submit a written work for the upcoming Writers' Gala in the Spring of 2022!

Contact Information

If you have any questions about your submission and our adjudication process please feel free to email uwc@ucf.edu.

Upcoming Contest

What we're looking for:

- Original Flash Fiction in 750 words or less.
- The poignant and meaningful use of our next element: **GREEN**
- You are free to explore any theme you wish!

What we're NOT looking for:

- Fanfiction
- Excessive or over-reliance on profanity.
- Gory, sexual and/or graphic imagery.
- Writing that promotes racism, sexism, and/or other forms of discrimination.

Submission Details

Flash Fiction column

Our Flash Fiction contest is a new running column of *Just Write !* The contest is held each semester Fall, Spring, and Summer. Our next element is **GREEN**. Open submissions will run through March 10th of 2022. To submit visit this link: <https://tinyurl.com/Spring22JustWriteFF>

Writers Write column

Each semester as editors we select one writer that either visits the writing center regularly or know of their writing. If you would like to write for our Writers Write column, simply contact us at uwc@ucf.edu with a small sample of your writing. The column's main purpose is to share a dialogue about the writing process.



Just Write!



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APPOINTMENT WITH
ONE OF OUR
AWESOME PEER
TUTORS!

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UWC Instagram:
@ucfuwc



RESOURCES FOR WRITERS

Publication Opportunities:

Convergence Rhetoric: A peer-reviewed online journal for upper-division undergraduate writing in the Humanities!

- Submissions for the Spring issue due November 30th.
- <https://convergence-rhetoric.net/>

Cypress Dome: Publishes an annual literary magazine of student work and hosts a variety of events.

- Early Bird submissions (including feedback from editors) from October 1st-31st.
- Open submissions are November 1st-December 31st.
- cypressdome.org

Stylus: A journal for the exemplary writing and research produced by students in ENC 1101 and 1102.

- Currently accepting submissions for the 2021 issue.
- Check with your ENC 1101 or 1102 professor.
- writingandrhetoric.cah.ucf.edu/stylus/

IMPRINT: A UCF student magazine supported by the Department of Writing and Rhetoric.

- Issue 21 coming soon!
- Next call for submissions will be in early spring.
- writingandrhetoric.cah.ucf.edu/imprint

Florida Review: A UCF literary magazine published twice yearly.

- Open submissions all year!
- floridareview.cah.ucf.edu/



Future Events:

UWC:

- Check out the events page for information on our upcoming workshops, writing groups, and more!
- <https://uwc.cah.ucf.edu/events/>

Cypress Dome:

- Check out [@cypressdome](https://www.instagram.com/cypressdome) on Instagram for information about monthly open mic nights!
- Follow [@writersinthesun](https://www.instagram.com/writersinthesun) on Instagram to see what nationally-acclaimed authors will be visiting UCF.

Writers Uknighthed: An RSO for creative writers striving to enhance their skills.

- Follow [@writers_uknighthed](https://www.instagram.com/writers_uknighthed) on Instagram for updates on their meetings and events.