

ENGL 4390: Writing Center Pedagogy



Spring 2022

Modality: This is a face-to-face course that meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in Founder's Hall 212.

Instructor: Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr.

E-mail: bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu

Office: Warrior Hall 420A, the University Writing Center, or WebEx Meeting

Office Hours: Walk-in or Email for an Appointment

TAMUCT Course Description: This class introduces students to the theory, research, and practices of tutoring writing by engaging them with the prominent scholarship on writing centers while providing practical experience through observations, co-tutoring, and live tutoring hours in the University Writing Center.

Dr. Bowles' Course Description: This class introduces students to the theory, research, and practices of tutoring writing by engaging them with the prominent scholarship on writing centers while providing practical experience through observations, co-tutoring, and live tutoring hours in the University Writing Center (UWC). Students are encouraged to synthesize the scholarship on writing centers with their own experiences to form a comprehensive philosophy of tutoring that

is reflective and constantly open to revision. Upon successful completion of this course with a grade of a B or better, students are eligible to become tutors for the UWC.

Course Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Evaluate a broad variety of strategies for tutoring writing and their effectiveness in different contexts
- Investigate, and become conversant in, writing center theory and scholarship
- Discuss the composing challenges that various types of student populations confront
- Analyze their own history with writing and composing processes in order to understand the various ways in which students' writing processes can be aided in development
- Devise strategies to deal with specific problems and issues that arise in writing center tutorials
- Construct a comprehensive philosophy of tutoring that is reflective and constantly open to revision

Required Textbooks and Materials:

- *The Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors*, by Leigh Ryan and Lisa Zimmerelli, ISBN (13) #9781457650727
- Various .pdf articles and selections from major texts (available through Canvas)
- Access to a Computer (the university provides a number of computer labs)

Technology Requirements:

This course will use the A&M–Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome or Firefox browsers. Canvas no longer supports any version of Internet Explorer.

Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/>] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [<https://tamuct.onecampus.com/>]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal.

Username: Your MyCT email address; Password: Your MyCT password

Grading Scheme: Various activities and discussion board posts, three major projects, and completion of an internship will comprise students' grades. The weights for each component are as follows:

Activities and Discussion Boards= 10%

Internship Completion= 10%

“A Long Time Ago on a Notepad Far, Far Away! Composing Your Very Own Literacy Narrative”= 20%

“More Practice, More Problems! Finding Solutions to Common (and Not So Common) Writing Center Concerns”= 30%

“I Think, Therefore I Tutor! Constructing a Philosophy of Tutoring”= 30%

Once you submit a final assignment (not a draft) through Canvas, it is the text I will grade, and you will not be given the opportunity to revise. Make sure that the text you are submitting is one you can be proud of and is the text you want me to grade. (If, for any reason, you believe you have submitted the wrong text, please contact me as soon as you submit to rectify the issue.) **Remember, once you submit—that is it!**

Additionally, your grade also counts as the first criterion for your future employment with the UWC. **A student must receive a grade of a B or better to be eligible for employment with the UWC. However, a grade of a B does not automatically guarantee an offer of employment.**

Posting of Grades: All assignments will be returned to you through Canvas as a .doc or—in the case of discussion board posts—as feedback in Canvas. When your assignments are returned as a .doc, you will receive your grade after the end comment in the comment box.

I do not use Canvas to calculate grades. Instead, I use a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. A sample of the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for this course is available on the “Syllabus” page of our course Canvas site so you can see how your grade is calculated. I will go over this the first day of class as well.

At any time, you are free to email me to ask me to send you the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with your grades inputted. I can also provide you with a rough estimate of where your grade stands at that time. However, be alert that as a result of the weight of various assignments, your grade can change substantially when major projects are submitted.

Journals: Almost every class you will write in your journals for the first few minutes. You can either write by hand or type your journal entries. Most days, I will dictate a topic for you to write about. Think thoroughly about the topic, yet try to write continuously throughout the duration of the exercise. Sometimes, merely writing down your thoughts can help you to gain a better understanding of the topic and your own thought processes.

Activities: You will have a few asynchronous activities to complete throughout the semester. The activities you are asked to complete will vary substantially depending on the content being covered in class. However, you are expected to read the instructions for the activity carefully and complete all of the requirements of the activity within the parameters set forth.

Your activities will be graded on a 0-100 scale. Mere participation does not ensure a 100—you are expected to offer quality work in order to receive an exemplary grade.

Discussion Boards: You will participate in discussion boards at other times as well. Most often, the initial discussion board topics and/or questions will be predetermined. Some weeks, however, they will be more wide open.

You should contribute a total of at least three times (or as many times as the prompt indicates) to the discussion board throughout the week, including making your first post by the date indicated. Your initial contributions should be roughly the equivalent of one to two pages double-spaced each; your replies to classmates should be two to three paragraphs. Furthermore, make sure to directly engage with what other students in the class are discussing and questioning.

Your discussion board posts should form a cohesive thread and narrative with the discussions of your classmates. Just posting to the board is not enough—you need to enter into a conversation with your peers!

As with your activities, grades will be awarded on a 0-100 scale and will account for both your initial post as well as your contributions throughout the week.

Internship: In order for you to gain experience tutoring writing, during the second half of the semester (weeks 9-16) you will tutor for 1 ½ hours in the Texas A&M University–Central Texas UWC in lieu of attending class on Wednesdays. Initially, you will observe the experienced tutors of the UWC in their sessions. Then, your first few appointments will be as a co-tutor working alongside one of our experienced tutors. After your initial co-tutoring sessions, you will tutor independently.

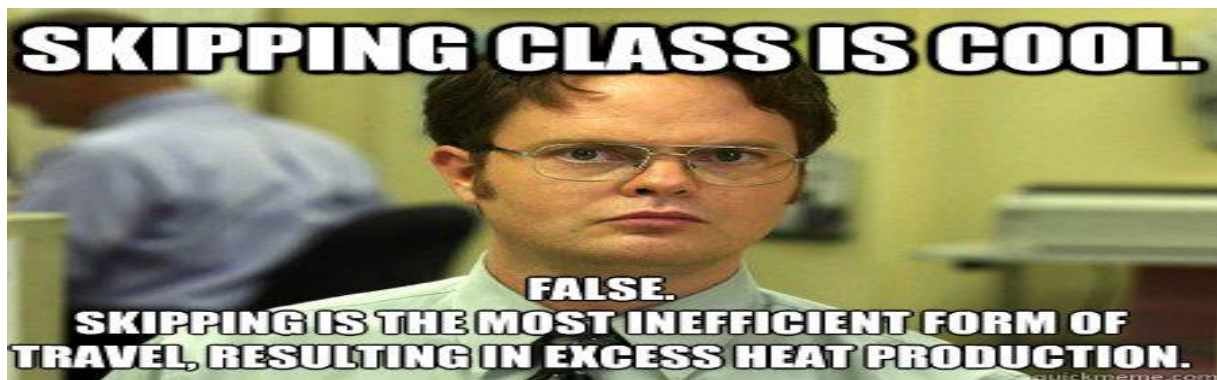
In order to successfully complete this course, you are required to complete this internship. Successful completion will require you to be present and ready to tutor during all hours that you are scheduled (unless you have a conflict you have previously discussed with me or a sudden illness that prevents you from fulfilling your scheduled hours). You are also expected to maintain a professional demeanor, including appropriate attire, polite engagement with the students you tutor, completion of any necessary paperwork, etc.

If, at any time during your internship, your performance or behavior indicate that you are unable to handle the responsibility of tutoring students in the UWC, I reserve the right to remove you from tutoring in the UWC and assign alternative work in order to enable you to complete the internship component of the course. Such a removal will also potentially result in a reduction of your grade for the internship component of the class and almost assuredly mean that you will not be hired to work for the UWC.

Remember, if you successfully complete this course with a grade of a B or higher, you will be eligible to work in the UWC for the summer semester on forward, yet your grade alone will not be the only determining factor—this internship is your opportunity to show me that you are ready for this responsibility!

Class Attendance Policy: Attending class is vital if you are to get the most out of this course and to build a productive community of engaged learners. As a result, I do require that you have **no more than three uninformed absences** throughout the semester. You will lose points for every uninformed absence thereafter.

The distinction between uninformed and informed absences is critical here. An uninformed absence occurs when you do not contact me ahead of class (or immediately after) to alert me to your absence, do not provide a reasonable rationale for the absence, and do not discuss how you will engage with the material from the class that day in order to account for the absence. If you inform me of your absence, though, provide a reasonable rationale for the absence (in rare instances, I may ask for documentation), and discuss with me how you will engage with the material you missed, your absence will be considered an informed absence and will not be counted against you. I am more than willing to work with you if you miss class. **However, these issues cannot be dealt with retroactively at the end of the semester. This is your one and only warning.**



If you have more than three uninformed absences by the end of the semester, your grade will be penalized 10 points—an entire letter grade—for each unexcused absence beyond three. I will inform you when you have two uninformed absences; additionally, I will inform you each time you receive a 10 point penalty. You may contest any uninformed absence, yet you will need to provide tangible evidence as to how you informed me or why you were unable to inform me.

Lastly, incompletes should be reserved for unexpected, life altering situations that develop after the drop deadline. Students should drop a course should something happen that prevents them from completing the course ahead of the drop deadline. Failure to do so may result in failing grades on assignments or the course if missing work is not completed and submitted before the last day of the semester. Please let me know immediately if serious health or life issues prevent you from attending class or submitting assignments.

Class Civility Policy: This class will tolerate neither disruptive language nor disruptive behavior. Disruptive language includes, but is not limited to, violent and/or belligerent and/or insulting remarks, including sexist, racist, homophobic or anti-ethnic slurs, bigotry, and disparaging commentary, either spoken or written (offensive slang is included in this category). While each of you has a right to your own opinions, inflammatory language founded in ignorance or hate is unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately.



Disruptive behavior includes the use of cell phones, pagers, or any other form of electronic communication during the class session (email, web-browsing, etc.). Disruptive behavior also includes whispering or talking when another member of the class is speaking or engaged in relevant conversation (remember that I am a member of this class as well). This classroom functions on the premise of respect, and you will be asked to leave the classroom if you violate any part of this statement on civility.

However, please do feel free to engage in constructive criticism and debates. This policy is not meant to discourage disagreement or passionate conversation. We will be engaging in discussions and/or debates about a host of potentially controversial topics; it is not my intention to censor your opinions. Yet, I do feel it is

important to foster an environment conducive to learning where no one feels threatened and/or not entitled to their opinion.

Remember, if you disagree with someone (including myself), always remember to argue against the **IDEA** the person is presenting—not the individual.

Late Work: While I understand that circumstances may arise that could prevent you from turning an assignment in on time, **I penalize late work severely! You will lose 10 points from your grade for each day that the assignment is late.** Here is a breakdown of how the penalties will be applied:

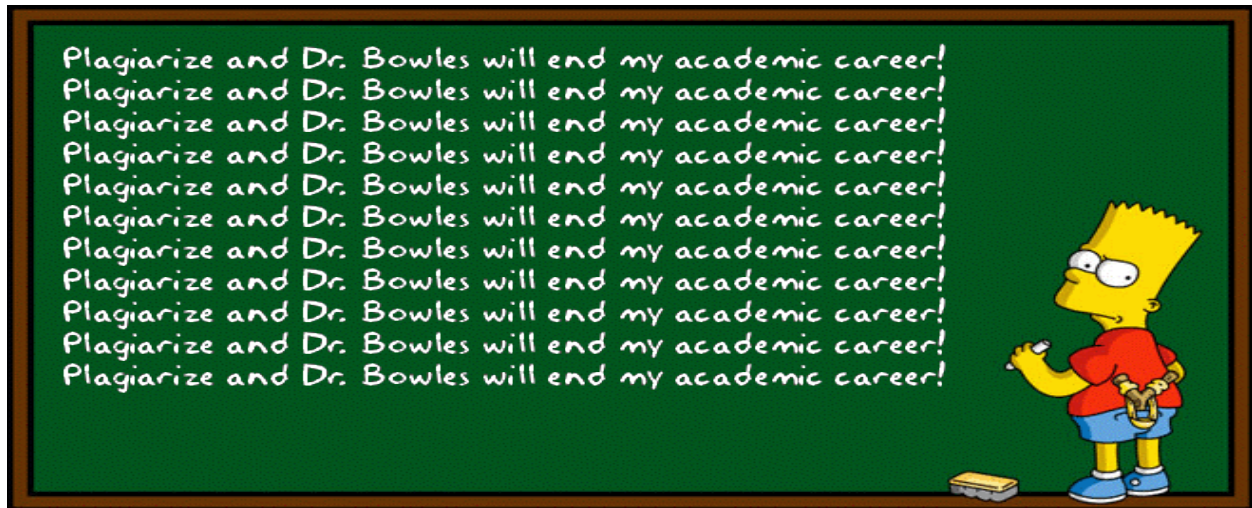
15 minutes–24 hours late= -10 points
24 hours, 1 minute–48 hours late= -20 points
48 hours, 1 minute–72 hours late= -30 points
72 hours, 1 minute–96 hours late= -40 points
96 hours, 1 minute–120 hours late= -50 points
120 hours, 1 minute–144 hours late= -60 points
144 hours, 1 minute–168 hours late= -70 points
168 hours, 1 minute–192 hours late= -80 points
192 hours, 1 minute–216 hours late= -90 points
216 hours late or more= 0 for the assignment

However, **I am always willing to discuss extensions ahead of time.** If you have a reasonable reason why you believe you should be entitled to an extension, either come see me after class, arrange to visit me in my office or the UWC, or e-mail me. **Once an extension is agreed upon in writing, the due date of the extension will become your new due date. Penalties will then only be incurred predicated off of the new due date.**

Academic Integrity: Texas A&M University–Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M–Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student’s academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student’s work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university’s Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university’s standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

Class Plagiarism Policy: As an instructor, I operate by the WPA (Council of Writing Program Administrators) definition of plagiarism: “In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer **deliberately** uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.” The key here is deliberate—I do not want you to be so paranoid about plagiarism that it inhibits your creativity.

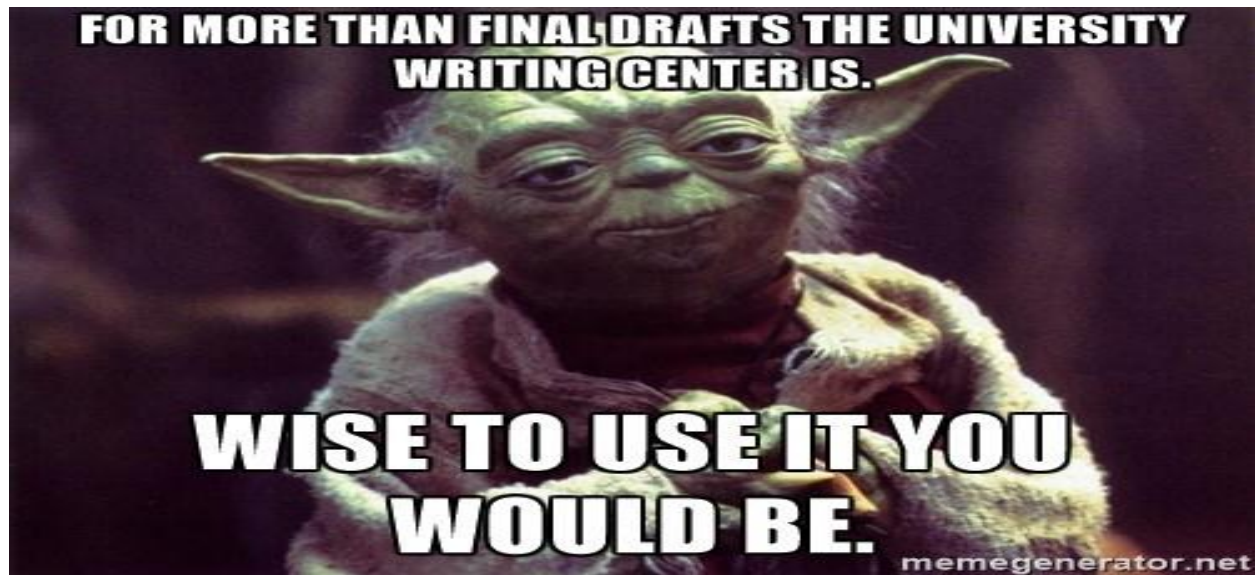
To that extent, any instance of “plagiarism” that **does not appear to be deliberate in intent** will be dealt with “in house.” You may be asked to revise; I may even deduct from your grade if this was a result of negligence. However, unless intentional, you will not fail merely as a result of plagiarism nor will you be brought up on plagiarism charges.



That being said, **deliberate plagiarism will not be tolerated in any manner.** If you willfully steal someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledgment, or submit an assignment for this class that you submitted for another (without previously discussing it with me), **be forewarned—you will receive a 0 for the assignment, and I will pursue plagiarism charges with the utmost zeal!** Such behavior hinders your learning, is unfair to your classmates, is a violation of my trust, and—above all else—is highly unethical. **This is your one and only warning—you would be wise to heed it!**

University Writing Center: Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (A&M–Central Texas) is a free service open to all A&M–Central Texas students. For the Spring 2022 semester, the hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday in Warrior Hall 416 (with online tutoring available every hour as well) with satellite hours available online only Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. and Saturday 12:00-3:00 p.m.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students’ ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students’ texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!



Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by making an appointment via WOnline at <https://tamuct.mywconline.com/>. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC, need any assistance with scheduling, or would like to schedule a recurring appointment with your favorite tutor.

Tutoring: Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both virtually and in-person. Student success coaching is available online upon request.

If you have a question, are interested in becoming a tutor, or in need of success coaching contact the Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion at (254) 501-5836, visit the Warrior Center at 212 Warrior Hall, or by emailing WarriorCenter@tamuct.edu.

To schedule tutoring sessions and view tutor availability, please visit [Tutor Matching Services](https://tutormatchingservice.com/TAMUCT) [<https://tutormatchingservice.com/TAMUCT>] or visit the Tutoring Center in 111 Warrior Hall.

Chat live with a remote tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas except writing support. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Library: The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 400,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 96,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled

for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place virtually through WebEx, Microsoft Teams or in-person at the library. [Schedule an appointment here](https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments/?g=6956) [https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments/?g=6956]. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].

Canvas Support: Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select “Chat with Canvas Support,” submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953. For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Technology Support: For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

Web Chat: <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student. For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Drop Policy: If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a Drop Request Form:

https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar’s Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed, and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar’s Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar’s Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Accommodations: At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university’s

programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations, please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. For more information, please visit our [Access & Inclusion](#) Canvas page (log-in required) [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717>].

Important Information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students: Texas A&M University–Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs’ Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit the [Student Affairs](#) web page: <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html>. Students may also contact the institution’s Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](#) online, please visit the website: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>.

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator.

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas: Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don’t agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don’t be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](#): <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php>.



Artifact Collection: To ensure the learning outcomes are met in the B.A. in English program, there is a program-wide artifact collection process. To that end, artifacts from ENGL 4390: Writing Center Pedagogy this semester may be used for programmatic assessment. Please note that all efforts will be made to keep your identity anonymous; as such, all identifying markers will be removed from your work if used for programmatic assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu.

Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the grading scheme, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

ENGL 4390: Writing Center Pedagogy

Major Projects

“A Long Time Ago on a Notepad Far, Far Away! Composing Your Very Own Literacy Narrative”

(approximately 5 pages double-spaced)

Each time we sit down to compose, we bring to that particular text more than just the experiences of the current moment or our thoughts at the present time. Instead, our past experiences with writing, reading, and learning are a crucial element involved in our composing process, influencing how we perceive the present situation in a variety of ways.

Being reflective about our literacy development is not only vital to being an effective writer but also critical to being an effective tutor. Much like us, every time students visit the UWC, they are bringing to that particular tutoring session a myriad of past experiences that affect how they perceive you as a tutor and the specific text they wish to work on, the manner in which they view themselves as writers, the perspectives they view the current rhetorical situation through, etc. By reflecting on your own literacy experiences, you can gain a better understanding of your own development, an understanding that will benefit your tutoring practices.



Your first assignment asks you to compose a literacy narrative. Broadly defined, a literacy narrative is a story of reading and writing; a literacy narrative depicts, and reflects upon, events that were formative in your particular development as a writer, reader, and communicator. Unlike some other genres, a literacy narrative is less defined in terms of structure. Some of you may choose to write a chronological history of your literacy development; others might decide to depict snapshots of their literacy development that are non-linear in time; a few of you may choose to include dialogue while others will not; certain students might focus on their early childhood while others will primarily depict their struggles and triumphs with literacy during adulthood. In essence, there is no “right” or “wrong” way to structure your literacy narrative.

That being said, it is paramount that your literacy narrative provides analytical reflection about how the story you choose to tell has influenced the writer, reader, and communicator you have become. Take the time to reflect upon the readings and discussions we have had in class so

far. Were you labeled a remedial student early in your education like many past writing center clients, or were you perhaps praised for your language abilities as a child? What role did your family and/or your community play in your literacy development? Did a particular teacher ignite your passion for reading and writing? Or, perhaps, did a particular teacher hinder your literacy development and confidence? When you compose, is it primarily for educational contexts or for your own personal fulfillment? What particularities of your own writing process are unique and play a vital role in the manner in which you compose? As you have probably noticed, the possibilities and directions for this assignment are limitless.

This project will also serve as your introduction to the UWC. As part of your assignment, you are required to make an appointment at the UWC to discuss your literacy narrative. You can make this appointment at any point during your writing process, whether you are brainstorming ideas, trying to find an appropriate organizational structure, polishing a final draft, etc. Be prepared to potentially write about this appointment for the class discussion board and discuss it in class as well.

Your literacy narrative should be approximately five pages double-spaced to be properly developed, incorporate at least two sources from the readings we have already completed (or will complete by the time the assignment is due), and follow proper MLA formatting and citation practices.

Evaluation for this project will primarily be based upon your ability to articulate a compelling narrative about your literacy development, the quality and effectiveness of the manner in which you organize your text, your engagement with—and integration of—the readings and discussions from class, and the overall polished nature of your finished product (e.g. grammar, proofreading, MLA style, etc.). The main question I will ask myself when assessing your “A Long Time Ago on a Notepad Far, Far Away! Composing a Your Very Own Literacy Narrative” project will be: *Does this student present a compelling narrative of their literacy development that demonstrates an understanding of both the primary influences on their literacy development as well as integrates the readings and discussions from class?*

**“More Practice, More Problems! Finding Solutions to Common (and Not So Common)
Writing Center Concerns”
(approx. 5-6 pages double-spaced and a 5-7 min. presentation)**

Unfortunately, tutoring is not an easy, formulaic endeavor. In any given tutoring session, we can encounter a host of problems that will test our limits as tutors and educators as well as, at times, our ethics and values. Your second major project asks you to identify a particular tension, problem, or ethical dilemma that can arise in a tutoring session and compose a written analysis of the dilemma that depicts the problem, delves into why it is a dilemma for tutoring, explores the available research on this issue, and suggests methods for properly handling the situation and/or appropriately resolving the dilemma. You will also give a 5-7 minute presentation to the class based on this analysis.

Examples of dilemmas include, but are not limited to:

- A student wants you to proofread his paper for him and show him all of the mistakes so he can get an A.
- After you point out something you absolutely know needs to be attended to in a piece of writing (or is absolutely wrong), the student still insists on proceeding in the same manner.
- A student comes to the UWC with feedback from her instructor that is highly critical and dismissive of the student’s abilities.
- The assignment an instructor assigned to one of the students you are tutoring makes absolutely no sense and is convoluted to the point of causing utter confusion for both the student and you.
- A student is using African American Vernacular English (AAVE), one of a variety of world Englishes, or another dialect that is frequently looked down upon for a class in which you know the instructor is strict about using Standard American English.
- While reading a student’s text, you come across content that you find highly offensive.
- As you read a student’s text, you realize she is making an argument with which you passionately disagree.
- During a session, a student becomes emotional and starts crying.
- While reading a student’s text, you begin to suspect plagiarism.
- A student demands that you tell him what grade he will receive on his assignment based on the rubric he has brought with him.



Once you have selected a topic, you will want to research what the scholarship has to say about the particular tension you are examining. You are allowed to draw on the readings from the class; however, you should also have at least two sources for your project and presentation from outside the required readings for the course as well. Take the time to explore what the best scholars in writing center research have to say about your topic.

After you have completed your research, you will compose your analysis, making sure that you frame the problem, explore why it is a dilemma, delve into the available scholarship on the issue, and provide suggestions for rectifying the dilemma in a productive fashion for all parties involved (if possible). Your analysis should be approximately five to six pages double-spaced and in APA format.

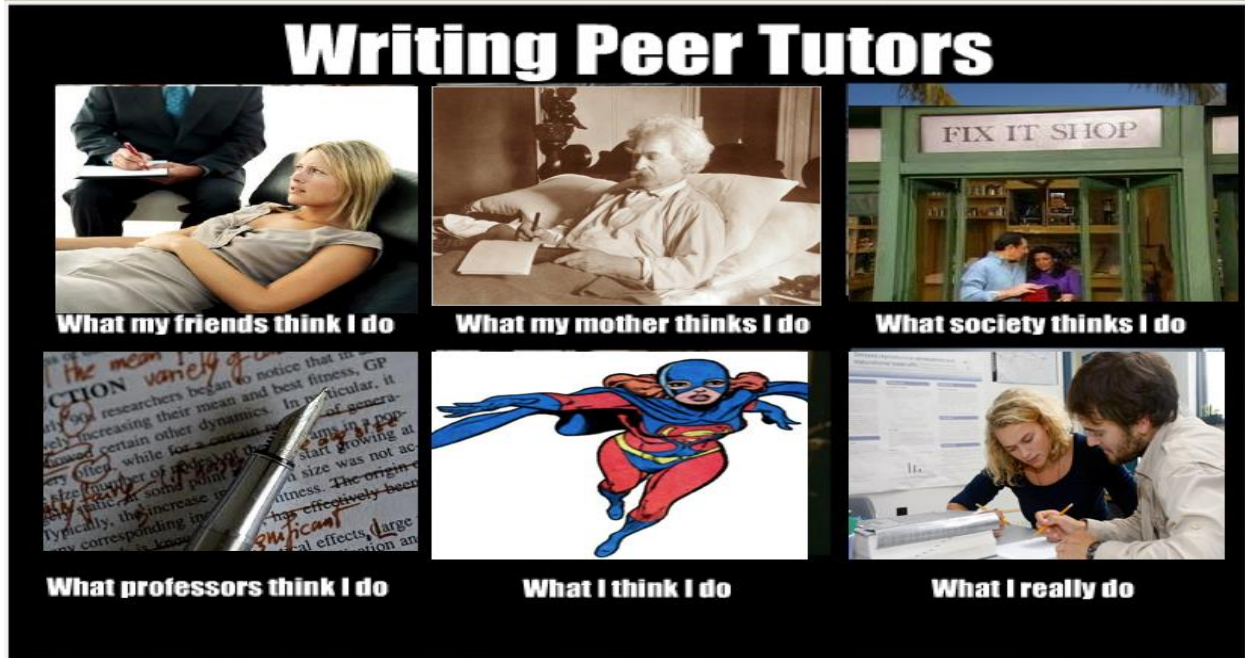
You will also create a five to seven minute presentation on your dilemma. Although the organization and style of your presentation is up to you, you are required to have at least one visual, auditory, and/or kinesthetic aid. Overall, you can approach this presentation in a variety of fashions. Some students will approach this presentation with a more traditional, linear approach; other students might use a short video, skit, anecdote, etc. to peak interest; certain students might even choose to make the entire presentation participatory. The choice is yours, yet make sure it is rhetorically effective.

The written analysis and presentation will each count for half of your grade with the average of the two determining the overall grade for your project. Your written analysis will primarily be assessed on the manner in which you frame—and persuade—your readers that this is a problem in writing center theory and practice; your ability to explore the ethical, epistemological, and pedagogical complexities of the subject in a nuanced fashion; the depth of your research; the validity—and practicality—of the solutions you provide; and the overall polish of your work (e.g. grammar, proofreading, APA style, etc.). Your presentation will primarily be assessed on your ability to articulate the dilemma you have chosen and provide relevant research, how engaging your presentation is, your public speaking skills (e.g. clear voice, engaging tone, avoiding verbal pauses, etc.), and—most importantly—your ability to provide practical solutions to such a dilemma for your peers. When I evaluate your written analysis and presentation for your “More Practice, More Problems! Finding Solutions to Common (and Not So Common) Writing Center Concerns” project, the primary question I will ask myself is: *Did this student demonstrate an acute awareness of why this particular dilemma is critical to contemplate and address for writing center pedagogy (framed within writing center scholarship) while also providing valuable insights into how to resolve such a dilemma?*

“I Think, Therefore I Tutor! Constructing a Philosophy of Tutoring”
(approx. 6-7 pages double-spaced)

Hopefully, if I have done my job well this semester (and that is probably a big “if”), you will have noticed how theory and practice are connected in a reciprocal relationship; theory drives our practice yet our practice also informs our theory. Throughout the course of the semester, you have had the opportunity to engage with various perspectives, theories, and research from the scholarship on writing centers. In addition, you were able to gain first-hand experience tutoring. For your final assignment, you will need to integrate both of these in order to form your own philosophy of tutoring.

Teaching and/or tutoring philosophies are a difficult genre, to say the least. You need to articulate both the rationales and theories that drive your practice as well as describe what these rationales and theories look like in practice. However, although this is a daunting task, it is a task that will benefit you immensely. Reflecting on why we do what we do allows us to question, and improve upon, our practice.



To get started, you will want to reflect upon what aspects of tutoring writing you think are most vital to being a successful tutor. You might ask yourself questions such as: What does it mean to compose? Are there particular theories of composing that are crucial to understand to be successful? How do you teach students these theories of composition? What, specifically, is your role as a tutor? Why should a tutor inhabit such a role? How do you balance tensions such as focusing on content vs. grammar, being facilitative as opposed to directive, etc.? Please use these questions as a heuristic to guide your brainstorming; you do not need to address every single question and you are quite free, and expected, to explore other questions/issues you believe are pertinent to tutoring writing.

Once you have an idea of the topics and issues you want to address in your tutoring philosophy, you will want to organize them in an intriguing manner that will engage your readers

but also allow for a *cohesive* vision of what it means to tutor writing. In essence, your tutoring philosophy should address several aspects of tutoring writing yet should also make a central claim as to what makes for successful tutoring of writing.

You will also want to incorporate the writing center scholarship we have read and discussed in class (or that you have discovered by working on your other projects) to provide evidence and support for your claims or, conversely, to argue against that scholarship, if you are so inclined. Remember, you are not required to agree with everything we have read nor are you expected to articulate the tutoring philosophy you believe I would like to read. This is *your* tutoring philosophy—take pride in it and make sure it reflects your attitudes and beliefs about writing and the tutoring of writing.

Your “I Think, Therefore I Tutor! Constructing a Philosophy of Tutoring” project should be approximately six to seven pages double-spaced and follow proper MLA, APA, or Chicago style formatting and citation practices. Assessment for this assignment will primarily focus on the depth of your articulations in regard to your theory and practice, the quality of your organizational structure and your ability to convey a cohesive philosophy of tutoring, your ability to integrate writing center scholarship to support your assertions or serve as a foil to your assertions, and the overall polished nature of your finished product (e.g. grammar, proofreading, MLA/APA/Chicago style, etc.). The final question I will ask myself when I assess you “I Think, Therefore I Tutor! Constructing a Philosophy of Tutoring” project will be: *How well does this future tutor articulate their philosophy of tutoring in order to demonstrate that they are ready to tutor writing in the UWC at Texas A&M University–Central Texas?*