

Director's Notes

In my first column, I am going to highlight some important changes within the Writing Center. This fall marked the beginning of a new student leadership program. Megan Sweeney and Kari Weiterschan were the co-recipients of the senior leadership position, and Margaret Glover was awarded the junior leadership position. Many of the Writing Center activities were organized by these three students, including the creation of this newsletter, the expansion of writing workshops, the celebration of International Writing Centers Week, the promotion of the Reading Women Book Club, and the facilitation

of service opportunities for our department. In regard to our staff, they have mentored new members, presided over meetings, and held informal writing forums. I am very grateful for their enthusiasm and efforts because they have made a genuine contribution towards enriching our department and its services.

We are slowly making subtle, but important changes to our website as well. In an effort to increase viewers' vocabulary and share our enthusiasm for words, we always feature a word-of-the-week. We are updating our staff page to include our pictures and interests, and we are adding accessible writing handouts and links for students. By next fall,

students will be able to make appointments online, too. For faculty, I am adding a new section that consists of a list of links to scholarly articles about writing and the teaching of writing along with some pedagogical strategies commonly used within the field of composition. My hope is that our webpage will become a valuable resource that is regularly used by both students and faculty.

As the Writing Center continues to adapt to the needs of our community, I welcome any suggestions or questions that you may have. Thus, please do not hesitate to contact me at 782-6510 or at mliptak@siena.edu.

Michelle A. Liptak

The Writing Center goes to St. Casimir's!

This spring, the Writing Center staff is offering literacy assistance to students at St. Casimir's Catholic School, located in Arbor Hill. The volunteers from the Writing Center are working closely with Ms. Kim Ollier and other St. Casimir teachers to develop a program that enriches the lives of inner-city children and provides service opportunities for

Siena students. Presently, the volunteers go into the first and second grade classroom once a week and read to the children. They also offer innovative workshops that help the young students develop and enhance their writing skills. The Writing Center volunteers will be posting pictures of these rewarding experiences on our webpage.

Built in 1896, St. Casimir's serves students from pre-kindergarten through grade eight and is a valuable and influential part of our local community. Thus, the Writing Center staff is genuinely saddened by the recent news that St. Casimir's is set to close, due to a lack of funding, at the end of this academic year.



2008-2009 Student Leaders: Margaret Glover, Kari Weiterschan, and Megan Sweeney



Halloween Extravaganza 2008—The Writing Center's "Story Corner"

Writing Center Student Staff

Blair Atkins
Samantha Carroll
Erin Conroy
Kerrylynn Daly
Lindsay Fairbrother
Margaret Glover
Meagan Grieger
Christina Jones
Heather MacDonald
Katherine Ollier
Kelly Shea
David Strong
Megan Sweeney
Rachel Tatarek
Chantal Warner
Kari Weiterschan
April Winney
Erin Yates
Vincenza Zurlo

STUDENT-TO-STUDENT

A column written by a peer

writing consultant

Writing Tip —

“Make an Outline!”

At one point or another, all of us have been assigned a paper, heaved a disgruntled sigh, rolled our eyes, and, wanting to be finished with it as fast as possible, typed it and hit print, hardly thinking anything through. If we're honest with ourselves, those probably were not our best papers.

Sometimes we get lucky, but for the most part, the papers we write without any sense of direction are satisfactory at best. But it's not difficult to make them great. Creating an outline beforehand can make a tremendous difference in the amount of time you'll later spend writing your paper, and chances are the quality of your paper will improve as well.

Perhaps denoting the virtues of an outline seems silly, but its merits far outweigh its disadvantages. Depending on the length and genre of the paper, outlines will vary. At times, you may find that a shorter, broad outline is sufficient.

As a general rule of thumb, however, the

more detailed the outline, the easier it will be to write the paper later. Again, depending on the length and style of the paper, outlines will differ, but an excellent source for how to formulate one is “Developing an Outline” at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>. Creating an outline does take time, but it is ultimately time well spent. Organizing your thoughts first will result in a more coherent and cohesive final paper, and once you're in the habit, outlining will become a natural part of your writing process. You won't be able to write without one!

Writing Center Seminars:

Providing Students the Tools They Need to Succeed

From March 9th through March 13th, the Writing Center staff conducted its semi-annual documentation seminars, which were aimed at helping students learn and practice the correct methods for MLA, Chicago, and APA styles of documentation. On March 16th, the staff held a different seminar titled “Thesis Statements and Writing College Papers” in L26.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS - “Techniques for Revising & Editing Your Own Work” on 4/14 at two different times - 1:30_{pm} (L12) and 5:30_{pm} (L12)

and

“Punctuating With Purpose and Precision: Commas, Semicolons, & Apostrophes” on 4/15 at 6_{pm} (L12)

Do you have writer's anxiety?

2009 Spring Hours

Mon 10am—7:30pm

Tues 10am—8pm

Wed 10am—9pm

Thurs 10am to 8pm

Fri 10am to 1:30pm

Sun 1pm to 8pm

ESL Support

Thurs 5:30 to 8:30pm

and

Sat 10am to 1pm

Call for an appointment
783—4125

WWW.SIENA.EDU/
WRITINGCENTER

Writer's anxiety is a common occurrence and can take many forms. One writer may be upset because she cannot get going and is unable to immediately produce a fabulous piece of writing. Another may do a lot of writing, but he is unhappy about not getting out what he really wants to say. A different writer may be so intimidated that she procrastinates right up until the deadline. Sometimes even the most experienced writers have a difficult time getting started – after all, writing is hard work! Here are some suggestions that may diminish writer's anxiety:

- Get started right away and make a plan
- Break up the assignment into smaller tasks with deadlines. (Give yourself a small reward

when you complete a task, such as visiting a friend or playing a game. This may seem silly, but it works!)

- Visit the Writing Center at the various stages throughout your writing process.
- A rough draft is just that – rough. It is the stage at which you are getting your ideas down, so try not to get bogged down with finding the “right” word or making the “perfect” sentence at this point.
- Revising refers to content and entails adding, moving, and deleting.
- After revising, edit carefully. Try reading your work aloud, for you will catch many of your own mistakes.



Decrease frustration
and anxiety . . .

The Writing Center
staff offers many
different strategies
to use when writing,
revising, and editing
and can help you
discover the ones
that work best for
you!