

# — From the Center —

## The Newsletter of the William L. Adams Writing Center

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### About the William L. Adams Writing Center

The writing center serves the entire TCU community: faculty and staff as well as undergraduate and graduate students. The atmosphere of the writing center is non-threatening and supportive. The center is a place where students can talk openly about writing with someone who is non-judgmental but informed.

The center is staffed by writing specialists who offer one-on-one conferences about writing in all disciplines. A specific piece of writing or an assignment usually serves as the focus of the Conference; however, upon request, staff members will also provide tutorials to review a specific aspect of writing such as essay exams, documentation, punctuation, or usage. Writing center staff members will also provide reviews for students planning to take the grammar, spelling, and punctuation exam administered by the Department of Journalism.

Staff members cannot, however, edit or proofread what a student has written, nor can staff members guarantee a particular grade or even suggest what grade a student is likely to receive on an assignment. Also, consultants are not able to read multiple assignments or extremely long assignments in a single conference, and they will not assist students with take-home exams or final portfolios.

The principal writing center, which is open from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, is located in Rickel 100. Students can make appointments to see a particular consultant by calling 257-7221 or they may simply come to the center where they will be accommodated on a first-come, first-serve basis.

In addition to the Rickel location, students can find help at the Library Writing Center in Room 112 of the Mary Coats Burnette Library. The library center, which was first opened in the fall of 1998 to in order to assist students during

the evening hours, has recently expanded its hours of operation. The library location is now open from 3 p.m. till 5 p.m. Monday through Friday as well as 6 p.m. till 9 p.m. on Sunday through Thursday.

The on-line writing lab, or OWL, is yet another way that students can get assistance from the Writing Center. Established in the fall of 1998, the OWL continues to grow in popularity. The OWL allows students to submit electronically up to five pages of writing for review by a consultant. Students can access the OWL by going to the Writing Center web page at <[www.wrt.tcu.edu](http://www.wrt.tcu.edu)> where they will find specific instructions for using the OWL under the link titled "On-line Writing Help."

### Center Can Assist with Many Writing Projects

- Essays and research papers
- Summaries and abstracts
- Proposals
- Recommendation reports
- Case studies and lab reports
- Speeches and presentations
- Letters of application and résumés
- Professional and business letters
- Theses and dissertations
- Creative and personal writing projects

### Class Visitations and Presentations

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. The writing center also schedules a number of workshops throughout the year. These workshops cover the various systems of documentation, résumé writing, and reviews for the GSP exam.

### New Staff Member Joins Writing Center

The William L. Adams Writing Center has a new staff member:

Dr. Marie-Madeleine Schein. Dr. Schein comes to TCU after working as a translator and teaching at the University of North Texas, West Texas A&M, and Tarrant County Community College. In addition to a Ph. D. in English, Schein holds a M.A. in French and a B.A. in Modern Languages (Italian and German). She has served as University Writing Center Liaison at West Texas A&M and on the ESL Curriculum Development Committee at TCCC. Her extensive experience as a teacher of English as a Second Language has made Dr. Schein, who worked at the writing center on a part-time basis last year, popular with students whose first language is not English.

Dr. Schein is also an accomplished scholar. She is the author (with Clay Reynolds) of *A Hundred Years of Heroes* (TCU Press, 1997), a history of the Fort Worth Stock Show. She has published numerous articles and reviews in such journals as *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, *Southwestern American Literature*, and *Texas Books in Review*. She has also contributed essays to the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* and the *Literary History of the American West*. Her chapter on San Antonio novelist Robert Flynn will be included in *West Texas Writers*.

In addition to her teaching and scholarship, Dr. Schein is active in a number of professional organizations including the Conference of College Teachers of English, the South Central Modern Language Association, and the Association of Teachers to Speakers of Other Languages. Most recently, Dr. Schein was elected to the office of treasurer in the North Texas Writing Centers Association.

### Writing Center Conference Productive and Successful

Last March, Dr. Jeanette Harris, Director the William L. Adams Writing Center at TCU, and Dr. Lady Falls Brown, Director of the Texas Tech University Writing

Center, combined efforts to host the South Central Writing Centers Association conference in Fort Worth. SCWCA, a four-state organization with nearly one hundred institutional members, meets annually to discuss issues relevant to writing center operations, research, and administration.

Highlights of last spring's conference included a key note speech by Christina Murphy, a former president of the National Writing Centers Association, as well as presentations by more than sixty members of the organization, and a lively reception hosted by the North Texas Writing Centers Association.

Murphy discussed recent research linking the cognitive process to writing, while individual and panel presentations focused on a wide range of issues facing writing centers. For instance, Kurt Schick, a Ph. D. candidate in English at TCU, delivered a paper about the role of writing centers in graduate education, and, in a panel presentation, Dr. Marie Schein of the William L. Adams Writing Center, discussed the issue of developing effective strategies for writers of English as a second language. Margaret-Rose Marek, a staff member of the William L. Adams Writing Center, chaired a session on writing center theory and practice, while Steve Sherwood and Dave Kuhne, also staff members of the TCU writing center, delivered papers at the conference.

In recent years, the staff of the William L. Adams Writing Center has taken an increasingly active role in the South Central Writing Centers Association. Steve Sherwood served as President of SCWCA in 1996-97, and Dave Kuhne, Associate Director of the Writing Center, was elected president of the organization for 2000-2001. Next year's conference will be hosted by Southwest Louisiana State University in Lafayette, Louisiana. Anyone interested in attending the conference should contact Dave Kuhne at 257-6537. for additional details.

### **Staff Members Help Train Tutors for Athletes**

The fall of 1999 marked the first time that Writing Center staff members have taken part in the training of tutors who work with student athletes. Kurt Schick, a Ph. D. candidate in English who is serving as Assistant Director of the Writing Center, met with new tutors to discuss effective tutoring

procedures and appropriate ethical standards. The staff of the William L. Adams Writing Center appreciates this opportunity to assist the tutors hired by the athletic department and to work with student athletes attending TCU.

### **Guest Authors to Visit Campus**

Writing Center staff members have helped the English Department organize this year's Creative Writing Week by arranging for two guest authors to visit campus as part of the creative writing awards program.

Each year TCU sponsors twenty-four creative writing contests that award nearly \$3,000 to TCU students and alumni. This year, TCU students can attend readings by two outstanding authors: Janice Galloway and Larry L. King.

Galloway has been called one of Scotland's most talented authors. Her first book, a collection of short stories titled *Blood*, appeared in 1991. Galloway followed *Blood* with two novels, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* (1994) and *Foreign Parts* (1995). While on campus, Galloway will address classes in creative writing, and she will give a public reading at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4, 2000, in Room 207 of the Student Center.

Texas writer Larry L. King, author of thirteen books and seven produced stage plays including the *Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, will read from his work on Wednesday, April 5, at 2 p.m. in the Dee J. Kelly Alumni Center directly before the creative writing awards ceremony.

Both events are free, and TCU students, faculty, and staff—as well as interested members of the community—are welcome to attend the readings. Light refreshments will be offered, and the authors will be available to autograph copies of their books.

### **Writing Center Staff Members for 2000-2001**

- Dr. Jeanette Harris, Director
- Dr. Dave Kuhne, Associate Director and Newsletter Editor
- Mr. Kurt Schick, Assistant Director
- Mr. Steve Sherwood, Writing Consultant

- Ms. Margaret-Rose Marek, Writing Consultant and Technologies Coordinator
- Dr. Carol Lattimore, Writing Consultant
- Dr. Marie Schein, Writing Consultant
- Ms. Marie Laine, Writing Consultant
- Ms. Chris Fudge, Writing Consultant
- Mr. Bob Vann, Administrative Coordinator
- Mr. Zsolt Varga, Technology Consultant

### **Peer Writing Consultants: Outstanding Student Writers**

The Writing Center is especially proud of its staff of peer writing consultants, 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 peer consultants give samples of their writing to Dr. Harris. Those chosen to work as peer writing consultants attend a series of training sessions designed to help them assist other students with writing projects.

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