

College Writing: Theory and Practice

Spring 2022 (CRN: 21819)

Prof. Lori Jacobson

Office: Swem Library 145A (Writing Resources Center)

Office Hours: Monday 2:00-3:30 or by appointment

Zoom Personal Meeting Room: <https://cwm.zoom.us/j/2366487087>

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I. COURSE INFORMATION

Course Title: College Writing: Theory and Practice (WRIT 399)

Meeting Times: MW 12:00-12:50, Tucker 111

Zoom Classroom (for occasional use, as needed): <https://cwm.zoom.us/j/96214631929>

Scheduled Exam Time: Tuesday, May 10, 9:00-12:00*

**This course does not have a final exam. The final paper will be due during the exam time.*

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the history, theory, and practice of tutoring writing in academic settings. Participants will explore and discuss the ideas that shape writing center practices, and they will develop a toolkit of practical strategies to use during one-on-one consultations. Course topics include: process pedagogy, collaborative learning, consulting across cultures and abilities, working with various genres and disciplines, global to local revision strategies, and information literacy. Assignments in this course will allow participants to observe, analyze, and reflect on consulting sessions and will culminate with a personal philosophy of consulting.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Available to borrow from the Writing Resources Center:

The Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors (6th edition)

Additional readings, available on Blackboard (Bb), from:

The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors (Christina Murphy, Steve Sherwood)

ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors (Shanti Bruce and Ben Rafoth)

The Oxford Guide for Writing Tutors (Lauren Fitzgerald and Melissa lanetta)

Available as free, open education resources [OER]:

Writing in College: from Competence to Excellence

(<http://pressbooks.opensuny.org/writing-in-college-from-competence-to-excellence/>)

Purdue Online Writing Lab (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>)

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students in this course will:

- Understand writing as a process of discovery and investigation as well as a mode of communication.
- Gain insight into the writing processes of writers.
- Learn tutoring strategies for conferring with writers.
- Learn to apply theoretical concepts and pedagogical techniques to meet the needs of individual writers.
- Develop an awareness of writing genres and expectations across a variety of academic disciplines.
- Cultivate the listening presence and service mindset typical of effective consultants.

IV. COURSE RESPONSIBILITIES

Assignments and Evaluation: I will use Blackboard to post all assignments and will use its announcements and “send email” function to keep you up to date on class activities. Remember to check email daily.

Your grade will be determined as follows:

15%	Participation and Engagement
15%	Reflection 1 “How I Write”
20%	Reflection 2 “Consultant as Consultee”
20%	Reflection 3 “Consultation Observation”
30%	Reflection 4 “My Philosophy of Consulting” (with Presentation)

Grading Scale:

93-100 = A	73-76 = C
90-92 = A-	70-72 = C-
87-89 = B+	67-69 = D+
83-86 = B	63-66 = D
80-82 = B-	60-62 = D-
77-79 = C+	0-59 = F

Participation and Engagement: Think of our class as a learning team and think of yourself as a vital member of the team. Plan to come to class on time and prepared. Preparation includes completing all reading and writing assignments and bringing thoughtful questions and comments to share with the class. In class, listen actively and respectfully to your instructor and your peers, contribute to the class discussion, and make an earnest effort on in-class activities.

The following ongoing learning activities are also factored into your participation grade:

Consulting Toolkit

Throughout the semester, you will use a shared Google Jamboard to pin reminders and gather ideas that contribute to your developing knowledge of tutoring practices. You might want to post notes on practical strategies for tutoring writing, effective questions to deploy during tutoring sessions, significant passages from readings, useful links, and more. We will use a shared Google Jamboard for these toolkits. The toolkit is intended to be a resource that you can return to as you craft your philosophy of consulting and begin your work in the WRC.

Article Summary

Each student (either alone or with a partner) will present a summary of one journal article about a writing center topic. You will sign up for your article at the start of the semester. The brief presentation (5-10 minutes) should be accompanied by 1) a one-page written summary of the article's main ideas, followed by 2) a list of 2-3 resources for further reading and 3) a short list of discussion questions. Design these questions to provoke a meaningful conversation about the article's ideas.

Article presentations allow us to think more deeply about writing center topics while keeping our collective reading load manageable. Your classmates will not read the article and will rely on your presentation and summary for understanding.

Consultant Handbook + Checklist + Mentors

The *Consultant Handbook* describes the policies and procedures that guide the WRC's daily operations. You will review the Handbook with an experienced consultant, who will be assigned as your mentor. Complete the included checklist as you read and discuss each section. Mentors and mentees should also seek out additional opportunities for engagement (e.g., consultation observations, walk-and-talk, etc.).

You will receive a mid-term assessment of your class participation (with clear feedback about how to improve your grade).

Assignments: Detailed assignment prompts will be provided in class and on Blackboard. Deadlines are listed in the course schedule.

Reflection Papers: These papers allow you to analyze your thoughts about and experiences with writing and consulting. As analytical essays, each should have a thesis, and be well-organized, fully developed, and grounded in our course readings and discussions.

Reflection 1—How I Write: (2-3 pages) In your first reflection paper, you will examine and discuss your own writing process. As part of this assignment, you will schedule an appointment in the WRC to brainstorm ideas or work on your draft. In the *Bedford Guide*, Exercise 3D “The Writing Process in Action” (Topic 1, p. 49) will help you get

started. You may also want to refer to the questions in Exercise 4B “Reflecting on Your Own Writing Concerns” (p. 71).

Reflection 2—Consultant as Consultee: (2-3 pages) In your second reflection paper, you will describe and analyze your experience being a consultee as you prepared for your “How I Write” reflection paper. Exercise 3E “Reflecting on Being Tutored” will help you get started (pp. 50-51).

Reflection 3—Consultation Observation: (2-3 pages) For your third reflection paper, you will first observe 3 consultation sessions led by experienced WRC consultants. Then describe and analyze your experiences and explain what you learned from them. You will receive observation sheets to fill out during each session. Exercise 2B “Observing Tutoring Sessions” will help you get started (pp. 25-26).

Reflection 4—My Philosophy of Consulting: (3-5 pages) For your final reflection paper, you will articulate your personal philosophy of consulting. Your paper should synthesize the ideas you have developed about: your work with student writers, course readings and discussions, and your observations of and conversations with other consultants. A consulting philosophy should draw on the theories and practices of others, but it frames these in a highly personalized way. It reveals *your* conception of tutoring writing, describes *your* tutoring practices, and offers a justification for why you tutor the way you do. Refer to Exercise 9A “Articulating Your Tutoring Philosophy” for more ideas (p. 128).

Presentation—Crafting My Philosophy of Consulting: (5 minutes, with slides) In our last two class sessions, you will present your emerging philosophy of consulting and share the process you are using to develop it.

Conferences

This semester, you will have two one-on-one conferences with Prof. Jacobson. The first will occur after you hand in Reflection 2. At this conference, we will discuss your writing, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. The second will occur after you hand in Reflection 3. At this conference, we will discuss your writing and your emerging thinking about your philosophy of consulting.

Revisions

You have the option to revise any paper after receiving Prof. Jacobson’s comments, but keep in mind that revision involves more than simply correcting grammar and spelling errors. Revision (literally “to see again”) requires you to think deeply and reconsider what you’ve written and how you’ve written it. Revisions of Reflections 1 and 2 are due one week after our first one-on-one conference. Revisions of Reflection 3 are due one week after our second one-on-one conference. NOTE: Because Reflection 4 is due during our final exam period, you will not have

the option to revise it. Revisions are graded by averaging the original grade with the revision grade.

V. COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: Because seminar-style courses depend on the participation of all students, your presence in class is essential. **You will be allowed two unexcused absences—no questions asked.** Each additional unexcused absence will lower your grade by one-third of a letter grade (A- to B+, for example). Excused absences include those arranged with me beforehand and those accompanied by appropriate documentation (such as notification from the Dean’s Office).

Pandemic: This semester, the world will enter its third year with COVID. As we experience a fifth surge of pandemic with the highly transmissible omicron variant, it is reasonable to expect significant levels of infection at W&M. As an academic community based on faculty and students convening, spring 2022 courses will largely consist of in-person instruction. All of us will follow [W&M requirements](#) – vaccinations and boosters, indoor masking, as well as quarantine and isolation when ill. For those who have tested positive, W&M’s requirements must be fulfilled before class can be attended in person, and, out of an abundance of caution, anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID – even if they don’t have a positive test – should not come to class. The W&M community views the adoption of these practices as a mark of good citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.

Making this a successful semester in spite of the pandemic will require a **flexible mindset** and **consistent communication**.

For this course, we will address COVID disruptions in the following ways:

1. Students who have mild COVID symptoms or are in quarantine may log into class via Zoom. **Please communicate with me via email when you intend to exercise this option.** Because it is more difficult to participate in class activities or discussions when using this hybrid format, please do so only as needed.
2. Course slides, readings, assignments, and materials produced by classmates will all be available via Blackboard. If you must miss class, use these resources to remain up to date. **Please communicate with me via email if the nature of your illness causes you to fall behind.** In that case, I will work with you to create flexible options to help ensure your success in the course.
3. When absences lead to questions or confusion about course expectations, you may 1) contact a classmate for clarification; 2) email me with your questions; 3) meet with me during my office hours (in person or via Zoom); or 4) schedule a meeting with me outside of office hours.
4. If we have multiple absences (3+ students) because of confirmed or suspected COVID, we will temporarily move our course online. I will notify you of this shift promptly, as soon as I am aware of the need.

5. If I test positive: a) if I am asymptomatic or have mild symptoms, we will temporarily move our class online; b) if I am too sick to lead online sessions, my teaching “buddy” will take over the course until I am well. This semester, Zarah Quinn will be sitting in on the course and serving as my “buddy.”

Class Climate: The class climate of a successful seminar-style course is open-minded and collegial. Most of our class periods will be filled by small- and large-group discussion of the assigned readings as well as collaborative activities. In order for this work to be productive, all students need to feel comfortable participating. We will create and maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect in which everyone’s ideas can be heard.

Assignments: You should complete all assigned readings by the start of class and bring the readings to class (on your laptop, or hard copy). Class activities are directly linked to the assigned readings. **You may turn in one assignment late without penalty** (but you must let me know in advance when you are choosing this option); otherwise, late work will affect your grade. I will not give an “Incomplete” except under extreme and documented circumstances. All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade for the class.

Manuscript Preparation: All papers should follow MLA format (including one-inch margins and 12 point, Times New Roman font); see the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) page for “MLA General Format” and guidelines posted to Blackboard.

Important Dates: The deadline to add or drop a class is February 4. The deadline to withdraw from a course is March 28.

Honor Code: The pledge of the W&M Honor Code states, “As a member of the William & Mary community, I pledge on my honor not to lie, cheat, or steal, either in my academic or personal life. I understand that such acts violate the Honor Code and undermine the community of trust, of which we are all stewards.” I expect you to uphold this pledge in your classwork; all of the work you produce for this course should be your own. We will devote class time to the ethical use of sources, but if you have additional questions about avoiding plagiarism, please ask me.

VI. **RESOURCES FOR IMPROVING WRITING, RESEARCH, AND STUDY SKILLS**

The Writing Resources Center, located on the first floor of Swem Library, is a free service provided to W&M students. Trained consultants offer individual assistance with writing, presentation, and other communication assignments across disciplines and at any stage, from generating ideas to polishing a final product. To make an appointment, visit the WRC webpage: www.wm.edu/wrc.

Swem Library Research Librarians are available to help you find the resources you need for any research project or paper. Make a research appointment online through the Swem Library home page: libraries.wm.edu.

The TutorZone offers free time management consultations and tools to help students improve their time management and college-level study skills. Contact the TutorZone at tutorzone@wm.edu. Or [visit their website](#) to make an appointment.

VII. STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES (SAS)

William & Mary accommodates students with disabilities in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2512 or at sas@wm.edu to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation.

VIII. SYLLABUS ICONS



[Article Summary \(Present\)](#)



[Consulting Toolkit \(Check-in\)](#)



[Consultant Handbook Checklist \(Deadline\)](#)



[Conferences \(Schedule\)](#)



[Revisions \(Optional\)](#)

IX. WRIT 399 COURSE SCHEDULE

 [Article Summary](#)
 [Consulting Toolkit](#)
 [Conferences](#)
 [Checklist](#)
 [Revisions](#)

DATE	IN-CLASS	READING	ASSIGNMENT
INTRODUCTIONS			
M Jan 25	Staff Meeting Meet the consultants		
W Jan 26	Introduction to Course		
FOUNDATIONS			
M Jan 31		Murphy and Sherwood, "The Tutoring Process: Exploring Paradigms and Practices"	Bring to class one question or observation about the syllabus.
W Feb 2		Lerner, "Writing Center Pedagogy" Teller, "Are We Teaching..." Hesse, "We Know What Works..."	 Presenters: Make an appointment at the WRC.
M Feb 7	Staff Meeting Opening Day <i>Staff Meeting Topic:</i> <i>Professionalism in the Writing Center</i>	BG Chapter 1, "The Writing Center as Workplace"	Come to the staff meeting with a question for the current consultants. (Post your questions in the Bb Discussion Forum.)
W Feb 9		Bruffee, "Peer Tutoring and the Conversation of Mankind" North, "The Idea of the Writing Center"	 Presenters:
Th Feb 10 - Sa Feb 12	Conference: Southeastern Writing Center Association (SWCA)		Attend one or more sessions at the annual SWCA Conference (held via Zoom). Take notes and bring them to class Monday.

DATE	IN-CLASS	READING	ASSIGNMENT
M Feb 14	What did we learn from the SWCA conference sessions?		Bring your notes about SWCA session(s) attended. 
W Feb 16		Lunsford, "Collaboration, Control, and the Idea of a Writing Center" Ede, "Writing as a Social Process"	 Presenters:
PRAXIS AND PROCESS			
M Feb 21	Staff Meeting <i>Staff Meeting Topic: Questioning the Question</i>	BG Chapter 2 "Inside the Tutoring Session" Capdevielle, "Why Do You Ask?"	DUE: Reflection 1 -- "How I Write"
W Feb 23		Johns, "Discourse Communities and Communities of Practice" Rothrock, "No Good Writers: Why Discourse Community Matters"	 Presenters:
M Feb 28		Mackiewicz and Thompson, "Motivational Scaffolding" BG Chapter 3 "Tutoring Writers through the Writing Process"	
W Mar 2		Brooks, "Minimalist Tutoring" Carino, "Power and Authority in Peer Tutoring"	 Presenters:
TUTORING AND IDENTITY			
M Mar 7	Staff Meeting <i>Staff Meeting Topic: English Language Learners at W&M</i> *Trainees sign up for one consulting hour per week.	Video: Writing Across Borders [29:58] Video: Cultural and Linguistic Awareness [6:49] Leki, "Before the Conversation"	DUE: Reflection 2 -- "Consultant as Consultee" 
W Mar 9	Participation Self-Assessment	Myers, "Reassessing the 'Proofreading Trap'" Nan, "Bridging the Gap"	 Presenters: 

DATE	IN-CLASS	READING	ASSIGNMENT
M Mar 14	Spring Break		
W Mar 16	Spring Break		
M Mar 21	Staff Meeting <i>Staff Meeting Topic:</i> <i>Decoding the Assignment Sheet</i> *Trainees begin consulting one hour per week.	Kendall, "The Assignment Sheet Mystery"	
W Mar 23		Kiedaisch and Dinitz, "Changing Notions of Difference" Grimm, "New Conceptual Frameworks" BG Chapter 4, "The Writers You Tutor"	 Presenters: 
M Mar 28		Rinaldi, "Disability in the Writing Center" Babcock, "When Something is Not Quite Right"	 Presenters:
W Mar 30		Denny, "Queering the Writing Center" Simpkins, "Meeting the Needs of LGBTQ Students in the Writing Center"	 Presenters:
TUTORING ACROSS FORMS AND DISCIPLINES			
M Apr 4	Staff Meeting <i>Staff Meeting Topic:</i> <i>Effective Ways to End a Session</i>		DUE: Reflection 3 -- "Consultation Observation" 
W Apr 6	Sign up for one chapter to read from the book <i>Multimodal Composing</i> .	BG Chapter 5, "Helping Writers across the Curriculum" <i>Disciplinary Writing Guides</i> (select and read two from unfamiliar fields)	

DATE	IN-CLASS	READING	ASSIGNMENT
M Apr 11		Grutsch McKinney “New Media Matters” One chapter from <i>Multimodal Composing: Strategies for Twenty-First-Century Writing Consultations</i> .	 Presenters:
REVISION AND INFORMATION LITERACY			
W Apr 13	Select one writing handbook for informal review.	Guptill, <i>Writing in College: From Competence to Excellence</i> , chapters 1-5.	
M Apr 18	Staff Meeting <i>Staff Meeting Topic: Addressing Various Tutoring Situations</i>	BG Chapters 6 and 7 “Addressing Various Tutoring Situations” “Tutoring in the Information Age”	
W Apr 20		Guptill, <i>Writing in College: From Competence to Excellence</i> , chapters 6-9.	Share your informal review of a writing handbook.
M Apr 25		McKeehen, “Critical Empathy and Collaborative Fact-Engagement” Pope Parker, “Writing with Evidence”	 Presenters:  
W Apr 27		Presentations	DUE: Presentation— “Crafting My Philosophy of Consulting”
M May 2	Staff Meeting <i>Staff Meeting Topic: Handling Difficult Consultations</i>	Blanda, “The ‘Other Side’ Is Not Dumb”	
W May 4	<i>Last Day of Class</i>	Presentations	
DATE	IN-CLASS	READING	ASSIGNMENT

Tu May 10	<i>Reflection 4 is due by noon (the end of our scheduled exam time).</i>		DUE: Reflection 4 -- “My Philosophy of Consulting”
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