



JUST WRITE!



Quarterly Newsletter of the University Writing Center at UCF



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JUST WRITE!



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS:

We welcome you to the latest edition of Just Write!, a newsletter sponsored by the University Writing Center. This edition was created and edited by Anastasia Ehling, Madison Fernandes, Isabelle Galan, Sadie Hughey, Mekenzie McElroy, and Elena Valdez. We would like to thank the Directors of the UWC, Professor Weaver and Professor Bryan, as well as our fellow peer tutors for their continued support of this newsletter. We couldn't continue this work of sustaining dialogue about writing for all students at UCF without their help. 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 collaboration as a community and we are grateful for the opportunity to create, write, read, and dream.

We are so proud to be working with the Writing Center and are incredibly grateful for the chance to write to our fellow students here at UCF. We know college is a busy time for all of us, so we appreciate our writers and readers who take the time to write, read, and create in our community. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to work with and publish writing, and we hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter.

In this edition, we are proud to present the winner of the fifth Tutor's Choice Flash Fiction Contest. This 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 for 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:

ANASTASIA EHLING, MADISON FERNANDES, ISABELLE GALAN, SADIE HUGHEY, MEKENZIE MCELROY, AND ELENA VALDEZ



**ANASTASIA
EHLING**



**MADISON
FERNANDES**



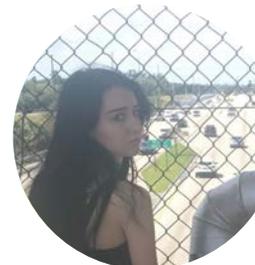
**ISABELLE
GALAN**



**SADIE
HUGHEY**



**MEKENZIE
MCELROY**



**ELENA
VALDEZ**

DIRECTORS WRITE

By Professor Matt Bryan
Assistant Director of the UWC

For this spring edition of Just Write, I wanted to share a proposal I recently had accepted for the upcoming Computers & Writing 2023 conference. I started this project last fall, before ChatGPT helped to take large language models and AI mainstream to a whole new level. How quickly the conversation around AI writing tools has been changing! My talk will be titled “Bringing AI to the Center: What Historical Writing Center Software Discourse Can Teach Us about Responses to Artificial Intelligence-Based Writing Tools.” Here’s the proposal:

As artificial intelligence (AI) reshapes writing practices in professional communication contexts (McKee & Porter, 2019) and machine learning continues to advance, writing centers can expect in the coming years to become sites of intense negotiation around questions of ownership of AI-(co)authored texts and the value of AI-supported pedagogies. Some AI-based writing tools have already been interrogated in the context of writing centers, such as Grammarly (Dembsey, 2017), and others have insinuated themselves more subtly into writing processes through popular software platforms for digital composition (e.g., Google’s Smart Compose and other auto-complete features). Of particular interest for writing centers should be those software marketed to students that purport to streamline the process of generating writing content, such as Dr. Assignment or Course Hero’s QuillBot. Whether or not such applications are endorsed by faculty or institutions is beside the point; students are already finding them and will continue to bring their experiences with them to writing centers.

Indeed, as William Hart-Davidson (2018) argues, “The robots are already here. And more are coming. And by and large, it will not be folks with training in writing and rhetoric studies who create or use them. But we can perhaps be among those who influence both how they work and how they are incorporated into the writing practices of people and institutions” (p. 254).

This presentation, then, seeks to localize Hart-Davidson’s call to writing centers by reviewing centers’ historical responses to previous software-based technological changes as a means of anticipating possible directions for further inquiry, needed education, and reactions to AI-based writing tools. While examining conversations taking place through research cannot reveal the full extent of how such practices have been taken up across writing centers day-to-day, this discourse provides a glimpse of the values, assumptions, and priorities that were shared by those writing about centers and that, in turn, shape the field’s history of itself. Writing centers have long positioned themselves as situated alongside but separate from classroom-based instruction, curricula, and even the larger institutions within which they exist (Cooper, 1994). In forecasting changes to writing and perceptions of writers that will accompany the uptake of AI-based tools, then, writing centers—and their histories with technologies—offer a distinct and important perspective from which to consider such transformations.

References

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WRITERS WRITE

By Khushi Patel

I didn't start visiting the University Writing Center until my second semester at UCF. I had assumed they were there to assist with the initial part of the drafting process, to help brainstorm and flesh everything out. I've never struggled with knowing where to start, but I can never make myself finish something. The fear of turning in something that feels incomplete often precludes me from starting a draft. There are so many things I want to write about and so many directions I want to take things that I stay stagnant – possibly the only Writing major who struggles with letting themselves write.

Many of the classes within my major encourage you to continue revising and drafting throughout the duration of the course, and the professors are often really understanding with providing flexible deadlines. It's awful. Without the intense, high-stakes pressure of an impending deadline (and the fear of disappointing an educator) limiting me, I'm bound by my own perfectionism; the freedom is paralyzing.

That is the beauty of writing consultations. They provide some form of routine, but your experience is different every time. The nature of your consultation is incredibly flexible and highly dependent on your needs as a writer. Despite my prior misconception, you can schedule a session regardless of what stage your draft is at! I've had sessions where I spent the entire 45 minutes writing, and there have been consultations where I barely drafted a sentence. Sometimes I need someone to help me stick to my goal of only writing to the rubric, making sure I stay on pace. And sometimes I need to talk out my lofty ideas to figure out how to tackle a project. The structured flexibility allows you to be creative while honing that creativity into actual progress.

My recurring weekly consultation has enabled me to maintain both my GPA and my sanity. My tutor is aware of my long-term goals, and we're able to create a system of accountability that keeps me on track. We often discuss strategies to overcome barriers I'm facing, and the feedback has been invaluable. I've spent days scribbling down notes and half-baked ideas to write the "perfect paper" – only to scrap it all when the assignment was due. It's like I would spend so much time and energy on something without having anything to show for it. It may seem like I found the UWC pretty early on in my academic career, but I can honestly say that the resources feel 19 years overdue.

Writing everything down can help you record and visualize your thoughts, but talking through them with someone reveals what is actually worth pursuing. The Writing Center helps turn intention into action. I don't know if it will ever feel like I'm actually 'done' writing, but I'm glad I've finally started.

TUTORS WRITE

Reflecting on My Writing Process for Political Science Courses

By Marina Habib

I am working toward a Bachelor of Science in Political Science, but I also have a minor in Writing and Rhetoric. Having this minor has greatly helped me in my assignments for my political courses. My courses do not usually have us writing much, but when we do need to write, the assignment is long and usually a large part of our grade. This makes these papers incredibly important and stressful, so I've had to find ways to write them without freaking out or messing them up.

Usually, we are aware of these papers from the very beginning of the course. My professors write in the syllabus that, among a set number of exams, there would be one paper due at the end of the semester. The expectations for the paper are usually left in the syllabus, and sometimes, that's the only place you'd find any information on the paper. So, how do I go about this?

Well, one thing I have learned as a tutor is to deconstruct your prompt; either rewrite the prompt in your own words or highlight keywords or make a list of everything it asks. This way, you can understand the assignment to the best of your ability. Also, if you do make a list of everything the prompt asks, you can answer each bit of the paper in little pieces. Since I'm aware of these papers at the beginning of the semester, I like to deconstruct the prompt as close to that time as possible. If this paper has a list of things it asks for, I try to divide the list into small deadlines for myself. Then, I do each part around that deadline, and then, by the end of the semester, I have all the pieces written and just have to connect them together.

Also, as I do each part of the paper, it'll give me insight into what I want to write for the next part, so I make a note of what to research when I get to that part. The way I research is a bit odd. I usually don't conduct research before I write, but rather, I do my research as I write. I actually found this very helpful because as I research, I get ideas on where my paper can go. So, instead of writing notes I won't understand later, I just continue writing. That definitely can get a bit messy, so, of course, I go back through and polish my wording in the essay.

My writing courses and work here at the center have greatly helped me in my political courses. They have taught me how to take a very intimidating essay and break it apart to ensure I don't get overwhelmed and also do a great job on the essay!



INQUIRY SPOTLIGHT

Artificial Intelligence in the Writing Center

by Courtney McCracken

It's no secret that the commercial release of ChatGPT has made huge waves in the learning community. Technology with the ability to generate text on such an intense level has clear ethical and pedagogical implications in the classroom, and it seems that students across all disciplines are starting to use ChatGPT. Because the conversations on AI tools in the classroom are so recent and slim, my inquiry team saw a need to consider the impact these resources will have on writing centers. As generative text and other AI tools continue to grow and see widespread use, writing centers will have to adapt to the ways students will use these resources.

To begin our inquiry project, we began looking to the past for answers. How had learning spaces dealt with tools like paraphrasing services and Grammarly in the past? While studies on the use of these resources had varied results, the general consensus was that proper implementation has a positive impact on students' writing. Grammarly in particular has several benefits while working with English-second-language (ESL) writers, and presents more opportunities for writing center tutors to discuss holistic writing issues. Unfortunately, if students abuse these kinds of automatic writing resources (AWR), it can lead to learning loss and issues in agency. This idea is why our inquiry group thought it would be a good idea to study scholarship on plagiarism in pedagogy. A common thread was that plagiarism often stems from what inquiry project member Madison describes as a "knowledge gap." It was argued that avoiding plagiarism is something that needs to be taught to students. By the same token, effective communication about the uses and limitations of AWR is crucial to preventing learning loss.

This begs the question: How should we communicate appropriate ways to utilize ChatGPT to our writers and tutors? While it's clear that generative text can be a much more valuable and nuanced tool than Grammarly- the principle of overuse representing a "knowledge gap" remains the same. When it comes to general students, lots of our research calls for greater awareness of pedagogy surrounding the use of AWR as a whole. This applies to educating tutors as well, with the added caveat of ways to open dialogue about technology with our writers. For instance, when inquiry project member Priscilla realizes an ESL writer may be overusing Grammarly, she takes it as an opportunity to discuss the limitations of the program. With the rapid growth of generative text, it becomes more and more obvious that tutors need to be more equipped to have conversations like this. Teachers and tutors would benefit greatly from identifying "knowledge gaps" that spur the abuse of AWR. From this point, we can open dialogue about ways students can avoid being completely dependent on ChatGPT while acknowledging methods that make it a valuable writing resource. As AWRs continue to grow, we encourage writing centers to have a conversation about what they offer and value. As a whole, further dialogue and research will be absolutely necessary to prevent learning loss as we navigate this new learning environment.



STEPS 2 SUCCESS

EMERGING MEDIA

One of the most important areas of writing within the Emerging Media program starts with your application; with the animation program applications, written requirements count for 30% of the evaluation, whereas academics only count for 20%. That being said, having a cover letter that targets the program's desires while setting you apart from the rest of the applicants is more than ideal.

One of the best tips I can provide includes avoiding the words "I'd like to join your program." This phrase is repetitive and too common within applications. Instead, talk about why and how admission would be beneficial to both you AND them. This shows confidence and provides a more persuasive argument to the evaluators. Also, I strongly recommend including an entertaining introduction, like a story or interesting fact. A strong start can set you apart from other applicants and gets the evaluators interested in what you have to say.

-BRIANNA SALAZAR

WRITING AND RHETORIC

Within this major, you'll find yourself engaging with many different types of writing, as well as learning the nuances of a variety of genres. Though this might seem daunting, it's important to understand because it means that you shouldn't box yourself in.

It took me a while to come to this conclusion, and so my advice for those entering the field would be just this: the essence of rhetoric itself to make meaning, so if you have to bend the conventional rules of your task to do so, do it! You're likely not going to know where you're headed with each assignment. In fact, you're likely going to find yourself heading in a different direction than planned pretty often. Rather than straying from this mode of thinking, lean into it and embrace discovering the different ways you can create meaning with what you've tasked.

-AREEJ ALNAIZY



ENTERTAINMENT MANAGEMENT

This major is based on the concept of management, planning, overseeing productions, and other strategic tasks. Due to this, several professors will ask that you work with several strategic and research-oriented writing genres like Case Studies, Research Papers, and even Business and Marketing Plans. Three important aspects that must stay with you throughout your college experience are time management, brainstorming, and outlining.

These genres will reflect real-life situations you may come across in the future. It is very important to give yourself time to think through your objectives, write down all the possible routes you want to take with your projects, and, most importantly, allow yourself space for your creative ideas to flow.

Leaving these assignments for the last minute will give you a limited time crunch for you to explore your ideas and may result in your projects reflecting the wrong goals you wanted to push forward.

-ADRIANA MERCADO

COMMON PROJECTS

Presentations

By Isabelle Galan

Academic presentations may come in many forms for students, including classroom and conference presentations. Both cases are united under the same purpose: relaying information about a topic to an audience. They are not meant to be dense with your subject information as it would be with an essay, but feature brief snippets of text and images to keep the audience engaged as the student speaks. The format, length, and detail of a presentation will depend on the setting.

When creating an academic presentation, it is important to arrange information in a way that flows naturally and guides your verbal discussion. The general format of a presentation is to include an introduction to your topic and purpose, any background information, discussion of your results or main point, analysis of what you wish for the audience to take away from your results, and a summary of your content. A research presentation may also include a research question and methodology. In both cases, what is most important is to provide enough information to introduce your main point, discuss it with the most detail, then quickly conclude.

There are some things to be mindful of when creating a PowerPoint. It is always beneficial to plan your slides before you begin writing them, including what content you hope to cover and for how long. Knowing how the presentation should go may assist in creating more effective and concise slides. In the classroom, a time limit may be placed on your presentation. In research, this may be more flexible; this makes it the responsibility of the student to limit the length of their presentation. An audience doesn't wish to sit through long, similar slides. To keep them engaged with your topic, be sure to attempt to keep your presentation brief. The usage of visuals is also beneficial. Above all, ensure you create your PowerPoint with your audience in mind. Is your audience in the same field as you? Would they be familiar with your terminology? Will more background information or elaboration on your results be necessary to fit the requirements of your assignment? It may help to keep these types of questions in mind.

A presentation may seem daunting, but is often straightforward. So long as it visualizes your topic for your audience without becoming overly text-heavy, provides necessary context and attention to your findings, and is created with the audience in mind, anyone can create a stellar presentation with ease!



HOROSCOPE PROMPTS

In need of some writing inspiration?

BY SADIE HUGHEY

Aries

Your tongue is sharp Martians. Instead of blurting out what you really want to say... let's write it out first on a notecard. You won't burn any bridges this way. Watch! You'll be rewarded for your carefully articulated words!

Taurus

Uh-oh Taurus! Has there been a sudden change in what you want? Do you want different things now? Let's write a short story about the shifts in your life right now. Analysis can come later.

Gemini

This will be a major moment for you, Gemini. A core part of yourself will be developed during this time period. Write about who you want to be. I hope you'll be able to become them.

Cancer

You're a force to be reckoned with right now Lunarians! You're the zodiac's current main character and I love that for you. Write a poem about a past life of yours where you're the best chariot rider in ancient Greece.

Leo

Hello little lions! There's a lot of emotion and feeling up in the air right now, especially surrounding the maternal figures in your life. Write a biography of one of your favorite female loved ones. Or two. Or three. I won't stop you!

Virgo

Oh, Virgo. What's up with your personal boundaries recently? I'm worried about someone crossing your sturdy lines. Get in a comfy spot with your tummy-soothing tea and write about something that brings you comfort.

Libra

Don't panic Venusians! You can adapt to this situation if you really want to! I want you to write a poem about a little seed growing into an alien tree. Make it as fun as possible and then imagine yourself as that alien seed. Feel better?

Scorpio

The sun is coming over the horizon Scorpios. What has it illuminated? Write a letter about it. Once you've written it and sealed it away, open it one month later. You'll see how much you've grown this way.

Sagittarius

Jovial besties! It's all peace and light right now for you. Write a haiku about the stillness in your life currently. Please, don't make a mess!

Capricorn

Wow Capricorns! It's nice when everything goes your way, yeah? Let's write a report of what has happened so you can keep this up. This is a place to acknowledge your hard work too.

Aquarius

Hi Aquarians! There's so much potential for you right now. Write about the future you want to experience. How much change needs to happen for it to become your reality?

Pisces

Pisceans! It's time to clear all the negative energy from your personal space and personal life! Make a list of what needs to go, what can stay, and what you need. Don't be afraid to flap your fins a little, twin fishes.

Growing Pains Are Blue.

Blue was the color of the water my little feet
splashed through.

My favorite crayon color.

Blue jeans, blue eyes, but never blue lipstick.

Blue text bubbles, blue feelings, blue dress.

The color of that cord at graduation.

Drive away in my blue car.

Blue tote bag, same shoes.

Even when the sky looked gray, it was still
blue.

I suppose I was too.

Alyssa Babcock

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



Writer Bio:

Alyssa Babcock is a senior Advertising and Public Relations major with a minor in Writing and Rhetoric. Alyssa has had an interest in marketing and advertising since she took a marketing class in middle school. She wants to be able to use her creative and writing skills in her future career. She currently works as a social media manager at Brick Media Group, where she curates content for business clients. Alyssa is from Trinity, Florida, which is approximately 30 minutes north of Tampa. Growing up in the suburbs and close to the water has shaped her lifestyle and preferences. A perfect day in her life would include getting coffee, reading on the beach, and enjoying a sunset dinner. She enjoys spending time with friends, listening to music, playing volleyball, and thrifting. As she completes her last semester at UCF, Alyssa is beginning to plan for what the future will hold. She hopes to travel to and live in different cities where she can have many different experiences. In fact, she hopes to see snow for the first time soon. Alyssa is currently working hard in school to set herself up for success after graduation.

Upcoming Contest:

What we're looking for:

- Original Flash Fiction in 750 words or less.
- The poignant and meaningful use of our next element: **RED**
- 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 Opportunities

Flash Fiction Column

Our Flash Fiction contest is a running column of *Just Write!* The contest is held each semester. Our next element is **RED**. Open submissions will run through October 13, 2023. To submit visit this link or scan the QR code: <https://tinyurl.com/F23TCFFC>



Writers Write

Each semester we select one writer that visits the writing center regularly. The column is a dialogue about the writing process. If you would like to write for our Writers Write column, contact us at uwc@ucf.edu with a small sample of your writing.



JUST WRITE!

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY!



Visit [UWC.CAH.UCF.EDU](https://uwc.cah.ucf.edu)

SCHEDULE AN
APPOINTMENT WITH ONE
OF OUR AWESOME PEER
TUTORS!

Check out the UWC
Instagram: [@ucfuwc](https://www.instagram.com/ucfuwc)



RESOURCES FOR WRITERS

Publication Opportunities:

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

- <https://convergence-rhetoric.net/>

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

- 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.

- 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.

- 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 [@ucfuwc](https://www.instagram.com/ucfuwc) on Instagram for more updates about upcoming events, or visit our website for more details

<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.