

**FACULTY & PROFESSIONAL
WRITING ASSISTANT
HANDBOOK**

2010-2011

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
New Writing Assistant Training	4-6
Writing Center Philosophy	7
Privacy Statement	8
Responsibilities of the Writing Assistant	9
Why Work for the Writing Center?	10
A Typical Day	11
Guidelines for the New Writing Assistant	12
The Essay	13
Face-to-Face Sessions	14
Online Tutoring	15
TutorTrac	16
Writing Assistant Report Form	17
Writing Assistant Report Form Example	18
Observations	19
Sample Initial Observation Sheet	20-21
Sample Advanced Observation Sheet	22-23
Professional Development	24
EN101	25
EN102	26
Resources for Writers	27
Additional Information	28

Introduction

Dear New Writing Assistant,

Congratulations! If you are reading this handbook you are on your way to being a Writing Center Writing Assistant (WA)! Monmouth University's Writing Center prides itself on hiring the best and brightest to partake in this truly unique employment opportunity. For faculty members, being a WA allows you to step away from the classroom for a moment and interact with writers on a more personal level. For professional WAs, working at the Writing Center allows you to take a break from the workplace and give something back to the leaders of tomorrow.

In this handbook, which has been compiled by Writing Center WAs and staff, you will find the answers to many of the questions that you will undoubtedly have during your first semester as a WA. You will also find information about your responsibilities as a WA and about the resources that will help you and your writers master specific skills.

Please make sure that you are familiar with the entire handbook prior to your initial sessions. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact Jeanne Szumera or me. Thank you for your interest in the Writing Center. We look forward to working with you.

Jane DeTullio
Writing Center Director

New Writing Assistant Training

Although each WA is encouraged to develop his or her own style of assistance, there are a few elements that must be common in every WA's approach to make the Writing Center experience equally helpful and enjoyable for all writers. New training of WAs provides both the knowledge and experience for successful sessions.

The following describes the training and evaluation goals which must be accomplished by all new WAs in the Writing Center. Check the boxes below as you finish each requirement on the checklist. When all items on the checklist have been completed, please return this form to the Writing Center Director.

1. New Writing Assistant Handbook/Evaluating Your Own Writing

As a new WA in the Writing Center, it is important that you have an extensive understanding of the Writing Assistant Handbook. Please read through the entire Handbook online. When you have finished, it is necessary that you begin your training by reviewing the Handbook with the Director/experienced WA. During this meeting, the Director/experienced WA will also be evaluating your own writing samples and discussing areas that need improvement. After these tasks have been completed, please check the corresponding boxes.

(1 hour)

- Handbook Review Complete
- Writing Evaluation Complete

2. Roundtables and Workshops

During the course of the semester, you will be required to attend at least three Writing Center roundtables and/or faculty workshops. The Writing Center Director will conduct and determine the topic of each roundtable. A list of the scheduled roundtables, as well as copies of the articles, will be available to you at the beginning of the semester. The workshops, which also occur during the semester in the Writing Center, are led by faculty members and focus on writing strategies which may be helpful to you during tutoring sessions. Roundtables and workshops are one hour each. After completing each roundtable or workshop, please fill in the following information: (3 hours)

- Roundtable/Workshop #1 Topic _____ Date _____
- Roundtable/Workshop #2 Topic _____ Date _____
- Roundtable/Workshop #3 Topic _____ Date _____

3. TutorTrac Training

TutorTrac is an online appointment setting software program used by the Writing Center. While some writers still call to make an appointment, we strongly encourage that they make their future appointments online. As a new WA, you should be familiar with this process. Not only will you assist writers in making future appointments, but you will also be required to log writers in and out of the system before and after your sessions. Have your mentor WA show you the following procedures, and check the box after each task has been completed. (1/2 hour)

- Logging Writers In and Out
- Making Future Appointments
- Logging into Your Own Schedule

4. Observations of Experienced Writing Assistants

As a new WA, you are required to observe experienced WAs for a *minimum* of two sessions before you may begin working with writers. This way you can become familiar with the Writing Center practices and more comfortable in assisting your first writers. After each observation, discuss with the experienced WA what you learned from the session and ask any questions that you may have. Upon completion of each observation, you are required to fill out an observation sheet which must be signed by the experienced WA and then returned to the Writing Center Director. Please fill in the following information and check the corresponding boxes when these tasks have been completed. (2 1/2 hours)

- 1st Observation Completed
Date _____
Experienced Writing Assistant's Name _____
Observation Sheet Completed
- 2nd Observation Completed
Date _____
Experienced Writing Assistant's Name _____

5. Documentation Style Evaluation

After you complete your initial observations of experienced WAs, you will be evaluated on your knowledge of the documentation style(s) in which you will be available to tutor. You will be asked to complete a quiz on each of the documentation styles with which you are familiar (i.e. MLA, APA). After completing the quiz, or quizzes, you will sit down with an experienced WA who will review your answers with you and notify you of any areas within your knowledge of the documentation style that need improvement. The goal of this evaluation process is to prepare you with the documentation skills you will need for your own tutoring sessions. Once this evaluation is complete, you may move on to advanced observations, in which you will lead the tutoring session along with the experienced WA.

- Documentation Style Quiz Complete
MLA _____ Date _____
APA _____ Date _____

6. Observations by Experienced Writing Assistants

After completing the required observations of the experienced WAs, you are ready to start leading the tutoring sessions. An experienced WA will sit with you for a *minimum* of two sessions to assist you with the session and provide support, similar to a team tutoring approach. After each session, the experienced WA will spend time discussing the session with you. The goal of these sessions is to make you feel more comfortable when it comes time to take your own students. Remember, you will team tutor for a *minimum* of two sessions; you may continue tutoring with an experienced WA for additional sessions if needed. (2 hours)

- 1st Observation Completed
Date _____
Observed by _____
- 2nd Observation Completed
Date _____
Observed by _____

7. Self-Evaluation

After completing all of your training requirements, you should take the time to reflect on how you have grown as a WA. Think about all of the sessions you have conducted during the semester as well as those which you have observed. What did you learn? In what areas have you improved? In what areas do you still wish to learn more? As a WA, what are your specific strengths and weaknesses? Think of this as a journal entry. When you are finished writing your self-evaluation, please turn it in along with this completed checklist to the Writing Center Director. Your completed training checklist and self-evaluation will be reviewed before you are eligible for rehire at the Writing Center for the following semester. (1 hour)

- Self-Evaluation Complete

Note: While it is not required for the training module, you also have the option of conducting a self-evaluation based on your own audio-recorded tutoring session. You may take advantage of this option at any time, but we strongly recommend you to do so during your first year of tutoring as an effort to further identify your strengths and weaknesses. This may even help you when it is time to write your reflection. For additional information on this option, see the Writing Center Director.

Congratulations! You have successfully completed the Writing Center's new Writing Assistant training program!

- ♦ Upon completion of the Writing Assistant training program, all WAs will receive certification from the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA).

Writing Center Philosophy

While a Writing Center WA may read and write effectively, the key to effective guidance is knowing how to assist others in developing those skills. Although each WA is encouraged to develop his or her own style of assistance, there are a few elements that must be common in every WA's approach to make the Writing Center experience equally helpful and enjoyable for all writers.

- **The privacy of our writers is of the utmost importance to us.**

Writing Center WAs must follow the procedures outlined elsewhere in this handbook as well as those included in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when handling writers' documents. WAs must also refrain from discussing students' grades and other information with other WAs and writers (see "Privacy Statement" for more information on student privacy policies).

- **Writing Assistants are professional and encouraging during sessions.**

Some writers may be self-conscious about their writing abilities. Therefore, WAs should be sensitive to this possibility and proceed in their sessions with a high degree of professionalism and encouragement. Our goal is to make all writers feel *comfortable* and *respected* in the Writing Center.

- **Writing Assistants support faculty members in an effort to do what is best for the writer.**

In essence, WAs are extensions of faculty members and do not contradict or undermine their teachings. Instead, we are here to clarify assignments and help writers sharpen their overall writing and mechanical skills. Faculty members and WAs communicate through writer progress forms like the Writing Assistant Report Form as well as by email, telephone, and personal meetings. We believe that this communication is key to the academic improvement of the writers.

- **Writing Assistants listen first, question second, and then react.**

The writers who come to us have taken the first step and, in doing so, have shown that they want our help. As such, WAs should first allow writers to explain their situations or the difficulties that they believe they are having with their writing. By listening first, WAs are able to react and provide writers with the help that fits their situations best. If writers are vague or do not know where to begin, the WAs should raise questions that elicit thoughtful responses. The result is more individualized tutoring sessions where writers' particular needs are addressed.

- **Writing Assistants always open with a positive assessment of a writer's work.**

To reduce writers' discomforts about having their papers reviewed, WAs should always begin assessments of writers' work by first accentuating what they have done well. By discussing the positive aspects of writers' papers first, WAs then create a more open atmosphere in which to discuss areas of needed improvement. WAs should focus their positive feedback on specific areas of the paper rather than providing a general positive comment which could be misinterpreted by the student.

Privacy Statement

The privacy of the writers who utilize the Writing Center is of the utmost importance. WAs not only provide help and guidance but they also must ensure that confidential student information is not shared with anyone outside of the Writing Center. Professional ethics, University policy, and federal law require that WAs respect and preserve the confidentiality of students' personal and academic information. These courtesies should extend to faculty and staff who utilize the Writing Center as well. To that end, WAs must follow specific procedures when handling the following types of student information.

Student Grades and Personal Information

Often, a student will come to a session with a graded paper that includes a faculty member's comments. According to University policy and federal law (FERPA), the grade and related comments belong to the student and are released to the WA under the conditions that they are not shared with other parties in identifiable ways and that they are held confidential. Regardless of the grade or the comments, **WAs may not disclose grades or faculty-written comments to other students or fellow WAs.** When there is a question as to how to assist the student most effectively or how to assist other students in a particular skill, a WA may discuss the content of a session with another WA in a discreet, professional manner in private. If at any time a WA has a question about what grade information may be disclosed to what parties and under what conditions, the WA should contact the Writing Center Director immediately.

Similarly, during a session, a student may disclose personal information of a sensitive nature. Such information is given in trust and should not be shared with others. If the WA is concerned about the nature of either the personal information or the manner in which it was disclosed, the WA should contact the Writing Center Director immediately.

For more information on students' rights to privacy, consult the FERPA statement in the Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs.

Responsibilities of the Writing Assistant

Writing Assistant Responsibilities:

- Assist writers with gathering ideas, locating sources, organizing and developing drafts, achieving clear expression of ideas, and editing in an affable and professional manner.
- Check your schedule on TutorTrac regularly as writers are constantly making appointments.
- Use the 30-minute sessions as effectively as possible. Determine the writers' needs and decide what can feasibly be accomplished during the session, focusing on higher order problems/issues first.
- Provide detailed feedback to each professor concerning his/her student's progress via the Writing Assistant Report Form.
- Wait at least ten minutes for a writer to attend his or her scheduled session before noting that writer's absence.
- In the absence of a writer, check with the Director or Secretary for additional work in the Writing Center.

Personal Responsibilities:

- Work collaboratively with staff and WAs.
- Participate in training sessions, roundtables, and professional workshops.
- Give adequate notice when an absence is expected, even if no writer is scheduled for an appointment.
- Call, if sick.

Why Work for the Writing Center?

There are many advantages to being a Writing Assistant at Monmouth University's Writing Center. Working for the Writing Center provides:

- professional development opportunities, including roundtables that focus on tutoring pedagogy and practice as well as workshops that strive to increase knowledge and effectiveness in the field of composition;
- an opportunity to view a variety of faculty assignments that can, in turn, inspire innovation and creativity in your own assignments;
- exposure to faculty from other disciplines and professionals from the workplace;
- an opportunity to view writing assignments and writing challenges from individual student's perspectives;
- personal fulfillment from helping others; and
- access to a computer lab and various writing resources during Center hours.

A Typical Day

Although we can sometimes accommodate walk-ins, all writers are encouraged to schedule appointments ahead of time. When they do so, their names are recorded in our online scheduling software, TutorTrac. The WA will know who he/she is working with by either checking the day's printed schedule in Jeanne's office or by logging into TutorTrac with a username and password.

Upon arrival at the Writing Center, writers are asked to sit in the lobby to await their WAs. **It is the WA's responsibility to check if his or her writer has arrived and to bring the writer back to the tutoring room to start the session.** Additionally, a WA must wait ten minutes before concluding that a writer is not going to be present for a session; **if a writer is deemed a "no show" after the appropriate amount of time, the WA must inform the Secretary or the Director that he or she is available to assist another writer or to perform other work for the Writing Center.**

When the writer arrives, the WA should fill out a Writing Conference Record located near the kiosks. This record will provide the information needed by the WA when filling out the WARF at the end of the session. Next, the WA should log the writer into TutorTrac. When beginning the session, the WA should ask the writer what he or she has to work on for that day. Often, the writer will be in some stage of the writing process, which is the basis for a productive session. A number of useful and meaningful exercises and research and documentation skill sheets are located in the Writing Assistant Resource cabinet for distribution as well as on the Writing Center's Web site. It is up to the WA to decide on which skills his or her writer needs to work. Early in the session, the WA should determine a strategy in order to get the most out of the session.

When the session is finished, the WA will take the Writing Conference Record and log into the WARF site on one of the Writing Center computers (instructions on how to fill out the electronic WARF are on page 17). After submitting the WARF, the WA must log the writer out of TutorTrac and return the Writing Conference Record to the designated box by Jeanne's desk. Note: **It is imperative that WAs log their writers in and out of TutorTrac in a timely manner.**

To Recap:

- Check TutorTrac for your schedule of writers.
- Check to see if the writer is waiting in the lobby.
- Fill out a Writing Conference Record through consultation with the writer.
- Log the writer into TutorTrac.
- Bring the writer back to the tutoring room.
- Begin the session.
- Upon completion, check to see if the writer would like to schedule another appointment.
- Fill out the electronic WARF.
- Log the writer out of TutorTrac.
- Return the Writing Conference Record to the designated box.

Guidelines for the New Writing Assistant

The following are some useful guidelines that you should follow in order to ensure successful sessions with your writers.

DO...

- Be welcoming toward all writers;
- Be professional and respectful at all times;
- Ask the writer for the nature of his or her assignment;
- Position the paper so that both the writer and you can view the paper together;
- Allow the writer to always maintain ownership of his or her paper;
- Allow yourself to become the listener—ask open-ended questions during the session;
- Praise the writer for his or her strong points prior to noting the areas that need further work;
- Allow the writer to ask questions and voice concerns prior to ending the session;
- Encourage writers to return to the Writing Center.

DON'T...

- Be late for an appointment;
- Forget to log the writer in and out of TutorTrac;
- Simply proofread—this does not improve the writing process;
- Make corrections on the writer's paper.

The Essay

Unless given specific directions by a faculty member, the WA should follow these steps when reviewing a writer's essay. The WA should begin by quickly reading through a writer's essay to get an overall idea of any improvements the essay needs. The WA should then consider what can be accomplished during the session. When reviewing an essay with a writer, the WA should take a holistic approach, focusing first on higher order skills in the writing. Problems with the organization, development, and coherence of an essay should be addressed before any revision can be made on the sentence level or below. Although the WA's goal is to improve student writing in all areas, improving the lower order skills in an essay that lacks focus and logical development will be ineffective. WAs should consider this order when reviewing an essay with a writer:

- I. **The Essay Level-** Does the writer's essay have a purpose or direction? Does it sufficiently answer the questions posed by his/her professor? Is the essay organized, developed, and coherent? Is the writer's argument logical? Does the essay exhibit the writer's own writing style or "voice"?
- II. **The Paragraph Level-** Does each paragraph support the thesis or main purpose of the essay? Does each paragraph connect to those that precede and/or follow it? Is each paragraph well developed through the use of examples, details, and descriptions? Are all quotations or paraphrases well integrated and documented correctly?
- III. **The Sentence Level-** Are all sentences structurally clear and complete? Does the essay use appropriate word choice, diction, grammar, and punctuation?

Remember, the writer must retain his/her own writing style and voice in an essay. The WA must resist the urge to make the paper sound like his or her own. The WA's primary role is that of a facilitator—to supplement what a writer is being taught in his/her courses. **Under no circumstances should a WA undermine or criticize a faculty member's assignments and/or teaching methods.** Remember, we're here to help.

Face-to-Face Sessions

The function of the Writing Assistant during face-to-face sessions is to provide one-on-one assistance to students at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming ideas and writing drafts to polishing the final revision and reviewing documentation styles. After discussing the assignment with the student, the Writing Assistant's first step is to identify areas needing improvement within the student's writing. Unless otherwise noted by the student or referring professor, Writing Assistants are to focus on higher-order concerns of writing first, such as focus, development, and organization, before moving on to lower-order concerns, such as grammar and punctuation.

Face-to-face sessions allow the Writing Assistant to vary between minimalist and more directive approaches based on the student's needs; therefore, it is important that the Writing Assistant and the student engage in dialogue throughout the session to determine these needs. Writing Assistants are trained to make suggestions about student writing through non-directive techniques to foster independent learning.

For effective writing assistance to take place, allow the writer to become involved in the session by taking a minimalist approach and becoming the listener. By the Writing Assistant asking open-ended questions, the student becomes an active participant and maintains ownership of his or her own writing. The following are some examples of open-ended questions that may be asked during a session:

To make decisions:

- Do you think that would be helpful?
- Would you like to include that?
- Is that important to make your point?
- Where do you think that belongs?

To direct the writer:

- How could you develop that?
- How can you explain that more?
- How can you show your reader more?
- Can you clarify your idea here?
- What did you intend to convey?

To evaluate and analyze:

- Can you identify the sentence that contains your thesis/focus?
- Can you show me other places in the text where your focus is supported?
- Explain what you mean by.....

Online Tutoring

Once you make the transition from novice to experienced Writing Assistant, you may have the opportunity to assist students online. Writing Assistants who have worked in the Writing Center for at least one semester and have displayed exceptional tutoring skills may be asked to tutor online. Online tutoring is much different from face-to-face tutoring; without the student in front of you during the session, the opportunity to discuss elements of the paper is not possible.

At the beginning of each semester, online tutoring workshops will be available to those experienced Writing Assistants chosen to participate in the Online Writing Center. These workshops will train the Online Writing Assistants in all of the technical aspects of the online tutoring process, including working in eCampus and with Microsoft Word reviewing tools, as well as provide techniques for responding to student writing asynchronously.

The Online Tutoring Handbook contains specific information and instructions for how to conduct online sessions.

TutorTrac is an online appointment scheduling software. While writers may still call to make an appointment, we strongly encourage them to make their future appointments online after their first visit. WAs should bring their writers to the computer lab at the conclusion of the first session to guide them through the following steps. WAs are strongly encouraged to be familiar with this process to best guide their writers.

To access TutorTrac/schedule an appointment at the Writing Center:

- Go to tutortrac.monmouth.edu, select TutorTrac from the Jump To menu on the homepage, or click on the TutorTrac link from the Writing Center Home Page.
- Log on to the TutorTrac page by entering the student’s user name (student ID#).
- Have the student enter his/her password (the same as his/her HawkMail password).
- Click “Login,” and the Student Main Menu/Welcome screen will appear.
- To schedule an appointment, click “Go To” ... at the top of the page.
- Then, click on “Make an Appointment.”
- When the availability search screen appears, highlight Writing Center, and enter the desired date range for which the student would like an appointment.
- Before searching, make sure to highlight the areas that the student needs help in from the menu at the right; this will allow him/her to choose eligible WAs.
- Click “Search”—when the page refreshes, the Search Results appear at the bottom of the screen. Scroll down to view the available appointments—dates will be on the left and availabilities for each date will be on the right.
- Click on an underlined time slot from the availability column.
- Check to see that the information on the screen is correct.
- To schedule an hour-long session, repeat the process for the next time slot.
- The Main Menu/Welcome page will appear and will show the appointment the student has scheduled. The student may now click “Exit” to leave TutorTrac.

To cancel an appointment:

- Follow the steps above to reach the Student Main Menu/Welcome screen.
- Click on the underlined date of the appointment the student wants to cancel, and then click the delete box.
- Click “Exit” to leave TutorTrac.

Writing Assistant Report Form


The Writing Assistant Report Form (WARF) is an online document that helps WAs record both the type and quality of work that was performed by a writer during a given session. The WARF is a tool for evaluating the progress of a writer throughout the semester. Additionally, the WARF helps connect the Writing Center staff with the faculty of the academic departments on campus.

Instructions for Using the Online WARF

- Before logging your student into TutorTrac, fill out a Writing Conference Record, located near the kiosks, to obtain the information that you will need when filling out the WARF after the session. Make sure you have the Writing Conference Record at the end of the session.
- When you are done with your session, log on to one of the Writing Center computers and go to the following Web site: www.monmouth.edu/writing_center/reports.
- A prompt will appear, asking you to enter your user name and password. After doing so, you will be taken to the Writing Center Reports site.
- When you access the site, you will be prompted to enter your user name (this determines who is allowed to complete a WARF). Enter your user name and proceed to the next page.
- Click “Complete a New Report” under “Available Services” and fill in all of the appropriate sections. When you are finished, hit “Submit Form.” Your WARF will be sent to Jeanne for review. Note: You will be prompted if you do not fill out all of the required information.
- Click “Log Out” under “Current Session” when you are finished.

Log your student out of TutorTrac and place the Writing Conference Record in the designated box on the filing cabinet in Jeanne’s office.

Writing Assistant Report Form Example



WHERE LEADERS LOOK *forward*

sitemap

Prospective Students | **Current Students** | **Alumni** | **Academics** | **Admission** | **Campus Life** | **Athletics** | **Give a Gift** | **About MU** | **Resources**

You are here: [Home Page](#) > [Writing Center](#) > [Reports](#) > [Writing Assistant Report Form](#)

Monmouth U News and Events:

- **MEN'S SOCCER PICKED #15 IN NSCAA PRESEASON NATIONAL RANKINGS**
The Hawks, Who Ended Last Season Ranked #13 in the Poll, Return All But One Starter From Last Year's...
- **IN THE NEWS: CHRISTIE MAKES BOLD AND RISKY MOVES ON 2 FRONTS**
Monmouth University Polling Institute Director Patrick Murray Was Featured in The New York Times on ...
- **DR. EDWARD CHRISTENSEN APPOINTED VICE PRESIDENT OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**
Dr. Christensen and His Team Will Lead Strategic Planning Efforts for Information and Technology.

[More Headlines ...](#)

➤ **Arts Events at Monmouth**

Monmouth U Calendar:
 August 2010

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

[All Sports Camp](#)
[West Long Branch Tennis Clinic](#)
[Sports Medicine Meeting](#)
[MU Summer Basketball League](#)

Monmouth U Links:

Campus Safety Emergencies, contact MU Police: 732-571-3472

The University Store

[Directions/Map](#)

Writing Center

CURRENT SESSION
[Log Out](#)

AVAILABLE SERVICES
[Complete a New Report](#)
[Review Submitted Reports](#)

Writing Assistant Report Form

Writing Assistant: _____ **Date:** _____

STUDENT INFORMATION

Student ID:

First Name:

Last Name:

COURSE INFORMATION

Professor:

Course/Section:

REPORT INFORMATION

Send Report to Professor: Yes No

Writing Assistants: Please check the category (1 - 9) or one or more skills within each category (10 - 40) for areas addressed at this tutoring session. Use the comments area below for additional remarks.

1. ■ THESIS / CENTRAL IDEA	2. ■ DEVELOPMENT OF ASSIGNMENT	3. ■ PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> 1.10: no thesis/central idea	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.10: assignment too short/underdeveloped	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.10: no focus or more than one focus in paragraphs
<input type="checkbox"/> 1.20: unclear or multiple thesis/central idea	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.20: weak organization	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.20: ideas within paragraph do not relate to each other, choppy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1.30: indirectly responding to question or assignment	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.30: information irrelevant to argument	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.30: paragraphs too short or too long
<input type="checkbox"/> 2.40: lack of transitions		
4. ■ SOURCES	5. ■ SENTENCES	6. ■ WORD CHOICE / DICTION
<input type="checkbox"/> 4.10: sources not connected to student's ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> 5.10: sentences too short/too many simple sentences	<input type="checkbox"/> 6.10: wrong words for ideas
<input type="checkbox"/> 4.20: misquotations or incomplete paraphrases	<input type="checkbox"/> 5.20: incorrect construction of sentences	<input type="checkbox"/> 6.20: words used incorrectly/homonyms
<input type="checkbox"/> 4.30: incorrect documentation style <input type="radio"/> MLA <input type="radio"/> APA <input type="radio"/> AMA <input type="radio"/> Chicago	<input type="checkbox"/> 5.30: clarity of language	<input type="checkbox"/> 6.30: style too informal or too formal
7. ■ MECHANICS	8. ■ PROCESS	9. ■ OTHER
<input type="checkbox"/> 7.10: grammar problems	<input type="checkbox"/> 8.10: understanding assignment	<input type="checkbox"/> 9.10: ESL
<input type="checkbox"/> 7.20: punctuation problems	<input type="checkbox"/> 8.20: prewriting and planning	<input type="checkbox"/> 9.20: vocabulary development needed
<input type="checkbox"/> 7.30: misspellings	<input type="checkbox"/> 8.30: conducting research in library/on Web	<input type="checkbox"/> 9.30: understanding literature
		<input type="checkbox"/> 9.40: resume/cover letter/personal statement

Online Session: Yes No

COMMENTS

SEARCH | NEWS & EVENTS | CONTACT US | SITEMAP | CAMPUS DIRECTORY | MAP/DIRECTIONS | COMPLETE SITE FEEDBACK FORM

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Observations

Writing Center WAs include undergraduate and graduate students, professionals from the workplace, and faculty members, all from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. There are WAs who have been working at the Writing Center for years, as there are WAs who have recently joined the Writing Center family. In order to ensure that the less experienced WAs are as comfortable, confident, and skilled as possible throughout their first semester, they are paired with more experienced WAs who serve as role models, guides, and mentors. Novice WAs are then required to complete two sets of observations: Observations of Mentor Writing Assistants (Initial Observations) and Observations of Peer Writing Assistants (Advanced Observations).

Observations of Mentor Writing Assistants (Initial Observations)

Novice WAs observe their mentor WAs for a *minimum* of two sessions. The two observations should be arranged as quickly as possible so that novice writing consultants can become familiar with Writing Center practices and more comfortable in assisting their first writers. **Remember that completing two observations is simply the minimum** and that novice WAs are encouraged to complete as many as necessary to build confidence and comfort. Upon completion of each observation, novice WAs are to fill out a “Mentor Observation Sheet” with their names and any comments/opinions about the sessions. The sheets must be signed by the mentor WAs and turned in to the Writing Center Director.

Observations by Experienced Writing Assistants (Advanced Observations)

After observing for at least two sessions, novice WAs will tutor along with an experienced WA for a *minimum* of two additional sessions. The novice WA will lead the tutoring session, and the experienced WA will remain in the session for additional support, similar to a team tutoring approach. During these sessions, the novice WA will be observed by the experienced WA. Upon completion of each observation, experienced WAs are to fill out an “Advanced Observation Sheet” with their names and any comments/opinions about the sessions. The novice WA may request additional tutoring time before being opened to take his or her own students should the minimum of two sessions not be enough.

Please see the following pages for a sample Initial Observation Sheet and Advanced Observation Sheet.

4. Who did most of the talking? How was this effective or ineffective?

5. How would you characterize the role of the Writing Assistant: editor, coach, authority figure, peer?

6. Did the Writing Assistant provide closure, helping the writer to identify the next steps?

Advanced Observation

Observation of Experienced Writing Assistant (Advanced Observations)

The experienced Writing Assistant performing the observation will need to fill out this form in order for the observed WA to get credit for the observation. Please consider your responses carefully, as they provide a learning opportunity for the new WA. If time permits, go over your responses with the WA at the end of the session. The observation sheet should then be given to the Director or the Secretary. Both Writing Assistants will have copies of the observation sheet in their files.

Name of Experienced WA: _____

Name of Observed WA: _____

Date of Session: _____

1. What concern does the WA have regarding his or her tutoring skills?

2. Was the WA's concern warranted? In what manner did this problem manifest? Did you make any recommendations? (Use the back of this sheet if necessary.)

3. What did the Writing Assistant say or do that was particularly effective?

4. What would you have done differently?

Professional Development

Workshops

Workshops provide the opportunity for Writing Center WAs to enhance their tutoring and writing skills. All workshops are led by faculty members and are on topics concerning critical reading strategies, the writing process, and the challenges of non-native speakers of English. The goal of any workshop is to enhance the writing skills of the participants and create better, more confident WAs. Past workshop topics include Tutoring the ESL Student, Moving Beyond the Five Paragraph Essay, Sentence Structure: Typical Problems and Possible Solutions, The Strategic Connection Between Reading and Writing, and Decoding Questions: Key Words and Critical Readings. Novice WAs are required to attend at least three workshops or roundtables in their first semester at the Writing Center; all WAs are strongly encouraged to attend as many workshops and roundtable discussions as possible to enhance their tutoring skills. Please refer to http://www.monmouth.edu/writing_center/events.asp for specific workshop dates and titles.

Roundtable Discussions

During roundtables, WAs engage in open discussion on selected topics, such as the writing process, tutoring methods, and ways to meet and surpass the objectives of the Writing Center. Past roundtables have included Minimalist to Directive: Tutoring Strategies in Controversy, The Challenge of Tutoring: Specific Scenarios and Possible Responses, and Working with ESL Writers: Eradicating the Myths. Novice WAs are required to attend at least three workshops or roundtables in their first semester at the Writing Center; all WAs are strongly encouraged to attend as many workshops and roundtable discussions as possible to enhance their tutoring skills. Please refer to http://www.monmouth.edu/writing_center/events.asp for specific workshop dates and titles.

EN 101 is a course that provides a transition into university-level academic writing; identifies student writing skills, builds upon strengths, and addresses weaknesses; prepares students for EN 102; and helps to prepare students for university writing requirements and assignments in other courses.

By the end of the course, writers should be able to:

- plan, draft, edit, proofread, and revise a unified essay with a clear thesis or focus to convey an idea or opinion;
- develop unified and coherent paragraphs to support the thesis and give substance to ideas;
- produce clear and varied sentence structure;
- demonstrate an understanding of standard English grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage;
- employ a style and tone that are appropriate to audience and purpose;
- critically read and synthesize multiple viewpoints to make informed judgments about the rhetorical techniques used and the issues presented;
- acknowledge sources according to University policy; and
- understand how persuasion is achieved through emotional appeals, the writer's credibility, logical appeals (inductive and deductive reasoning), and a variety of rhetorical patterns of development.

The WA's primary purpose when working with an EN 101 student is to help facilitate the objectives mentioned above. The WA should review both upcoming writing assignments and returned essays with the writer. (Prior to sessions, WAs may consult faculty members' syllabi and assignment sheets, located in the filing cabinet in the Tutor Resource Room.) It is not the WA's place to revise or correct the writer's essay for him/her. Instead, the WA should help the writer sharpen his/her own proofreading/revision skills in an effort to make that student a better overall writer.

EN 102 is a course that all Monmouth University students must take prior to graduating. This course focuses on the process of drafting a research-supported argument. Throughout this course, students are taught methods of argumentation as well as how to properly and effectively analyze, use, and document sources.

By the end of the semester, writers will be expected to:

- demonstrate proficient academic writing skills through essays that include a) a thesis or central idea that directly answers a question; b) an argument that is sufficiently developed, clearly organized, and logically argued; c) unified, coherent, and developed paragraphs; d) sources integrated into the essay's arguments, used appropriately, and cited completely and consistently; e) clear and varied sentence structures; f) word choice, usage, and diction appropriate to the purpose and audience; and g) standard written English grammar, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics;
- demonstrate an understanding of audience and purpose in writing, and consider discipline-specific writing conventions;
- research, analyze, and evaluate print and Internet sources from different disciplines, and use those sources to develop and support written arguments;
- explore one or more theories of argumentation (for example Toulmin, Rogers, classical) with emphasis on credibility, evidence, logic, and rebuttal; and
- demonstrate an understanding of intellectual property and academic honesty; produce writing that differentiates quotation, paraphrase, and summary, and that distinguishes a source's ideas, words, and syntax from the student's own.

The WA's primary purpose when working with an EN 102 student is to help facilitate the objectives mentioned above. As such, the WA should be familiar with the basic elements of argumentative writing, library and Internet research, and the documentation style of the Modern Language Association (MLA). In addition, the WA, as with writers from all courses, should review both upcoming writing assignments and returned essays with the writer. (Prior to sessions, WAs may consult faculty members' syllabi and assignment sheets, located in the filing cabinet in the Tutor Resource Room.) It is not the WA's place to revise or correct the writer's essay for him/her. Instead, the WA should help the writer sharpen his/her own proofreading/revision skills in an effort to make that student a better overall writer.

Resources for Writers

As a WA, you should also be aware of the electronic and print resources that are available to you and your writers through our Writing Center Web site. The Resources for Writers page provides supplemental resources for writers on a variety of writing issues and strategies. This page can be accessed through the Writing Center Web site: http://www.monmouth.edu/writing_center/resources.asp

The following is a brief description of what resources are available:

- Under **Grammar and Punctuation**, you will be able to access pages specific to either area. Under **Grammar** you will find pages ranging from simple parts of speech to more complex grammar elements. Under **Punctuation**, you will find many resources available on how to punctuate correctly.
- The menu listed as **Other Resources** contains helpful links gathered from other writing Web sites and includes grammar exercises for independent practice.
- Under **Types of Writing**, you will be able to access descriptions and examples of different types of writing styles and formats such as discipline-specific writing requirements, research papers, scientific reports, abstracts, resumes, and cover letters.
- Under **Research and Documentation**, you will find skills pages on how to prepare an annotated bibliography, how to summarize and paraphrase, and how to avoid plagiarism. Also, any help you may need on APA or MLA documentation styles can be found under this heading. There are many resources available on both APA and MLA formatting.
- The **Effective Strategies** skills pages will provide you with helpful tips on how to read and write more effectively.
- Clicking on the **Writing Center Menu** will allow you to choose from a few different options. This is where you want to go if you are looking to schedule an appointment at the Writing Center, if you are interested in finding out more about the tutors at the Writing Center or becoming one yourself.

Additional Information

Finally, there are a few things that every Writing Center WA should know:

- A faculty Writing Assistant is available for any writer who needs help with the analysis of a work of literature or help with an assignment pertaining to a work of literature. Only English faculty and approved peer WAs are eligible to assist with the analysis of literature.
- An LMS/ESL Director is available to advise WAs on how to better serve Language Minority writers. We assist the University's LMS/ESL Director, Dr. Huang, by identifying and assisting Language Minority and English as a Second Language students. Texts designated to help LM/ESL students are available in the Tutor Resource Room. Special software for LM/ESL students has been installed on a special computer in the Writing Center. LM/ESL students are able to work independently or alongside a WA with this software. Ask Jeanne or the Director as to which computer is designated for this function.
- The Writing Center Web site and brochure help make our presence on the Monmouth University campus known. All WAs are encouraged to help get our name out there and devise new advertising and promotional strategies.
- When in doubt, ask Professor DeTullio or Jeanne Szumera. Even if they don't have an answer for you, chances are Jeanne's secretary network will have one.
- There is an annual Writing Center softball game each spring. Check your talent at the door and have some fun.