Spring 8-15-2013

ENG 5500-001: Practicum in Writing Center Theory and Practice

Fern Kory
Eastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2013

Recommended Citation
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2013/115

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2013 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Fall 2013 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.
ENGLISH 5500: Practicum in Writing Center Theory and Practice

Friday 1-3 pm in the Writing Center (Coleman Hall 3110)

This practicum is a seminar in the theory and practice (praxis) of writing center consulting. Each week, we will discuss readings and issues related to your work in the writing center.

Fern Kory
Writing Center Director
Coleman Hall 3365
office phone: 217.581.6509
cell: 217.621.8723
e-mail: fkory@eiu.edu

Jad Smith
Assistant Director, EIU Writing Center
Coleman Hall 3605
cell phone: 217.280.0044
e-mail: jdsmith3@eiu.edu

Attendance and Participation
Because we talk about issues related to our evolving community of practice, because much of the work done in practicum is collaborative, because you are serious scholars & professionals, and because you receive 3 hours of compensated time plus one credit for this course, it seems reasonable to expect that you will attend—on time—every class session. If an emergency arises that will affect your attendance, please contact both Dr. Kory and Dr. Smith as soon as possible via email or phone.

Of course, you are also expected to come to class with all books and other materials, prepared to contribute to a lively informed discussion of assigned readings.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Grades
You will receive written and oral feedback on your performance in this class, the written work you submit, and your work as a consultant in the writing center. You will not receive a letter grade for this course, but it is possible to earn a grade of "no credit" for English 5500.

Assignments
Here is a summary of the assignments and activities you will complete by the end of the fall term:

- 30 Posts (at least two each week) to the EIU Writing Center Blog
- 9 Analytic Responses (form/genre may vary)
- 3 Observation Memoranda
- 1 Article or Resource Search & Share presentation
- 1 Genre Show & Tell presentation
- 2 Opportunities to collaborate with group members to plan and facilitate class discussion
- 1 Philosophy of Writing Center Consulting
More Detailed information about Assignments

Posts on the EIU Writing Center Blog
The EIU Writing Center Blog is another place where theory and practice co-mingle. In this space, you and your colleagues will document experiences and insights that might otherwise be lost to memory—and get feedback from peers and supervisors based on your description of those experiences and your articulation of those ideas. Our blog is also a place to share—and receive—timely information related to the multi-faceted work we do in and through the Writing Center.

Starting week 2, the deadline for the first post of the week is noon on Wednesday. A second post in which you reply to or interact with the content of another post is due by noon on Friday.

We will occasionally assign or suggest a focus for blog posts, but the majority will be self-generated. You can write about insights gleaned from consulting sessions, what you’re learning from your peers, connections you make between theory and practice, or issues that emerge during the week. Ultimately, our aim is to make the in-house blog a space where we debate issues, ponder strategies and approaches, think about our practice, learn from one another, and enjoy the process.

Analytic Responses
In anticipation of our discussion of assigned readings, most weeks you will be asked to write a “response” in which you analyze and reflect on concepts, precepts, ideas, strategies, and issues presented in one of those readings. This response—which will have a specified audience and take an appropriate form—should focus on specific points made by the author, a specific feature of their text, an assumption that is implicit within his or her argument, specific tactics or strategies they advocate, or another aspect of the text that seems worthy of close analysis and detailed response.

Weeks 2 – 5: Analytic Response Memoranda
For weeks 2-5, your response should be in the form of a memorandum addressed to both Dr. Kory and Dr. Smith. The memo should be at least one single-spaced page in a memo format, and should demonstrate stylistic maturity and mastery of editorial conventions. Use APA style documentation. This form assumes a concise introductory paragraph that provides context for your response and a strong “bottom-line” in which you articulate a thesis that encapsulates the result of your engaged and respectful exploration of specific ideas or approaches articulated in this article by its author(s).

The bulk of each memo should be analysis. Some synthesis can be useful to establish context, but you can assume (in this case) that your readers have read the article in question, so you do not need to provide a summary. You will, however, want to quote or paraphrase the specific passages or points that are the focus of your analysis. Your memorandum should demonstrate focused attention to textual and experiential details as you test the ideas related in the essay against ideas and practices you have encountered vicariously, and your own experience as a writer and writing consultant.

Group Work: Facilitating Discussion of **Assigned Readings
You will regularly collaborate with peers to facilitate discussion of issues raised by assigned readings. We encourage you to find creative ways (e.g. oral or written activities, role-playing, small group exercises, etc.) to get us to engage productively with the reading material. Lectures are antithetical to the ethos of writing centers, so your presentations must be interactive. Groups are expected to arrange time outside of class to brainstorm and plan a pedagogically effective approach to the material.
Observation Memoranda
Three times this semester you will write an observation memo following your formal observation of a session facilitated by one of your Writing Center colleagues. By the end of the semester, you should have observed and analyzed sessions by at least two different colleagues. Submit these memos to the consultant observed and provide electronic copies to Drs. Smith and Kory (as a “cc”).

These memos should have a four-part structure:
1) Describe the arc of the session and key moments within it to the consultant you observed
2) Identify tactics, strategies, or moves that struck you as effective or appropriate, and anything else you learned from watching his or her work with this particular student writer
3) Focus on some specific moments of kairos in which the consultant responded appropriately to the demands of the moment, and describe any teachable moments s/he may have missed
4) Offer one specific suggestion or observation that your colleague might build upon.

Before you observe...ask your colleagues if there is anything they would like you to focus on.

Genre Show & Tell
Since the writing center serves writers taking courses across the college curriculum, it behooves us to be familiar with the genre and documents that are characteristic of particular fields, disciplines, and professions. Therefore, each member of the class will locate examples of documents that reflect the audiences and goals connected to a specific rhetorical situation or discourse community.

Note: For this assignment, we will not focus on literary genre (drama, poetry, etc.) or “school” genre (e.g. “research paper”), including “modes” that focus on a specified rhetorical aim (“informative,” “persuasive,” “narrative”).

Here are examples of genres and documents that respond to the demands of a particular rhetorical situation or reflect the methods and outcomes of specific disciplines or discourse communities:

- Marketing report
- Graduate school application essay
- Lab report
- Bad-news (sensitive) memo
- Lesson plan
- Business proposal
- Social-science essay (IMRD format)
- Job application letter
- Annotated bibliography
- Case study

Here are questions you can use to examine the genre or document and its discourse community¹:
- Type: What is the significance of the name of this genre? What type of document is this?
- Scene: Where and when (in what situations) does this genre typically appear?
- Subject: What sorts of topics, issues, problems and questions does the genre address?
- Rhetors and Audience: What are the roles of typical writers and readers of this document?
- Purposes: To what end do people write in this genre? What makes this type of document useful, interesting, or effective for its readers?
- Patterns: What specific features of style, format or approach are particular to this genre? What makes it different or similar to other written documents?
- Discourse Conventions: What is the level of formality for this genre? What’s important to note about syntax, sentence structure, and organization? (continued on next page →)

¹ These questions are adapted from Scenes of Writing by Devitt, Reiff, & Bawarshi (93-4).
Genre Show & Tell (continued)
For your presentation, prepare a properly documented handout in which information is organized by the questions above. You also should offer a sample or model document we might be able to use during consulting sessions. The written material provided should be detailed enough to be the basis for a discussion of practical strategies for working with students who are writing this genre.

Article or Resource Search & Share
Each week one member of the class will locate a reading from a professional journal or a resource (print or electronic) that seems relevant to the work you do as writing center consultants. You can find appropriate selections in books available in the Writing Center collection or recent issues of the journals on our shelves (*College Composition and Communication, College English, Teaching English in the Two-Year College, The Writing Center Journal, The Writing Lab Newsletter*). Or you might find something in a respectable virtual environment, such as the web site of a professional organization (NCTE, CCC, IWCA) or an online academic journal (*Praxis: A Writing Center Journal, The Dangling Modifier, et al.*). Or you can discuss a reading from one of our textbooks that is not on the syllabus.

For your presentation, prepare a properly documented handout that describes the article or resource, lays out its thesis/focus and key points, and includes a thought-provoking evaluation of its usefulness in the Writing Center. The handout should be detailed enough to form the basis for a lively discussion of the theory behind and the strategies or “best practices” presented in the original.

Philosophy of Writing Center Consulting
It is important to be able to talk about your *praxis*, to articulate the principles that support your practice as a consultant. Your own philosophy of Writing Center consulting will emerge from a synthesis of the ideas and experience you bring to the Writing Center, ideas and approaches you develop through your experience as a consultant, and the body of writing center research and scholarship we will have read and discussed by the semester. (Detailed Assignment Sheet to come.)

This document will serve as a capstone for this seminar, and provide a starting point for your evolution as a consultant during the spring semester. This document might also influence the philosophy of teaching writing you will develop next semester at the end of English 5502 (Mentored Composition Teaching), which will be part of your application packet if you apply to teach independently in the second year of your GAship.
Schedule of Reading & Writing Assignments

Shared readings and interactive presentations will introduce issues and ideas that are fundamental to writing center consulting and relevant to composition pedagogy in general. In discussions, we will consider how the concepts and strategies presented by researchers and scholar-practitioners might inform our work in the Writing Center…and beyond.

**Key**

BG = *Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors*  
ATG = *A Tutor's Guide*  
# = handout  
ESL = *ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors*  
LG = *The Longman Guide to Writing Center Theory & Practice*  
** = reading assignment facilitated by a group

Orientation

# “Talking in the Middle,” Harris  
# “The First Five Minutes,” Newkirk (also LG 302-315)  
# “The Writing Center as a Workplace,” Ryan & Zimmerelli (also BG 1: 1-4)

**Week 1: 8-23**  
Get Tutored: Meet with a WC consultant for at least one scheduled session  
“The Writing Process,” “Inside the Tutoring Session” & “Helping Writers through the Writing Process” (BG ch. 2-4: pp. 6-55)  
“Breaking Ice and Setting Goals,” Bruce (ESL 33-41)  
# “Tutoring Writing is Performing Social Work is Coloring Hair: Writing Center Work as an Activity System,” Carter

Sign-ups for Search & Share presentations  
Essay on Lessons of Best/Worst Writing Assignment DUE

**Week 2: 3-30**  
**Group 1 (aka G1)—“Can You Proofread This?” + Appendices A-D, Rapp Young (ATG 140-158)  
“Looking at the Whole Text,” Staben & Nordhaus (ESL 78-90)  
“The Idea of a Writing Center,” North (LG 63-78)  
# “Addressing Genre in the Writing Center,” Clark

Article Search & Share—*Others bring 2 Article S&S options*  
Analytic Response Memo due

**Week 3: 9-6**  
**G2—“Helping Writers across the Curriculum” (BG 7: 87-98)  
“Crossing Cultures with International ESL Writers: The Tutor as Contact Zone Contact Person,” Severino (ATG 41-53)  
# “Situational Tutoring,” Sentell  
# *Kairotic Moments in the Writing Center,* Taylor, Kory et al.

Article Search & Share—*Turn in brief rationale for Genre S&S selections*  
Analytic Response Memo due
**G3—“Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers,” Harris; (ATG 23-33)
“Before the Conversation: A Sketch of Some Backgrounds, Experiences, and Attitudes Among ESL Writers...,” Leki (ESL 1-17)
“Reading an ESL Writer’s Text,” Kei Matsuda and Cox (ESL 42-50)
“Avoiding Appropriation,” Severino (ESL 51-65)
Showing of Writing Across Borders
Article Search & Share
Genre Show & Tell
Analytic Response Memo due

**G4—“The Writers You Tutor” (BG 5: 58-73)
# “Bias in the Writing Center,” Effinger Wilson
# “Helping Students Negotiate Dialects in the Writing Center,” McDuffie
Article Search & Share
Genre Show & Tell
Analytic Response Memo due

**G1—“What Line? I Didn’t See any Line,” Wingate (ATG 9-16)
“Organizing Ideas: Focus Is the Key,” Trupe (ATG 98-106)
“Helping Writers to Write Analytically,” Rafoth ATG 107-14)
“Freud in the Writing Center: The Psychoanalytics of Tutoring Well,” Murphy (LG 296-301)
Article Search & Share
Genre Show & Tell
Observation Memo due

**G2—“Shifting Gears: Business and Technical Writing,” Briam (ATG 63-73)
“A Balancing of Efficiency and Exploration: Tutoring Writers in Advanced Classes,” Zemliansky (ATG 85-97)
“Look Back and Say ‘So What?: The Limitations of the Generalist Tutor,” Kiedaisch and Dinitz; (LG 260-71)
“A Critique of Peer Tutoring,” Shamoon and Burns (LG 225-41)
Article Search & Share
Genre Show & Tell
Analytic Response Memo due

Week 8: 10-11
Fall Break (No Classes)

Week 9: 10-18
**G3—“Using Others’ Words: Quoting, Summarizing, and Documenting Sources,” Dossin (ATG 159-66)
“Raising Questions about Plagiarism,” Bouman (ESL 161-175)
Fall 2013

WC Practicum (ENG 5500) Kory/Smith

“Information Literacy & the Writing Center,” Clark (LG 561-70)
Article Search & Share
Genre Show & Tell
Observation Memos due

Week 10: 10-25
**G4—“Minimalist Tutoring” Brooks (LG 219-24)
# “Queering the Writing Center,” Denny
Article Search & Share
Genre Show & Tell
Genre Show & Tell
Analytic Response Memo due

Week 11: 11-1
# “Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers,” Sommers
# “Composing Practices of One- and Multi-Draft Writers,” Harris
Article Search & Share
Genre Show & Tell
Analytic Response Memo due

Week 12: 11-8
“Our Little Secret: A History of Writing Centers, Pre- to Post-
Open Admissions, Boquet (LG 41-60)
“Early Writing Centers: Toward a History,” Carino (LG 10-21)
Article Search & Share
Genre Show & Tell
Analytic Response Memo due

Week 13: 11-15
“Collaboration, Control, and the Idea of a Writing Center,”
Lunsford; LG (92-99)
“Redefining Our Existence: An Argument for Short- and Long-Term
Goals and Objectives,” Barnett (LG 194-201)
Genre Show & Tell
Observation Memo due

Week 14: 11-22
Peer Review of Philosophy of Writing Center Consulting
# “Tutoring Writing as Career Development,”
# “Transferring Pedagogy from the Writing Lab to the Composition
Classroom,” Van Dyke
Showing of Take 20

Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: 12-6
Philosophy of Writing Center Consulting due
End-of-the-semester PARTY
Week One: Writing Center To Do List

○ Accept invitation to WC blog
○ Explore Writing Center
○ Post to WC blog about WC Resource by Thursday mid-day
○ Reply to WC blog post by Friday morning

○ Do the reading for our practicum meeting on Friday. Make a note of specific points about which you have questions or comments.
  
  ○ "The Writing Process," "Inside the Tutoring Session" & "Helping Writers through the Writing Process" (BG 2-4: 6-55)
  ○ "Breaking Ice and Setting Goals," Bruce (ESL 33-41)
  ○ "Tutoring Writing is Performing Social Work is Coloring Hair: Writing Center Work as an Activity System," Carter (handout)

○ Compose an analytic response to one of the readings for this week OR revise draft of Best/Worst Writing Experience Essay

○ Make an appointment Wednesday or Thursday of this week to meet with a WC consultant with a draft of your "Best or Worst Writing Experience" essay OR an Analytic Response to one of our readings

○ (opt.) Post on WC blog about the experience of being or meeting with a WC consultant. What surprised you? What did you get out of it?

Calendar Note:
The Writing Center opens on Wednesday of the first week of the semester (9/21) and closes on the last day of classes (12/6). We are not open during Finals Week.