

— From the Center —

The Newsletter of the William L. Adams Writing Center

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Celebration Marks Tenth Year of Service to TCU

On September 22, 1998, the Writing Center celebrated its tenth year of service to the TCU community with a reception and a reading by Professor Diana George of Michigan Technological University. Speaking to an audience of English professors and graduate students, George presented a paper titled "Mapping our Future in our Past: Teaching Composition in the 21st Century," in which she argued that writing instruction should engage students with their communities. Professor George suggested that writing centers and composition teachers design writing projects that extend beyond the borders of the university. Such assignments, George said, will link writing in the classroom to real life, everyday use. According to George, a number of universities already design writing assignments with community interests in mind. For example, students in composition classes at one college assisted with public relations and report writing for Habitat for Humanity, a charitable organization dedicated to improving housing for low-income citizens.

George's presentation was followed by a reception in the Writing Center. Those visiting the center included students who have found the center useful, current and former staff members and peer tutors, faculty members from several departments, and Vice Chancellor Koehler. William L. Adams, the benefactor for whom the center was named, also attended. Mr. Adams said that he was pleased that the Center had gained a national reputation as a model writing center during its first decade of operation. Many former students, peer tutors, and staff members sent messages of congratulations.

During its first ten years, the Writing Center had more than 75,000 contacts with TCU students and faculty members.

Center Serves as a Resource for Faculty

The Writing Center continues to expand its role as a resource for faculty at TCU. The Center has always assisted faculty with writing projects, especially projects for publication, and staff members frequently visit classes to inform students about the Center and to encourage students to make use of the Center. Last semester, at the request of faculty members, Writing Center staff members made a number of presentations dealing with specific issues in academic writing.

Dr. Jeanette Harris, Director of the Writing Center, discussed collaborative writing and peer response with graduate students in the Brite Divinity School. She also spoke with students in education and offered advice about writing essay exams, and she addressed graduate students in art history about professional writing.

Dr. Dave Kuhne, a Writing Center staff member, conducted a workshop concerning APA style for a group of seniors in social work. Kuhne designed a handout that allows students to find information quickly in the *APA Publication Manual*. Copies of this quick guide to APA style are available upon request. Kuhne also spoke with Ph. D. students in the Profession of English class on the subject of turning a dissertation into a book.

In coming semesters, Writing Center staff members plan to conduct workshops on writing dissertations and grants.

Scheduling Class Visitations

Staff members are always happy to address classes and inform students about the services of the Writing Center. The presentations are about ten minutes in length. To arrange a presentation, call 257-7221.

Evening Hours Prove Popular

The fall semester of 1998 marked the opening of the Writing Center's satellite tutorial service in Room 112 of the Mary Coats

Burnett Library. The satellite writing center is open approximately three hours per evening, Sunday through Thursday. The library writing center allows students who cannot visit the Rickel Building during office hours an opportunity to discuss their work with an experienced tutor trained by Dr. Harris.

The evening tutorial services have been popular with TCU students; tutors consulted with students in all classifications and in a variety of subjects. The services offered at the satellite center are identical to those available at the Rickel Building. Please encourage students who have difficulty finding time to visit the Center in Rickel to take advantage of the services offered by the Writing Center during evening hours.



Writing Center Assists with Creative Writing Contests

Writing Center staff members will assist members of the English Department with TCU's 1999 Creative Writing Contests and Awards Program. The program will take place in the Dee J. Kelly Alumni Center on Tuesday, April 6, 1999, at 2 p.m. This year, more than \$3000 in prizes will be awarded to TCU students and alumni. The awards program will include a reading by poet John T. Irwin of Johns Hopkins University. Please encourage your students to enter the contests. Entry forms are available in the English Department, Reed Hall 314, and in the Writing Center, Rickel 100. Deadline for entries is Friday, February 19, 1999.

Longtime Staff Member Retires

Mary Nell Kivikko, longtime member of the Department of English and Writing Specialist at the William L. Adams Writing Center, announced her retirement at the conclusion of the Fall 1998

semester.

Ms. Kivikko had worked as a full-time and Occasional Faculty in the English Department for several years before joining the Writing Center staff in the fall of 1989. She had previously taught English at Texas Woman's University, the University of Minnesota, UTA, and TCJC. Immediately before coming to TCU as a full-time member of the English Department and Writing Center, she was Co-Director of the Writing Center at TCJC's South Campus.

During her time at TCU, Ms. Kivikko conducted courses in composition and writing about literature and worked on TCU's English CLEP Committee. In addition to her teaching duties, she served as President of the North Texas Writing Centers Association and Texas Representative for the South Central Writing Centers Association.

Kivikko's publications include several articles on writing centers as well as numerous book reviews, and she is co-author of the *Early Childhood Manual for Lutheran Preschools*. She has presented papers on writing and writing center issues at many national and regional conferences, including CCCC and the Pacific Coast Writing Centers Association. While at TCJC, she wrote and produced an orientation video about the TCJC Writing Center. The video is still in use. She is a member of CTE, CCCC, NTCE and the National Writing Centers Association.

Ms. Kivikko's retirement plans include catching up on her reading, doing genealogical research, writing family narratives, spending time with her daughters, and traveling. She will continue to work part time as a Writing Specialist in the W. L. Adams Writing Center.

The Writing Center staff is planning a reception to honor Mary Nell Kivikko and thank her for her years of service to TCU.

What the Writing Center Can Do

- Provide one-on-one writing instruction
- Discuss assignments with students, helping them to clarify and organize ideas
- Read a draft of what a student has written and offer suggestions for revisions
- Help students expand and

develop a paper

- Assist students with matters of style and correctness
- Explain specific rules of usage
- Answer questions about research and documentation of sources
- Help students increase confidence in themselves as writers



What the Center Cannot Do

- Edit or proofread what a student has written
- Guarantee a particular grade or even suggest what grade a student is likely to receive on an assignment
- Read multiple assignments or extremely long assignments in a single conference
- Assist students with take-home exams or final portfolios



Faculty Members Can Help the Center

Faculty members can assist the Writing Center staff by

- Encouraging (but not requiring) students to use the Center
- Sending copies of writing assignments to the Center
- Understanding that our goal is not to edit students' papers but to improve their writing skills
- Referring outstanding student writers to the Center for possible employment as peer tutors

The William L. Adams Writing Center is located in the Rickel Building, Room 100. The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. To learn more about the Center and its staff, consult the website <<http://gamma.is.tcu.edu/wrt/>> or phone 257-7221.

Peer Tutors: Outstanding Student Writers

The Writing Center is especially proud of its staff of peer tutors, outstanding student writers who are recommended for their jobs by faculty members familiar with their writing. After students are recommended for a position by a faculty member, the prospective student tutors give samples of their writing to Dr. Harris. Those chosen to work as peer tutors attend a series of training sessions

designed to help them assist other students with writing projects.

For peer tutors, training is an ongoing activity. Several times a semester, peer tutors attend sessions that focus on specific concerns such as development of thesis statements, issues of style, and methods of documentation. Writing Center peer tutors have also attended special peer-tutor training sessions hosted by professional organizations such as the North Texas Writing Centers Association.

While many of the peer tutors are majors in English or journalism, others come to the Center from disciplines such as economics, history, philosophy, and French. Some of the peer tutors are pre-med and pre-law students. Having peer tutors who come from a variety of backgrounds and who have a wide range of interests is beneficial because peer tutors, like the professional staff members at the Writing Center, work with students from many departments.

The Writing Center is justifiably proud of its peer tutors, many of whom have gone on to successful careers after graduation, and the Center frequently hears from past tutors who report that their experience in the Center was a great assistance to them in their professional lives. Please recommend your outstanding student writers to the Center for possible employment as peer tutors.

Mailing Label Here