



writing center



Happy 2015 from the MSU Writing Center! We at the Writing Center continue to be both excited and humbled by the community of writing that exists at MSU. Growing numbers of student writers are continually walking through our door. Through course partnerships, we are working with faculty in Political Science, Family and Consumer Sciences, Geographical Information Sciences, Engineering, and more. And we are reaching beyond our campus to a much wider community as well. This past week, we hosted several National Honor Society students from Bozeman High School, interested in starting a writing center of their own. Last semester, the Writing Center, along with the Department of English, hosted Michelle LaFrance, Director of the Writing Across the Curriculum Program at George Mason University for a week of conversations about writing with tutors, writing instructors, and faculty across the curriculum. Three of our undergraduate peer tutors traveled to Orlando to present at the International Writing Centers Association and National Conference on Peer Tutors of Writing. This community of writers, tutors, faculty, and peers – this community and the conversations within make this the dynamic space that it is.

Come join us! Writing happens here.

– Michelle Miley, Director and Assistant Professor of English

SPRING EVENTS

WRITE W/ US WEDNESDAYS

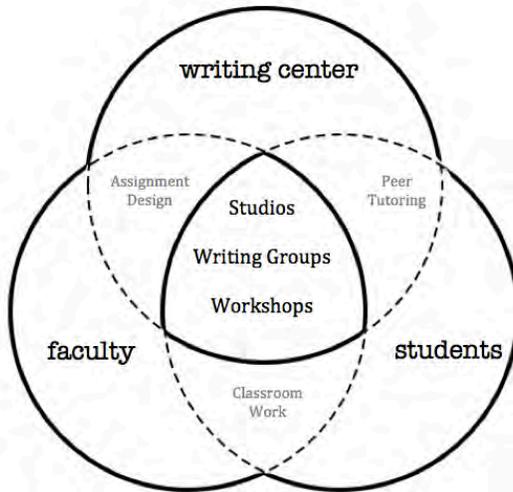
February 4, March 4,
April 1, and April 29
4:00-6:00pm
Wilson 1-114

WRITENIGHT @ the Library

Thursday, April 16th
5:00-7:00pm
Renne Library



Faculty Resources: Where Does the Writing Center Fit?



We at the Writing Center believe that we support our students best when we are in conversation with those teaching writing. We want to partner with you!

- **Class Presentations:** Our standard class presentation takes about 5-10 minutes and gives a brief who, what, when, where, how, and why of the Writing Center.
- **Syllabus Language:** If you would like to include a paragraph about the Writing Center in your syllabus, we're happy to send you verbiage.
- **Assignment Design Consultation:** Our Writing Center director will consult with you in designing your writing assignments.
- **GTA Consultation:** We will work with your GTAs to help them most effectively respond to your students' writing.
- **Writing Studios:** In a writing studio, students enrolled in a class meet regularly outside of the classroom space in small groups to actively work together on their research and writing. A Writing Center tutor facilitates these groups.
- **Workshops:** We have several writing workshops available upon request that can be modified to meet your specific course needs.

Wilson Hall Room 1-114

M / W / F:
8:30am-5:00pm
T / Th:
8:30am-7:00pm

Renne Library

First Floor Commons
Look Online for
Daytime Hours
Su - Th: 7:00-10:00pm

M - Th 5:30-7:00pm
WRIT 101 Specialists

Student Writers: Writing Center Support

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One-on-One Tutoring: for student writers of all disciplines at any stage in the writing process.

Certified ESL Specialists: certified ESL tutors, supported by the Office of International Programs, available for English language learners.

Writing Groups: time, space, and a facilitator for any group of writers.

Online Tutoring: one-on-one tutoring in our virtual space.

Chat with a Tutor: tutors online available to answer quick writing questions.

*Find our hours and locations at
www.montana.edu/writingcenter.*

A Talk with Michelle LaFrance

Director of Writing Across the Curriculum at George Mason University sits down with an MSU Writing Center Tutor.

As Director of Writing Across the Curriculum, you work with people across the disciplines. What is your own definition of 'discipline'?

ML: It's hard for me to define it, because everything we call a discipline is so different. But in essence I believe a discipline is the point at which knowledge meets practice, or where what we do cannot be separated from what we know.

On the other side of that, how might you define writing?

ML: Broadly, I'd define writing as a complex web of knowledge practices, with an intentional purpose to engage in what becomes an ongoing conversation. I think it's really important, however, no matter your 'definition,' for us all to know that writing is dynamic. It's not just one thing. When I talk to students about what writing consists of, the first reply is usually 'grammar,' as if that's all English or writing is. I think this results in some very over-determined, incredibly simplistic ideas about writing that filter through the public sphere.

Do you believe there is a potential universal way to utilize or teach writing across these disciplines?

ML: I don't believe we can approach writing as anything that has a universal form or function. I know there are definitely people who would disagree with me. What I would say is that if we're teaching writing or preparing students to be writers, what we're doing is not teaching them anything universal or even talking with them about writing in any universal way, but are or should really be equipping them with a set of analytical tools with which they will be able to understand and function within any writing situation.

Within that conversation, where do you think writing centers play a role?

ML: I really think that writing centers are the spirit or the soul of a culture about writing on most campuses. For me, the important thing about writing centers is that they meet each student where he or she is, and allow that interaction to bring that individual *thing* about writing, that individuality of writing situations, to life. You simply can't realistically do that in a writing class, where you have 25-plus students, as a single instructor. Yet it's that individual



conversation— Who's your audience? What's your purpose? What do you want to say? —with the student and whatever tutor is reading this draft that really brings out an importance and immediacy and vibrancy to writing that most writing classrooms can't spend much time on. The opportunities that writing centers present for that, I really feel you can't say enough about. And that's why they're so valuable. Because this thing that we do, this thing we call writing, is not universal. It's very different from situation to situation, and individuals then have very different strategies and tools to negotiate those differences in very different ways. So we need someone in addition to the teacher, someone who can meet them where they are, in the moment, in a place in a larger process.

Congratulations!

Three of our peer tutors presented at the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing in Orlando, FL on a panel titled "New Media: Re-imagining Writing Center Connections." In their presentation, Kerry Byrnes, Brooke Hampton, and Kelsey Weyerbacher questioned the relationship between new media and writing centers. Kerry and Kelsey were among only seven students at the conference to receive the prestigious \$300 Burkean Parlor Grant from the NCPTW. In addition, both tutors received a \$250 CLS Student Research Travel Grant.

Dr. Michelle Miley and Dr. Doug Downs also presented at the International Writing Center Association Conference, discussing the challenges of collaboration between Writing Centers and Writing Programs.

ESL Specialist: Laura Graham

Provided by Office of International Programs



Since she was little, Laura has been fascinated with languages. She studied Spanish, as well as Latin American and Caribbean Studies at the College of Charleston in South Carolina. Upon graduating, she moved to Buenos

Aires, where she began her career as a nomadic ESL teacher. She completed her CELTA teaching course in Lisbon, Portugal, where she has taught English and studied jewelry for the past five years. She is thrilled to be tutoring here in the lovely city of Bozeman.

Tutor Spotlight: Kerry Byrnes

What is your favorite part of working at the Writing Center?

I really value being a part of a dynamic writing community. Before I came to the Writing Center, I always wrote alone and my only conversations about writing occurred in the classroom. Now, I can talk about writing with students and faculty from every academic discipline.



Kerry is majoring in English Writing with a minor in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management.

What's something that you did not know about tutoring here before you started?

I did not know that my job would involve more than one-on-one tutoring. I've found myself in engineering classrooms discussing technical writing, in small studio groups facilitating conversations about science writing--even in DISNEY WORLD presenting original research to the international writing center community. In October 2014, I presented at the IWCA/NCPTW conference in Orlando, FL with two of my fellow peer tutors. Our panel presentation focused on how we use new media in MSU's Writing Center. To develop and explore questions that have emerged from my practice as a tutor--and to present what I've learned to the larger writing center community--has thus far been the highlight of my peer-tutoring career. I also learned a ton from other writing centers' presentations; overall, it was a magical experience that has inspired me to continue thinking about what we "do" in writing centers.