



Logo by Terry Dolson

Richmond Writing Across the Curriculum Newsletter

Issue 29, October 2011

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome Ms. Mundle!

The Writing Center would like to welcome Ms. Robin Mundle to our team! Replacing Nell Masse as our Administrative Coordinator, Ms. Mundle plays an important role in our program. She handles the online calendar, and Consultants can contact her with issues regarding scheduling appointments. Stop by and say hello if you get a chance!

Web Enhancements

We want to thank Chanel Adams for coming up with "Spider Writer," a Google Site for and by Consultants. Chanel worked with Kirsten McKinney in the Arts & Sciences Dean's Office to link a "Meet the Consultants" directory to our main Web pages. Writers, faculty, and Consultants can now see the interests and experience of every Writing Consultant, both by name and by major / field of study.

Click the "See a Consultant" link on our main page to find our "Meet the Consultants" directory.

At Writer's Web, visitors to our site will find new Writing-in-the-Disciplines handbooks in Chemistry, Film Studies, and First-Year Writing. We have also expanded the Creative Writing handbook to include materials about writ-

ing "Flash Fiction." Special thanks to Consultants Astoria Aviles, Shannon Biello, Chris Boss, Savannah Gillespie, Gabrielle Pound, and Carter Staub for writing the drafts of these new handbooks that Megan Venable incorporated into Writer's Web.

Writing Consultants Needed: Spring and Fall 2012

Faculty and Consultants should refer students to Joe Essid for enrollment in Eng. 383. We will be recruiting students for the Spring 2012 section until the end of the semester, and it is never too early to begin approving students for next Fall.

Tips For Writing Center Reports by Megan Venable '11

Writing Center reports are an incredibly important aspect of our program. These reports let professors know what a Consultant has discussed with a writer. Not only that, writing a report at the end of an appointment gives a Consultant a chance to reflect on their tutoring techniques and strategies. Such reflection is integral to the English 383 course and to most Pedagogical courses. Beyond all of this, a well-written Writing Center report can protect a Consultant from being accused of Honor Code Violations as they detail the ways that a Consultant helps writers change their own writing, rather than the Consultant writing for the writer.

With this in mind, here are a few reminders of how to write an effective Writing Center report:

1. Only center and on-call Consultants should fill out the online form. If you are a Class Consultant, plan to contact your professor directly.
2. Ask students to fill out their name, their professor's name, and the name of the course on the WC worksheet at

the beginning of the consultation, not the end. This way, you won't forget to collect important information, and you can ask for clarification if you can't read the student's handwriting.

3. Take the time to find the professor's correct title. After years of schooling, doctors want to be referred to as doctors!

4. "The writer" has a name, and it is not "the writer." Refer to writers by their first names.

5. Detail, detail, detail. You don't want to write a memoir, but be sure to give detail about the techniques used and issues addressed in the appointment. Take the time to make your report effective.

6. Share the treasure! When you give a writer a handout from Writer's Web, tell the professor what you provided and put the Web address for the specific handout into the report. That way, faculty learn about particular resources we use, resources they often then provide writers themselves.

Not only will writing a detailed, correct report make the proofreader's job easier, it reflects a way of thinking about writing pedagogy. Taking the time to use a writer's name, to communicate effectively with faculty, to recall tutoring techniques and to consider their effectiveness improves tutoring quality and improves our program!

THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD by Maria Rajtik '13

When I stepped onto my Paris-bound flight in September, I was more than a little nervous. Not only was I flying alone for the first time, but I was flying away from home. Flying away from my friends and family. Flying away from the English-speaking world.

I have been studying French since the 8th grade, but I felt as though I had only achieved the speaking level of a fifth-grader. I had the basics down--

Bonjour! Ça va? Au revoir! -- and I told myself what I lacked in actual talent I would make up for with sheer enthusiasm. But when I was face to face with the good-looking, perfectly dressed French population who flooded in and out of the Charles de Gaulle airport, I shut down.

Have a photo, announcement, cartoon or idea for our next newsletter? Please contact Joe Essid jessid@richmond.edu

I asked for directions in English; I sought out translated signs; I even ordered coffee from McDonalds. But as soon as I left the airport, I realized I lost my English crutch. Bus and taxi drivers in Paris do not speak English. At all. My first day, I did a lot of pantomiming and pointing, but somehow managed to make my way to my host-family's chic apartment. Thank goodness hand gestures are a universal language.

I chose to live with a French family because I knew myself. I knew that I would try to weasel my way out of struggling through French phrases. If I lived with a host family, I was required to speak only French with them. At first I was nervous, and didn't know how to communicate what I wanted to say. I may have even created an extra brother or sister in our first conversation, but I am blaming that on the jet lag. Eventually though, words began falling into place.

The most important thing I have learned about language during my time here in Paris has been to be confident and more importantly, be shameless. Yes, when I order food at a café or try to explain what a chipmunk is to my host-parents I make errors. It is through these errors, however, that I am getting better-- little by little. It may be embarrassing when I flub the pronunciation of a word and I may get frustrated when I can't explain something in class, but c'est la vie à Paris.

Being able to communicate with someone is often taken for granted and the complexity of language is too. Language connects people, but it also can alienate them. I am so thankful that I got on that plane in September, because had I not, I would not have pushed my own limits and found out how much bigger the world truly is.