A Study of Writing within Discipline-Specific Writing Support Centers: Expanding our Definitions

Rebecca A. Morrison

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Diana L. George, Committee Chair
Katrina M. Powell
James M. Dubinsky
Quinn Warnick

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores discipline-specific writing support spaces in an attempt to better understand disciplinary writing from various perspectives. Neal Lerner suggests that writing center scholarship would benefit from interdisciplinary work; therefore, I investigate spaces that are uniquely positioned in disciplines to identify disciplinary questions within writing center work. These spaces will allow writing center professionals to gain a better understanding of the intersections between writing in the disciplines and writing center work, and the writing center's role in student learning, from within the disciplines. We can then integrate these interdisciplinary frameworks into writing center scholarship to broaden perspectives and subsequently better accommodate students across disciplines. This scholarship could offer some clarity as we try to expand our scholarly purview in order to identify some of the questions writing center professionals should be asking.

Through ten interviews from three different academic institution, this dissertation interrogates questions that have been embedded within writing center scholarship for decades. This dissertation shows the prominence of the generalist / specialist debate, the "students can't write" narrative, and explores a situated learning theory in writing center practice. While there has been valuable research done in writing center research and scholarship in an attempt to move writing centers out of the margins, many writing centers still maintain a marginalized status to some faculty and administrators within their institutions. Unless we shift the perception of, and the narratives coming from, writing centers, we might be replaced by writing support centers that are not affiliated with writing centers. These writing support spaces, as shown in this

dissertation, provide students a plethora of discipline-specific resources, often including research and communication. If writing centers do not distinguish themselves as a place that can help students across disciplines, writing centers might move from a marginalized position into having no position within the institution at all.

For writing center scholars, professionals, and students, the findings of this dissertation mean that as writing centers attempt to accommodate students who write in the disciplines, our identity potentially becomes distorted. Therefore, we must pay special attention to the narratives we use in the writing center and subsequently circulate to our faculty. We have an opportunity to reconsider those narratives and offer a new theoretical framework for how we conceive of and define writing center work. If we do not adapt a situated learning theory in writing centers, we might consider other alternatives so that writing support spaces, such as those highlighted here, do not replace writing centers altogether. Those of us who are involved in writing center theory and practice have a responsibility to consider the alternative venues students might seek for help and to, as a community, identify best practices and theoretical frameworks as writing centers seek to accommodate disciplinary writers.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction: Discipline-Specific Writing Center Satellites

At the outset of my dissertation, I was interested in exploring spaces that Kristin Walker called discipline-specific writing centers ("The Debate" 29) in order to better understand disciplinary writing. As a master's student, I was lucky enough to work in a writing center where my business background was valued as a skill unique to my peers, and I was asked to help develop and facilitate the business school's discipline-specific writing center satellite. During my time in the satellite, I was intrigued by the seemingly altered approach to tutoring and tutor training at the business school. I assumed that the "differences" had something to do with disciplinary writing. In other words, I thought because writing in business courses is different from writing in English courses, the tutors in the business satellite might need to alter their tutoring practice to accommodate the students' disciplinary writing needs.

While my research questions for this dissertation focus on the development of discipline-specific writing center satellites, tutoring practices, and institutional structures, ultimately I discovered something much different than I had anticipated. Surprisingly, I found that the stories writing centers thought they were moving away from still resonated within the condensed spaces of the discipline-specific writing center satellites. Two narratives, in particular, surfaced: "students can't write" and "you're not doing your job." The "students can't write" narrative has a long-standing reign among faculty across disciplines. Although writing center professionals do not suggest "students can't write" explicitly, they are potentially perpetuating the narrative by continuing to echo the sentiments of faculty across disciplines. The "you're not doing your job" narrative is a subsequent narrative to students can't write. If students cannot write, then *someone* (i.e. writing centers, first-year writing instructors, etc.) is not doing their job teaching writing.

My own growing awareness of the persistence of these two narratives seemed to clash with the realization that many writing centers continue to struggle to validate their worth to the institutions within which they are housed. Jackie Grutsch McKinney suggests that narratives can be dangerous and cause writing centers to fracture and once again be known as remedial, "fix-it shops." Additionally, these narratives can narrow our view for future work. What we will see throughout the chapters of this dissertation is that the "students can't write narrative" has been internalized not only by some discipline-specific writing center satellites, but by students they serve as well. McKinney argues that once these narratives are internalized, they narrow "the gaze of writing center practitioners and scholars, shaping their research and practice" (McKinney 9). Therefore, as we continue to research writing centers and publish writing center scholarship, we might continue to carefully consider our guiding questions and think about the kinds of questions writing center professionals and scholars should be asking.

Early on, much of writing center scholarship echoed composition scholarship—studies in cognitive learning in the 1980s and 1990s, for example ("Dependency" Pemberton). Writing center scholars have recently explored new territory within their scholarship which includes the consideration of working with students whose first language is not English (ESL) (Bruce and Rafoth), students with disabilities (Brizee et al.; Cook and Bennett; Hewett), and technology within the writing center (Carpenter and Lee). As we will see in Chapter 2, composition scholarship and writing center scholarship parallel each other in other ways as well. Even so, Neal Lerner, one of the most prominent voices in writing center scholarship today, has recently charged the field with being too insular in its publishing practices, too hesitant to go outside the few journals dedicated specifically to writing centers ("The Unpromising Present"). To gain a better understanding of just how insular writing center research is, Lerner traces the authorship

and citation practices of *The Writing Center Journal* over the course of 29 years. He suggests, "*WCJ* has been dominated by single-authored articles that are citing sources that largely appear just once [except for North's article] and the most frequent source for citations is *WCJ* itself" (Lerner, "The Unpromising Present" 68). Lerner argues that "articles previously appearing in *WCJ* are by far the articles most likely to be cited in *WCJ* [which] is one indication of an inward gaze or a tight-knit genealogy that does not quite seem healthy for […] future generations" of writing centers ("The Unpromising Present" 68). As an example of our insularity, Lerner notes that missing from writing center journal citations are more general composition journals such as *CCC* and *College English*. Further, writing center scholars do not often cite writing from within the disciplines in their work. As Lerner suggests, we need to venture outside of writing center studies to gain new perspectives. Before I move any further into the dissertation, it would be worthwhile to extend our gaze into the disciplines to identify the ways in which writing is being taught.

The Teaching of Writing by Instructors in the Disciplines

Engineering

Within the sciences, particularly within engineering, there has been increased interest in the teaching of disciplinary writing. In 1932, an accreditation system now known as the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) was created to set educational standards for institutions. According to abet.org, "From the very start, our educational standards have served as the basis of quality against which professional engineers are held for licensure. After over 80 years of refining our processes, [ABET] remain[s] the benchmark for the engineering professions" (Engineering Accreditation Committee). As the ABET standards have evolved over the last several decades, an emphasis on communication, writing, and speaking has

been placed within the outcomes. "These criteria are intended to assure quality and to foster the systematic pursuit of improvement in the quality of engineering education that satisfies the needs of constituencies in a dynamic and competitive environment" (Engineering Accreditation Committee). Further, "It is the responsibility of the institution seeking accreditation of an engineering program to demonstrate clearly that the program meets the […] criteria" (Engineering Accreditation Committee). Accreditation is vital to an institution's growth and ongoing success; therefore, reaching the criteria set by ABET is of utmost priority for engineering programs. Since the turn of the century, then, there has been an increase of literature from those in the disciplines who discuss the difficulties of teaching writing. A quick overview of this literature will be helpful to trace issues that arise when teaching writing within the disciplines and will potentially offer a perspective different than Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) directors typically discern when they train those in the disciplines to teach writing through a composition lens. Investigating a small corpus of texts outside of writing center studies and the rhetoric, writing, and composition disciplines will help us gain a broader perspective on how writing in the disciplines is taught by those in the disciplines, which will provide us with valuable insight as writing centers try to expand their scholarly purview.

In "A Team of Equals: Teaching Writing in the Sciences," Lisa Emerson, Bruce MacKay, Marion MacKay, and Keith Funnell claim that the WAC literature they used to inform their research "did not appear to offer the balance of power we required as an approach to integrating the skills of our group" (Emerson et al. 69). In other words, Emerson, MacKay, MacKay, and Funnell suggest the writing across the curriculum model did not integrate all the skills they felt were required to develop a writing curriculum within the sciences. They also contend there was a lack of disciplinary diversity within WAC literature as of 2006 (Emerson et al.). Therefore,

Emerson et al. argue for an action research approach, which diagnoses a problem and then implements a solution quickly, to implement a kind of WAC program into their university. The authors offer a model for the teaching of writing within the sciences to develop a long-term solution, "in the sense of not relying on the presence of a writing consultant in the long run" (Emerson et al. 69). The results of their study suggest that the collaborative nature of action research while developing a WAC program generate bonds and trust among faculty, and between faculty and students—which the authors posit is lacking in current WAC programs and literature (Emerson et al.).

Sarah Gassman, Michelle Maher, and Briana Timmerman discuss their experience with the development of a graduate course to teach writing in engineering in their article "Supporting Students' Disciplinary Writing in Engineering Education." The authors argue, "Graduate students typically learn how to write for their discipline through intensive hands-on guidance from their faculty mentor," yet faculty often lack proper pedagogical training to teach writing (Gassman, Maher, and Timmerman 1270). Unfortunately, "students' first exposure to disciplinary writing is often circumscribed within carefully managed laboratory experiments with pre-determined outcomes" (Gassman et al. 1270)—something much different than what is taught in first-year writing where process is often highlighted and valued. Additionally, "undergraduate programs that include writing throughout their engineering curricula are rare" (Gassman et al. 1270). Therefore, studies like these raise questions about the ways in which students learn how to write. For example, how do graduate students, as emphasized in Gassman, Maher, and Timmerman's article, learn how to write in their disciplines if engineering faculty "may lack appropriate pedagogical training" (1270)? If students receive minimal writing instruction during their undergraduate work, and their advisor is not adequately equipped to teach graduate students

how to write, how do students become prepared to compose theses, dissertations, seminar papers, and most importantly to engineering, publications?

Since writing "success" in engineering is measured in publications, Gassman, Maher, and Timmerman offer a suggestion to teach writing to graduate students—a graduate writing course called "*Writing for Publication*" (1271, emphasis in original). "The course had three instructors: one was the instructor of record from the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and the other two were from the University's College of Education and Office of Research and Graduate Education" (Gassman et al. 1271). The study's results showed that,

> Upon course conclusion, four of the 22 students had achieved the outcome of preparing a manuscript that was ready, or near ready, for submission. Six months later, an additional ten students were judged to have met this goal. Thus, a total of 14 of the 22 (64%) had achieved the primary course outcome six months after course completion. (Gassman et al. 1279)

In the course, students had much more "success" when they already had some kind of writing completed before beginning the course. In addition, those who were deemed "unsuccessful" at the end of the course were not in a "publishing" stage in their graduate work.

The authors noted, "several students perceived that they had a clearer sense of the process of disciplinary writing" (Gassman et al. 1276) after the completion of the course. However, the authors do not define "disciplinary writing" within the article or within the survey they ask students to fill out after the course. Additionally when they analyze the student comments from the exit survey, it seems as though they suggest that genre-specific comments led to the students' improved perception of disciplinary writing. For example, one student comments, "I think it is much easier now because of the format we learned this semester" and another says, "I have

better ideas about how I should structure and revise my paper. The process of writing became easier" (Gassman et al. 1276). When we see students describe their progress with generic words such as "format," "structure," and revision, questions arise about the boundaries of the definitions of disciplinary writing. The authors offer "alternatives" to a course such as this: "for example, a more informal writers' workshop series might provide adequate writing support" (Gassman et al. 1279).

Unlike Gassman, Maher, and Timmerman, who developed a standalone writing course situated within the graduate curriculum, Edward Wheeler and Robert L. McDonald integrate writing into existing engineering courses. Wheeler and McDonald suggest that students go into the workforce ill-prepared for "workplace tasks," and engineering education can benefit from using writing tasks to cultivate reflective thinking. Wheeler, from the Department of Engineering, and McDonald, from the Department of English, use a social constructivist framework via Vygotsky to develop an argument for writing to learn in the engineering curriculum. Wheeler and McDonald contend that writing will help students learn engineering theories and practices.

The authors argue that writing is a core proficiency for "lifelong learning" (481) and that it is particularly important for engineering faculty to gain a sense of how students are understanding content since "most topics in science and engineering inevitably build on previous learning" (Wheeler and McDonald 483). However, faculty feel uncomfortable teaching writing in their classes for two main reasons, according to Wheeler and McDonald. First, it takes too much time to grade written work. Second, faculty feel uncomfortable assigning and evaluating prose especially since "[m]any engineering faculty are too willing to ascribe the duties of 'teaching writing' to the English department" (Wheeler and McDonald 485).

As Wheeler and McDonald point out, there are "a wealth of options […] available for allowing students to practice and receive feedback on their writing that do not require much additional work for the faculty at all" (485) such as a writing center. They also encourage faculty to work peer review into their course. Much like Gassman, Maher, and Timmerman's piece, Wheeler and McDonald suggest that engineers regularly receive technical training (484), but argue that "writing should be present in most engineering courses" (485). "By asking our students to write we can improve the technical proficiency of our graduates, provide them with a broader, more connected educational experience, improve their communication skills, and gain a powerful assessment tool" (Wheeler and McDonald 485). This research shows a disconnect between the standards ABET requires of students and faculty's feelings of preparedness to teach writing and communication.

Julio Gimeniz and Juliet Thondhlana, just like Wheeler and McDonald, argue that writing is the construction of knowledge, but they add it is also reaffirmation of disciplinary values and identity (471). Additionally, "writing plays a critical role in the education of future engineers" because writing allows for knowledge to become shareable (472). In other words, writing is critical for the engineering field because it circulates and disseminates knowledge. For all the authors in this section, writing is an important skill to accumulate during students' engineering education; however, how students gain writing skills, according to those in the disciplines, is unclear.

Business

Jo Mackiewicz, an advocate for disciplinary genre training for writing consultants, discusses her experience as a coordinator of the Business Writing Prototype (BWP) that she initiated within her university's College of Business (COB). The prototype took six graduate

students, "four of whom were veteran consultants who had worked several years in the university writing center" (Mackiewicz, "Relying" 236), and partnered them with seven sections of classes within the COB, including Accounting (auditing), Accounting (research methods), and Supply Chain Management (Purchasing supply management and servicing). Mackiewicz worked with the faculty of these classes (four faculty members in total) to develop a scaffolded writing assignment that drew upon writing assignments the faculty had already used in class to help further develop the assignment prompt, the rubric, and the due dates. The consultants held four one-to-one conferences during the course of one semester, attended class meetings (about 50% of classes), were trained in discipline-specific business genres, and were asked to do further research to better understand the rhetorical nature of these genres. Mackiewicz stresses that "[s]uch training is particularly necessary in a WID approach because writing consultants must be familiar with the discipline's genres and credible evidence in order to help students practice their discipline's discourse" ("Relying" 237).

Wei Zhu collected assignments and syllabi within a "business communication" curriculum to examine the differences in assignments across disciplines. "Examining the purposes and features of writing tasks is seen as a means to understand the discursive practices in different communities, the values associated with those practices, and student socialization into discourse communities" (Zhu 112). According to Zhu, some characteristics of business genres are the awareness of and explicit writing to a business audience, the dual role of the student (i.e. writer as student & writer as business person), persuasion (consistency and plausibility), and decision-making. However,

> In finance, decision-making tended to rely more on the quantitative results of applying
> specific financial analytical tools such as ratio analysis, cash flow analysis, growth

analysis, etc, and financial statements such as statement of income, balance sheet,

statement of cash flow were often included as evidence and support for the decisions and

recommendations made. (Zhu 126)

In other words, quantitative analysis and financial statements are often considered "writing" in

finance. We might contemplate what these differences across disciplines could lend to learning.

In "Reformist Possibilities? Exploring Writing Program Cross-Campus Partnerships,"

Marie Paretti, Lisa McNair, Kelly Belanger, and Diana George discuss cross-campus

collaborations through the lens of interdisciplinarity. As David Richter and Paretti explain in a

later article, an interdisciplinary lens allows us to think about the ways in which multiple

disciplines can work together to create new knowledge. Additionally, Paretti, McNair, Belanger,

and George suggest that cross-disciplinary partnerships can enhance students' writing skills, spur

curricular innovations, and provide fertile ground for research (pp. 74-75). Since we do not yet

have "sustained characterizations that situate partnerships within theoretical frameworks for

collaboration," we can think about how the concept of interdisicplinarity can offer productive

ground to think about research and learning (Paretti et al. 75). One large roadblock we, as

rhetoricians and writing teachers, have in front of us is to convince faculty across the college that

writing is a discipline and not just a skill (Paretti et al. 75). "Interdisciplinary partnerships

between writing faculty and faculty from other disciplines include teaching approaches

developed by integrating disciplinary practices and research-based writing pedagogy" (Paretti et

al. 77). The authors argue that "students with interdisciplinary competence not only understand

the methods and knowledge base of their own field; they also recognize and can integrate

knowledge and approaches from other fields" (Paretti et al. 79). This is key because "[w]hen

both faculty and students recognize writing as a discipline with its own domain knowledge,

theoretical frameworks, and epistemology, then cross-campus partnerships that integrate writing and disciplinary content can themselves become sites for interdisciplinary development" (Paretti et al. 80). Discipline-specific writing center satellites might help us better understand these sites for interdisciplinary development and encourage the development of theoretical frameworks in writing centers.

Other (Accounting, Nursing, Archeology, etc.)

Michael Brennan argues that essays in nursing classes serve as useful assessment tools. Brennan suggests that students often see essay writing as a task, not a learning opportunity, and that students who spend longer on their assignment tend to do better overall (with their grade) (Brennan 352). Therefore, Brennan argues that nursing instructors have to teach the specifics of their discipline when teaching writing and give thorough feedback to their students. Ultimately, "the intention should be to develop ways of refining and improving the activity of essay writing so as to make it a truly educational experience" (Brennan 255).

Elizabeth Somerville and Phyllis Crème chronicle their experiences with integrating a "writing strand" into a first-year archaeology class in "Asking Pompeii Questions': A Co-operative Approach to Writing in the Disciplines." They found that the use of Peter Elbow's freewriting technique was useful in helping students learn the material. The article does not explicitly name their writing strand as "writing to learn," but they do believe that writing is the construction of knowledge. Somerville and Crème argue, freewriting allowed students to find their own voice in their writing and to explore writing in a safe environment; these freewritings fed into the students' formal essays. "Different kinds of writing opened up new ways of understanding the subject" (Somerville and Creme 27) for the students. The students' writing experience was enhanced by the partnership between an archaeology teacher and a writing

"specialist" which "enriched the course experience, making it more multi-dimensional" (Somerville and Creme 27).

It is encouraging to identify those faculty in the disciplines who integrate writing into their classrooms and publish scholarship on their experiences. Additionally, faculty in the disciplines are carefully constructing the ways in which they integrate writing into their courses and curriculums. Faculty across disciplines, it seems, also look for ways to join with other disciplines to construct new knowledge. Unfortunately, though, some faculty have a different view of the teaching of writing.

Eugene Corman asks, "Whose job is it to teach writing? An obvious answer is that the task has been delegated to the English or communications departments and it is their responsibility to teach students to write" (85). Beyond the question of who should teach writing, "Many accounting instructors do not assign written exercises in their courses because the quality of student writing is so poor that the papers cannot be graded readily" (Corman 85). Even after all of the work faculty in the disciplines have done, the "Johnny Can't Write" narrative still circulates. Additionally, much like Wheeler and McDonald argue that engineering faculty feel uncomfortable teaching and assessing writing, Corman argues accounting faculty do not evaluate the quality of students' writing because they either do not know how or they do not have the time (86).

> A specialist on student writing problems reviewed several papers submitted by
> accounting students and commented on three additional problems: lack of transitions
> between propositions, lack of logical arrangement of sentences within paragraphs, and
> excessive repetition of material instead of developing the material fully. *Some writing*
> *problems are beyond what the program is designed to correct. The students may*

recognize the need for remedial work when the writing is graded. (Corman 91, emphasis

added).

Corman suggests that faculty do not feel comfortable assessing writing in their classrooms

because "instructors often are working in an area where they lack the expertise possessed by

their colleagues in the English and communications departments. Intuitively they recognize a

problem but lack the technical vocabulary to describe it to the students" (89). Yet, if faculty are

not trained in writing pedagogy, as Gassman, Maher, and Timmerman suggest, and they do not

feel comfortable assessing writing as Corman and Wheeler and McDonald argue, what guides

faculty's decisions to assess writing?

Still, the "incentives" for students to improve their writing is that "10 percent of the final

course grade depends on writing skills" (Corman 93). And although faculty do not feel

comfortable teaching or assessing writing, Corman argues,

The papers are graded with rigor. A composition error of any kind reduces the writing

component of the grade one-third of a letter grade. Three errors, for example, result in a

B+; four errors, a B, and so on. Most students get the point quickly. (93)

This kind of grading causes students to walk into a writing center and ask for grammar help.

However, most writing centers avoid working with students on surface errors, as we will see in

Chapter 4, which becomes a problem. Instructors, such as the ones Corman describes, grade on

surface errors, but writing center theory suggests tutors work with students on global issues. This

disconnect is troubling because we can see how students might become frustrated. Students are

told they are poor writers in class, then come to a writing center for assistance and only receive

help with global issues in their paper, regardless of whether or not they ask for grammar help,

which still results in a low grade when the student turns in their writing to the teacher.

The Writing Center's Role

The narratives that those like Corman perpetuate about poor student writing across the disciplines offer insight into how writing centers are viewed as remedial. Corman suggests that students should seek writing help because "[s]ome writing problems are beyond what the program is designed to correct" (91). Corman, like many others, use the writing center as a "fix-it shop" or a form of punishment. Lil Brannon and Stephen North provide more evidence that writing centers are viewed as remedial saying, "[c]olleagues would sometimes speak to us more slowly and more loudly, projecting their images of [remedial] students on us" (9). My study speaks to this "students can't write narrative" and the remediation of the writing center. While some scholars in the writing center field might consider these narratives to reside in our past, I argue these narratives are still prominent, even if under the surface. Therefore, I argue that writing center professionals should consider questions for scholarship that move away from these narratives and uncover new theoretical frameworks for the evolution of student learning in writing centers.

The corpus of texts discussed here is in no way meant to be exhaustive. In an attempt to expand writing center theory, I present the literature in this introductory chapter as a glimpse into how writing is being taught across disciplines. The literature highlighted in this chapter suggests that there is still a need for understanding how to teach writing within the disciplines. Several disciplinary scholars use language from WAC and Writing in the Disciplines (WID) and suggest that learning to write or writing to learn are both valuable notions for the teaching of writing within the disciplines. However, since disciplinary scholars are rarely trained to teach writing, resentment and hostility arise because disciplinary faculty believe the English department should be teaching students how to write so that their students are no longer "remedial" writers. If

disciplinary faculty do not integrate writing into their courses, they send their students to the writing center as a punitive measure, and the "students can't write" narrative rages on.

While my research does not tell us everything we need to know about narratives and discipline-specific writing centers, it does demonstrate that these old narratives are still circulating, and there is a need to consider new perspectives of writing center work. Since I agree with Lerner ("The Unpromising Present") that writing center scholarship would benefit from interdisciplinary work, I investigate spaces that are uniquely positioned in disciplines to identify disciplinary questions within writing center work. These spaces, as I discuss in the next section, allow me to gain a better understanding of the intersections between writing in the disciplines and writing center work, and the writing center's role in student learning, from within the disciplines.

Research Sites and Questions

While I will offer a more extensive explanation of my research sites, participants, and methods in Chapter 3, I offer a brief description of my research sites here to contextualize the questions that guided my study. In order to interrogate the disciplines from the inside out, I purposefully chose a number of research sites that would allow me to move outside of the English department as well as outside of the traditional image of a writing center. There were two main areas I researched: discipline-specific writing center satellites and writing support spaces. For the discipline-specific writing center satellites, I chose a mid-sized Midwest university whose university writing center houses eight satellite centers. The writing center director is also the director of the university's writing across the curriculum (WAC) program and has sustained the WAC program for well over fifteen years. All of the satellite locations were

developed within the last ten years. From this university, I interviewed six participants from four different discipline-specific writing center satellites.

The writing support spaces include spaces within a university that offers writing support but do not align themselves with their university's writing center. There were three sites I investigated in this area: a legal writing support space in a large, west coast university; an engineering writing support space in a large, mid-Atlantic university, and a writing support space housed within a library in a large, mid-Atlantic university. From these spaces, I interviewed four people in total.

Through the perspective of these ten participants, I have gained insight into writing center theory and practice. With this insight, I hope to explore ways that we can shift the trajectory of deficit model narratives and positively affect writing center theory and practice. This dissertation will offer evidence of complex narratives laced throughout discipline-specific writing center satellites, and through the integration of a disciplinary perspective, to suggest ways in which writing center professionals can implement changes.

I chose to use both discipline-specific writing center satellites and writing support spaces because I believe that the dual perspective can give us a better reflective view of writing center practice. I also believe that these spaces combined can give us an interdisciplinary look at how students learn throughout the university. However, as I explained at the beginning of the chapter, this is not where I expected to end up. Using grounded theory to code and analyze my data, I moved beyond my original set of research questions to expand into a broader point of view. The following research questions began this journey:

- Research Question 1: What are the exigencies for creating writing center satellites and writing support spaces in disciplines?

- Research Question 2: How do writing center satellites expand or complicate what we know about the theories and practice of writing center studies?

- Research Question 3: How do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of writing center satellites?

Chapter Descriptions

In order to contextualize these research questions within writing center theory and practice, Chapter 2 offers a brief literature review which echoes the issues raised in this introductory chapter. The literature review begins with early composition theory, then moves into WAC and writing center theory in order to draw parallels among all three. Then, I identify the deficit model narrative throughout writing center theory. Throughout Chapter 2, I follow Lerner's suggestion and argue writing centers would benefit from identifying ways to expand writing center scholarship's focus through interdisciplinarity as suggested in this introductory chapter.

In Chapter 3, I further explain my research sites and offer descriptions of each participant I interviewed. I offer an explanation for using interviewing as my method and using grounded theory for my methodology. In addition, I discuss my data analysis and offer my coding schema for how I determined the development of Chapters 4 – 6.

In Chapter 4, I explore the generalist / specialist debate throughout writing center scholarship and suggest that this binary creates a narrowed perspective. Chapter 5 explicates the history and circulation of the "students can't write" narrative, and I argue that writing center scholars and literature are overlooking issues of literacy within our writing centers. Chapter 6 offers a renewed perspective to distance writing centers from the generalist / specialist debate and the "students can't write" narrative in order to engage with students' learning in writing

centers through situated learning. Finally, in Chapter 7, I offer implications for the generalist /

specialist debate, the "students can't write" narrative, and situated learning within writing

centers. I then offer suggestions for future research.

Conclusion

While we do have the ability to think beyond writing center studies, we have integrated

little literature from the disciplines into our writing center work to expand our knowledge in

order to construct new theories and practices. As Lerner argues, if we do not expand our ways of

thinking about disciplines, then we remain insular. And, if we remain insular, we continue to

perpetuate narratives that are not productive for the evolution of writing center theory and

practice.

This dissertation, then, offers an in-depth view into two specific areas of writing support

offered to students: discipline-specific writing center satellites and writing support spaces. I

demonstrate how the discipline-specific writing center satellites perpetuate narratives, while

writing support spaces offer a different perspective. Writing support spaces such as those

modeled after *The Idea of the Writing Laboratory* (Lerner) allow students to use the space to

write, learn, and grow, not as a punitive measure, but because they learn better through situated

practice. Ultimately, I argue that the "students can't write" narrative is not productive. It shuts

down both students and the teachers of writing. I consider what might happen with writing center

theory and practice when we push those unproductive narratives aside and ask questions like,

"How do students learn?"

Chapter 2 – Review of Literature

Most thorough histories or overviews of writing center theory begin with Stephen North's, "The Idea of a Writing Center," and I will begin there as well. Using North as a starting point reinforces the foundation on which we have built our centers over the last three decades. Our writing center theories that remain strong suggest that while writing centers tutors continue to help writers at all stages of writing ability, they focus on helping the writer become a better writer overall instead of focusing solely on the improvement of one particular piece of writing. "The Idea of a Writing Center" is aimed toward an audience of faculty who is ignorant to this kind of writing center work. Still today, instructors across disciplines (and even in the English Department) think of the writing center as a place to send their students to get "tutored" for writing (Mauriello, Macauley, and Koch).

Though North did *not* write "The Idea of a Writing Center" for a writing center audience, and its purpose was to inform ignorant faculty of their value, those who internalized North's message were those who were building writing centers. While writing centers have come a long way in informing faculty about their worth, as we saw in Chapter 1 and will see again in Chapter 5, faculty still circulate the "students can't write" narrative. Unfortunately, some writing centers are back to where they started—remedial and de-valued. The narratives told about writing centers continue, admittedly not exhaustively, to be remedial, fix-it shops, but the narratives that define writing centers often are developed from outsiders. Thus, before we begin to think about how disciplinary writing informs the writing center (and subsequently re-informs the disciplines), we can take a look at the multiple perceptions of students and their writing. The following literature will include:

1. a brief view of early composition theory, which I suggest privileges a generalist viewpoint;

2. a comparison of the work that is done by professionals in writing across the curriculum programs (WAC), writing in the discipline programs (WID), and writing centers (WC) to draw parallels across theories, which I suggest privileges a specialist viewpoint; and

3. an argument that while there are benefits to the partnerships between WAC, WID, and writing centers, it would be useful for writing center professionals to identify and maintain an identity of their own.

The following will argue that writing centers have been working from a deficit model and that it would be useful for writing center professionals to consider new theoretical frameworks to guide writing center theory and practice. Additionally, while there is value in the WAC/WID/WC partnership, it would be useful to make these distinctions as to see the ways in which each of these have their own distinct identity. Furthermore, I hope to clear a path for the reconsideration of the remedial status of writing centers in order to gain a fresh perspective on writing center studies. A refreshed view of writing centers will help to position my work objectively as well as assume a position that writing centers help students from across disciplines with their writing. Ultimately, I argue the investigation of discipline-specific writing center satellites and writing support spaces can help us better understand what it means to reconsider the narratives of the writing center.

Early Composition Theory

During the development of composition theory, a quick survey of early composition literature, prior to the 1980s, shows a focus on general knowledge of writing. Take, for example,

one of the earliest recorded works within composition theory. In the mid-1800s, Edward Tyrrel Channing, a graduate of Harvard College, wrote "A Writer's Preparation" that discusses the importance of reflection, process writing, research, and originality. More than a century later, Chaim Perelman also stressed the generic nature of social contexts and urged his colleagues to move away from the classification of knowledge.

> In contrasting the natural and the human sciences, or quantitative with qualitative knowledge, we construct a classification of kinds of knowledge based essentially on the idea we form of their greater or smaller independence by reference to the social conditions in which they have developed. (Perelman 252)

Perelman claims that classification causes knowledge not to be properly contextualized. He offers more general advice and suggests, "argumentation is a function of the audience to which it is addressed and to which the speaker is obliged to adapt himself" (Perelman pp. 252 – 253). In 1965, Francis Christensen wrote "A Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph" where he argues that "the parallel between sentence and the paragraph is so close […] the paragraph seems to be only a macro-sentence or meta-sentence" (283). Christensen argues that, regardless of the discipline, the creation of the paragraph is a generative way to write. Channing, Perelman, and Christensen all seem to value the generalist view of writing. Each offers strategies for writing that are not discipline-specific.

In 1967, William Riley Parker wondered "Where Do English Departments Come From?" and suggests, "[e]ven if history does not truly repeat itself, knowledge of it may, at least sometimes, give current problems a less formidable look" (Parker 3). While my intention in this literature review is not to highlight any "problems," Parker's words remind us how useful it is to extend our gaze backwards to gain a new perspective of how to move forward.

As we move forward in composition theory, "Toward the end of the sixties and largely in response to the protests of that decade, many four-year colleges began admitting students who were not by traditional stands ready for college" (Shaughnessy 1). In 1970, City University of New York adopted a kind of open admissions policy, and within six years, enrollment grew substantially (from 174,000 in 1969 to 266,000 in 1975) (Shaughnessy 1). Not only had the sheer volume of college students changed, but the type of student also changed. "Not surprisingly, the essays these students wrote during their first weeks of class stunned the teachers who read them. Nothing, it seemed, short of a miracle was going to turn such students into writers" (Shaughnessy 3). It was shortly after the open-admissions policy was instituted that "basic writing" and the "remedial" status of writers began to emerge.

Writing Across the Curriculum

Another important movement that began in the 1970s was the writing across the curriculum (WAC) movement. Here, we can begin to see, as David Russell, suggests, "a triumph of specialization" (1). Charles Bazerman helps us understand Writing Across the Curriculum as, "the pedagogical and curricular attention to writing occurring in university subject matter classes other than those offered by composition or writing programs (most often housed in the English Department)" (9). The WAC movement was created to help support those teachers in the disciplines who wanted guidance on teaching writing to their students. Bazerman argues, "The movement provided systematic encouragement, institutional support, and educational knowledge to increase the amount and quality of writing occurring in such courses such as history, science, mathematics, and sociology" (9).

Susan McLeod argues WAC programs help "students to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers as well as develop their communications skills" (54). Additionally, "WAC

focuses not on writing skills per se, but on teaching both the content of the discipline and the particular discourse features used in writing about that content" (McLeod 54). Bazerman suggests that while there are differences between writing that is done in disciplines, there is a general set of skills that we can teach all students. Kathleen Blake Yancey, Liane Robertson, and Kara Taczak call this teaching for transfer. Teaching for transfer (TFT) courses assume "that *ideas matter*, but also that *specific ideas* in the form of key terms for composition are critical to students' writing development" (Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak 131 emphasis in original). Most importantly, Yancey et al. argue, "weaving these terms throughout writing assignments *and* the accompanying (intentionally designed and integrated) reflection assignments begins to equip students to move appropriately into new writing contexts" (Yancey et al. 131 emphasis in original). Instructors believe that students will learn best by gaining awareness about the differences in writing across disciplines and teaching the rhetorical tools (and / or genre tools) to help students respond to each situation accordingly (Bazerman pp. 86 - 88).

Even though institutions have seen a rise in WAC programs, Chris Thaiss and Tara Porter suggest that the transition of these programs into the curriculum have not been easy. In fact, after the initial push of WAC programs into institutions, Thaiss and Porter show that by the turn of the millennium, programs were either funded through the director's own dime, or the programs needed to be re-imagined. "[A] significant number of schools were attempting to re-start WAC after an earlier effort had either faded or had failed to get off the ground" (Thaiss and Porter 536). The sustainability of WAC programs is often called into question. Additionally, as an effect from the open access admissions, WAC programs were driven from those conversations between English faculty and faculty across disciplines who complain that their students "can't

write" (McLeod; Russell). Unfortunately, as composition professionals began to design ways to become more specialized, WAC programs were potentially building upon a deficit model.

Writing in the Disciplines (WID)

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) makes the distinction between WAC and WID as the role writing can play (WAC) versus writing inside specific disciplines (WID). Writing across the curriculum, "emphasizes the role that writing can play in learning, whether it's keeping a journal, annotating a text, making notes, or reflecting on what we have learned" (NCTE). Writing in the disciplines, then "helps students behave as apprentice writers in that discipline, be it civil engineering, sociology, or dance" (NCTE). Even in this small distinction from NCTE, we see that the perception of writing across the disciplines[1] is complex. "The assumptions behind writing outside the disciplines are deeply ingrained in the very concept of the university" (Carter 386). Additionally, "Faculty come to understand that what counts as good writing is writing that meets the expectations of faculty in their disciplines. It's also beneficial that all this takes place on their own turf" (Carter 408). In other words, what counts as "good writing" for faculty across the university is highly subjective, based on their discipline, in their discipline. Yet, "It is not the writing professional who is telling them what counts as good writing in their fields. The faculty themselves are the experts" (Carter 408). WAC tends to position the English faculty as writing "experts," but "writing" in the English department is just one definition of "writing" among many. If we are to gain an expanded view of what writing is across disciplines, then it is critical that we move out of writing center work and explore the kinds of writing faculty determine is "good writing" within the disciplines.

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[1] The author acknowledges that there is a difference between writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC), writing in the disciplines (WID), and writing across disciplines (WAD); however, WAD will not be explicated as it does not contribute to the scope of this project.

Ann Blakeslee follows Michael Carter and suggests that WID research is critical to help faulty better understand how to help students develop writing within disciplines as a way of knowing. If students understand writing as a way of knowing, not only will they become better writers, but they will learn better and develop confidence (Blakeslee). Therefore, "We might aptly characterize WID scholarship as a productive and lasting workhouse of our field" (Blakeslee 246). The literature above suggests a usefulness to WAC and WID together and separately. That is said to be true for WAC and writing centers as well.

Writing in the disciplines (WID) became an even more specialized version of writing. There is not much literature to suggest that WID programs are built from remediation or from a deficit model. In fact, often the impetus behind a WID program is to encourage the production of knowledge across disciplines, or what Jan McArther considers "interdisciplinarity." McArthur suggests disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity "are complementary and interdependent spaces" (McArthur 312). McArthur argues that each discipline is valuable in and of itself and can subsequently be complementary to other disciplines to create knowledge. It is this distinction that is useful for the understanding of the WAC/WID/WC partnership. Writing center theory is valuable in its own right—which benefits both the tutor and the student. WAC and WID are also separately valuable. Subsequently, WAC, WID, and writing centers can be complementary in order to explore new perspectives and create new knowledge.

Writing Across the Curriculum / Writing Center Partnerships

WAC programs and writing centers have historically come together to build interdisciplinary partnerships (Barnett and Blumner). Robert Barnett and Jacob Blumner offer two assumptions included in writing center / WAC partnerships:

(1) That Writing Centers have moved away from their previously marginalized status toward a more centralized institutional position with the potential to effect curricular change; and (2) that any discussion of Writing Center/WAC partnerships must include issues of student, faculty, and administrative involvement. (iv)

Russell also argues that as "Writing centers became full partners with WAC programs" (315), writing centers begin to move away from their marginalized status and become more central in the curriculum (316).

According to Thaiss and Porter's recent study (2010) of the WAC/WC partnerships across institutions (4- and 2-year), at least 70% of WAC programs are in some way linked with a writing center. "In many WAC programs, the writing center serves as the nerve center of the program, disseminating information to the university community and providing writing support and services to both faculty and students across disciplines" (Bazerman 25). While some agree that the writing center and a WAC/WID program both have similar values (Bruffee), others acknowledge the complexities of the relationship. Some mention that the writing center should be an ambassador for WAC (Johnston and Speck), and others mention that the writing center should undertake a writing fellow program (Leahy). In addition, WAC programs were being formed using Elbow's free writing and writing process as a theoretical framework, much like the kind of theory that writing centers value (Russell 26).

While there are scholars who advocate for WAC/WC partnerships, Michael Pemberton makes clear distinctions between WAC programs and writing centers in order to question this partnership ("Rethinking"). Pemberton suggests that "the central purpose of writing across the curriculum is to familiarize and train students to become fluent in exactly those discipline-specific rhetorical features that a 'generic' writing center is geared to overlook" ("Rethinking"

368). Pemberton contends that the WAC/WC partnerships were "an incomplete and somewhat jaundiced picture of how WAC programs and writing centers might work together" ("Rethinking" pp. 368 – 369). Writing centers are too generic to help students in the disciplines with their specialized writing, argues Pemberton. This section demonstrates the alternating viewpoints of prioritizing generalist and specialist perspectives to develop a writing curriculum. Later, in Chapter 4, we will see these same viewpoints alternating within writing center work as well.

Writing Center Deficit Model Narratives

While writing centers attempt to untangle themselves from the WAC/WID/WC web to claim their own identity, they are faced with yet another struggle, moving beyond a deficit model. Writing centers and writing programs often attend to issues of grammar and lower order concerns (LOCs). Subsequently, the writing center is often viewed as a fix-it shop because, at times, it is forced to be one. Jane Nelson and Margaret Garner argue that faculty "sometimes send students to the writing center with the admonition to have the Writing Center 'fix' the students' papers or proofread the papers, and they express frustration or even anger when their hope is unfulfilled" (24). However, as argued in Chapter 1, "Our experience and research show that faculty often struggle to connect writing with learning in distributed environments" (Neff and Whithaus 3) because they are uncomfortable with doing so.

In "Rearticulating the Work of the Writing Center," Nancy Grimm notes that writing centers were created to serve underprepared writers and to help solve students' "remedial" problems.

> Even though many writing centers seek to put their remedial history behind them, the
> writing center questions-that-won't-go-away—questions about the ethics of

collaboration, about relationships with faculty, about proofreading, about dependency, about what to call the people who work in writing centers—are all questions rooted in the fact that writing centers were expected to solve the problems students weren't supposed to have when they came to college. (Grimm, "Rearticulating" 531)

Some writing centers' identities are still rooted in remediation and are identified as "fix-it shops." These deficit models make it difficult for writing centers to emerge as worthwhile resources within an institution to help students with their writing.

Creating an identity, especially from a deficit model, is not easy. Additionally, as Jackie Grutsch McKinney argues, definitions of writing centers are too constraining. Creating definitions are often too narrow to encompass the rich and complex work that happens in writing centers (McKinney). As Joyce Kinkead suggests, writing center scholars also need to take care not to make generalizations about their writing centers because no two centers are the same (232). However, identifying themes and recurring problems across our centers might be of some use to help us develop our unique identities.

In *Writing Centers in Context: Twelve Case Studies,* editors Kinkead and Jeanette G. Harris offer a comprehensive view of how and why writing centers developed their physical spaces and ideologies for their best practices from the late 1980s and early 1990s. Across many of the twelve case studies, there were a number of commonalities:

- Having computers in a WC was a big deal; students would use them in the center even if they were not seeking help with their writing

- Tutors, who have excellent academic standing within the university (3.5 GPA or higher), are either referred by instructors and / or take an accompanying writing center tutoring class

- All centers have resource materials for students such as: handbooks, handouts, informational material (citations, revision, etc.). Many also have resource material for faculty for teaching

- Most centers do some kind of outreach in the community

- Directors suggest that holding regular staff meetings is important

- Centers generally work with small budgets but most get continued resources as they show their worth within the university

- Many centers were initially named a "Lab" in one way or another

- Many centers were developed to accommodate writing programs (basic, freshmen, etc.), but mostly all centers move towards a more collaborative model, much like the one we know now that works closely with first-year writing and / or WAC programs, because it was called for by composition programs

- Many centers are also either in tandem with a WAC program, or developed from them

- Most have tutor training programs (i.e. anywhere from one day workshop to one week training)

- No two days are the same (atypical); meaning, tutor training cannot be created based on one situation—there are too many diverse situations to train for

- Many centers also mention "testing" as one of their services – they are a service to the department and university by administering tests

While there were many positive commonalities happening across early exemplary centers, there were also a number of issues within writing centers that are still unresolved:

- Many writing centers are still viewed often as "remedial" (Wallace and Simpson)

- Faculty's ignorance about what the center does; they see writing centers as skill-and-drill shops / to "fix" students' work (Wallace and Simpson)

- The writing center's position within the English Department often marginalizes it from the rest of the institution (Wallace and Simpson)

- Funding is difficult to seek (Wallace and Simpson)

- Staffing / Administrating issues: many centers are staffed with either adjunct instructors or full-time positions, but not tenure-track professors (Wallace and Simpson)

- Questions are raised about whether or not "peer tutoring is effective" (Bruffee: Yes! / Trimbur ("Peer Tutoring"): Yes, and … p. 31)

- The need to continually explain what we do (Wallace)—to some extent lab / center nomenclature debate

- Tutor training—how to train the tutor "effectively" (Child)

- The notion of collaborating (Clark, "The Writing Center")

- Generalist / specialist debate (Samson)

- Writing centers only help or cater to the "Educationally disadvantaged" (Ricker)

What we will see later in this dissertation is that my data overlapped with some of these unresolved issues, particularly remediation and the generalist / specialist debate. Most importantly, the works referenced here are from the early 1990s (Kinkead and Harris 1993; Wallace and Simpson 1991), and my data suggests some of these issues are still circulating in writing centers almost thirty years later.

We might wonder why these issues remain unresolved. While reviewing this literature, we can begin to see how scholars make decisions about circulating the problems they face in the center. It is obviously helpful to discuss issues with colleagues—they know what circumstances

surround the issue, and they are likely experiencing similar problems. While engaging in constructive conversation, some have tried to shed their "remedial" skin by explicitly marketing to "the highest succeeding students such as graduate students, honors students, and upper level students; […] and to the entire institution through sponsorship and support for an intellectual culture […] in the university and in the community that the university serves" (Isaacs 131). Emily Isaacs makes this argument to transform her university writing center into a Center for Writing Excellence (CWE). The CWE is a comprehensive center that is deeply valuable to *all* students, as well as to the field of writing studies more broadly (Isaacs 131). Isaacs notes, "CWEs are the opposite of modest—in budget and demand for university space, time, and resources, but also in what they dare to promise" (pp. 131-132). To "rename" or "transform" writing centers into a Center for Writing Excellence seems to marginalize writing centers further. John Trimbur reinforces the notion that the label of "lab" or "center" is something that writing centers should be concerned about. He suggests that writing is a term that "seems to be taken for granted in all the names we've been using" (Trimbur, "Mulitliteracies" 66). Regardless of its name, students who are high achievers can go to the Center for Writing Excellence while everyone else, it seems, can go to a writing center.

While Isaacs's CWE does express the need to reach all students at all levels, the above statements seem problematic in a number of ways. First, by explicitly marketing the center for *excellence* to graduate students, honors students, and faculty, the remaining writers who do not identify with any of these categories may feel alienated and resist seeking writing help from the center. Second, those who are not actively producing original research—and are working on a first-year research paper, or a creative writing assignment, or a business writing application packet with a resume—may hesitate to come to the center because they might feel like,

compared to honors students and faculty, their poem for their African American studies class is not worthy of seeking help. Finally, many members of the institution are marginalized by CWEs suggesting that honors students, graduate students, and faculty who conduct research *are* the university community. If honors and graduate students and faculty *are* writers, does that mean the rest of the writers in the university community *are not*?

The authors of *The Everyday Writing Center* encourage us to view our centers through new lenses and move away from these kinds of constraining perspectives as we create and maintain centers through tutor training, tutoring sessions, and the administration of a center (Geller et al.). The authors emphasize the constant evolution of writing centers and position the writing center staff (faculty included) as learners, not teachers. In addition, the negotiation of identity is highlighted. However, while identity construction is important, it is not the authors' ultimate goal; "it is how those identities participate in a writing center community of practice that is most important" (Geller et al. 82). Ultimately, as North mentions, it is important for students to have the self-motivation to engage in conversations about writing without the faculty pushing them to do so ("The Idea"). When students do have this motivation, they will find themselves operating within the community of practice that Anne Ellen Geller et al. discuss, and then take those identities back into the classroom with them. The authors remind us to use caution as we develop ways to evolve our writing centers as a unique service and that this growth is for both students and writing center staff.

Expansion of Writing Center Focus

Michele Eodice, Kerri Jordan, and Steve Price, the editors of *The Writing Center Journal* argue that as writing center professionals continue to make theoretical strides, their recent publications (34.1 and 34.2) "send a message that needs to be heard: Our field *can* question our

long-held assumptions. But we aren't always willing to do so" (12). Furthermore, as Lerner encourages, we need to find literature outside of our field to examine the needs of students across disciplines ("The Unpromising Present"). However, this is no small task. We have limited access to the scholarship found on writing in specific disciplines. What we do find, then, is usually published within rhetoric and composition journals. One example is from Dorothy Winsor. She argues that the writing engineers do is knowledge creation. Engineers from the disciplines believe that the knowledge creation comes with the actual experiments, but as Winsor argues, their experiments only become knowledge when the engineers deliver the results in writing. Winsor suggests that she fills a gap where "studies have not yet shown how engineers' writing would look when *contemporary* views about the textual shaping of knowledge are applied" (Winsor 59 emphasis added). Winsor is correct; we do not often get a view of engineer's writing in the discipline, but by "contemporary," here I believe she means "composition." Windsor suggests that engineers' perspective of writing is all wrong. She urges her audience (a composition audience) to acknowledge that engineers construct knowledge through their writing. Although writing is at the center of our composition programs, it is not centralized across all disciplines, such as engineering. To avoid these kinds of narrowed views, we can use what Eodice, Jordan, and Price suggest as a guide to question long-held assumptions in our field and follow Lerner to reach outside of our field to gain perspective.

Scholars explain the ways in which they have attempted to do just that and expand their purview. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) polled their engineering alumni to identify feelings of preparedness for the workplace. The results showed that while alumni felt prepared to be an engineer, they did not feel adequately equipped to write and communicate. In "Innovation Across the Curriculum," Jennifer Craig, Neal Lerner, and Mya Poe suggest that their

main goal for students at MIT is to "move from general academic writing or novice approximations of disciplinary writing to internalizing the communication-thinking practices of professional engineers" (311). MIT developed a communication-intensive program where each discipline has communication intensive courses throughout all four years of the students' study. The authors argue that, "[c]urrent educational initiatives such as communication-across-the-curriculum programs attempt to address these changes by integrating communication instruction in engineering courses rather than teaching writing and speaking in 'stand alone' technical writing courses" (Craig, Lerner, and Poe 310). Craig, Lerner, and Poe remind us that we need to continuously "revise and update our approaches," which our WAC current practices tend not to acknowledge. When those who create WAC programs within their institution use words such as "embed" (Donahue), "pedagogical reorientation," and "implement" (O'Brien; Segall and Smart) to identify the integration of writing into disciplinary curriculums, there is not much room left for the recursive nature of the continuation of revision and updates to the program. Further, the "Implementations of WAC" (Segall and Smart 5) across disciplines is problematic in that it typically suggests that the English Department is superimposing a composition theory onto the discipline and not taking into consideration the epistemological reasons why disciplines write.

William Keep also speaks to the variation of writing's place across disciplines, particularly business. He discusses the vast differences among writing expectations of students across disciplines and suggests each discipline uses different languages of writing. "The logical approach would be to link vocabulary used in English courses with the fundamental writing tasks found in business. To make such a linkage requires a dialogue between English faculty and those in business disciplines" (Keep 13). Although, to make changes, Keep changed the length of his assignments, making them shorter (to mirror the assignment length English faculty have

developed), he integrated reflection into his writing class (something that historically been used in rhetoric, writing, and composition classes), and changed revision policies (whereas before there were none, he implemented revision opportunities into his assignments). Keep notes, "My involvement in writing across the curriculum has altered my view of what is possible in my classroom" (Keep 16). New perspectives on how to teach students writing are always important, and writing centers might benefit from continuing to talk with disciplines such as Keep suggests.

Dan Melzer posits that we gain a skewed view of the writing across disciplines because those faculty members who are sharing assignments or talking about their students' writing have, in a sense, already bought into the importance of writing across disciplines. Therefore, he conducts a wide-view study (or a panoramic view as he notes) of writing assignments across disciplines. For a more neutral look at writing assignments from across disciplines, he collected his samples from the Internet. Melzer argues that these assignments provide a rich sample of which to study for a number of reasons. First, he can gather rhetorical choices and intent from instructors about the position of writing in their discipline-specific classes. Second, although case studies and ethnographies have been useful and provide a number of insights for researchers, the sample is usually compiled from willing participants, and therefore, the results are skewed. Melzer's study is notable because much of the research WAC scholars publish comes from willing participants of WAC programs. Yet, as Melzer suggests, it is the instructors' assignments and work, who are not yet convinced of WAC theory, which we should be acknowledging and reviewing.

As writing center professionals, how else might we gain an objective view of writing in the disciplines? While it is likely that we will not be able to entirely remove bias, we might search for sites of research that offer unique perspectives. Some writing centers are beginning to

reach out to disciplines through satellite writing centers. Katherine Adams has had success with two writing center satellites at her university. From the success of these satellites, Adams plans on creating two more centers, all of which are run by the writing across the curriculum program. She suggests, "These centers have brought writing into a central role on our campus, provided support to students and faculty, reinforced good teaching, and helped teachers to understand various approaches to writing" (Adams 80). In addition, "Their presence on our campus has been important for admissions and student retention" and allows students to write "within a supportive writing community to respond to those prompts at the best possible level, thus preparing to write as professionals" (Adams 80). This social nature of writing is what John Ackerman explicitly calls for in "The Promise of Writing to Learn." "I believe the field of composition and rhetoric is poised to advance a different model of writing and learning: more social than developmental, more situated than conceptual, more tied to activity than knowledge" (Ackerman 362). The situated aspect of writing, Ackerman argues, is a useful frame for the teaching of writing.

Adams suggests satellite writing center locations across campus are social in that students feel included in a community. She suggests that students within a major form a "natural community […] one marked by student collegiality, common tasks to perform, common strengths and weaknesses as writing, and a common place to work" (Adams 78). Adams asserts that it is helpful for writing centers to be integrated within that community physically. In some cases, satellite centers are established out of need for proximity. "Too much distance between service and need makes it harder for institutional participants to value the service" (Grego and Thompson 112). If a university's writing center is located in the library, and business school, for example, is located almost two miles off campus, business students will likely not be able to regularly access the writing center on "main campus." As Adams and Grego and Thompson

suggest, creating spaces physically located in a discipline for students' convenience can broaden our practice and can also give us rich, new sites for research. Therefore, the development and research of discipline-specific writing center satellites can broaden the scope of a writing center.

Conclusion

As we can see with a brief overview of early composition theory, scholars began theorizing from a generalist point of view. Channing talked about process and preparation, Perelman spoke about the importance of argumentation, and Christensen argues for the rhetoric of the paragraph. As we move from the 1960s into the 1970s though, we start to see a need for specialization start to emerge. WAC programs began in high schools in the 1970s (Russell) and were in higher education institutions across the nation by the 1980s. WAC programs then led to WID programs which became even more specialized. As theorists in the field of both composition and writing center studies began to see the overlapping ideologies, a WAC/WC partnership was created. The WAC/WC partnership seems like an attempt to reintegrate the generalist view. While writing across the curriculum programs and writing centers influence each other, and while they have similar evolutions, in Chapter 4 we will see the writing center move from a generalist to a specialist viewpoint; therefore, it might be helpful for writing centers to claim a separate identity from WAC programs. In so doing, writing center professionals can clear the path to imagine new theoretical stances.

As writing center professionals develop discipline-specific writing center satellites, we might turn to these discipline-rich sites for research. Additionally, it might also be useful to look at disciplinary-specific writing support spaces not affiliated with writing centers in an attempt to remain as objective as possible. For these reasons, my study will include both discipline-specific writing center satellites and discipline-specific writing support sites. In the next chapter, I will

offer a thorough description of my discipline-specific writing center satellite and writing support

space research sites, the participants included within this study, and my research methods and

methodologies.

Chapter 3 – Research Sites, Methods, and Participants

Because my own experience has been limited discipline-specific writing center satellites,

I thought it would be valuable to expand my understanding of why discipline-specific writing

center satellites and writing support spaces began, their tutoring practices, and their institutional

structures. In order to expand my understanding, I collected qualitative data in the form of

interviews from those who developed these spaces and / or worked in them for a number of

years. Rebecca Day Babcock, Kellye Manning, and Travis Rogers argue "that writing center

tutoring, rather than being based on research, has been based on common practice, lore" (5). In

other words, much of writing center research has been done through storytelling rather than

actual data collection, which is why the collection of my qualitative data, to support my

experience, was critical. My original goal for the collection of this data was to offer a new

theoretical framework for the training of writing center tutors to help students across disciplines.

However, as I explained in Chapter 1, my use of grounded theory has been crucial in changing

many of these early goals.

In this chapter, I will discuss the three research sites where I chose to collect data, and I

will offer a brief participant profile for each interviewee. Then I will explain my choice to

conduct interviews, collect a small number of artifacts, and use grounded theory to analyze my

data. Finally, I will describe the process which changed the trajectory of this dissertation.

Research Sites

For this study, I interviewed ten people from three different institutions. The first were

from discipline-specific writing center satellites. The second group of people were from writing

support spaces that are not aligned with writing centers. While I will define each of these spaces

in their respective sections below, it is important to note that the discipline-specific writing

center satellites are distinctly different than writing support spaces. The discipline-specific writing center satellites extend from a "main" writing center located a university's campus and are physically situated within the college they serve. The tutors who work in the satellites are, for the most part, trained by the writing center director and follow traditional writing center theory and practice. Writing support spaces are not aligned with writing center work and those who work in the space are typically mentored by disciplinary faculty. Within the scope of this project, writing support spaces are not necessarily physically located within the college, or discipline, within which they reside.

As a researcher, I recognize that my data set is quite small for both research sites and participants. However, even a relatively small sampling can reveal areas of writing center theory and practice that need to be more fully understood in individual settings. While what I suggest in this dissertation is not a panacea for the issues that writing centers face, I believe this dissertation can advance conversations within writing center theory and practice and encourage future studies in writing center work.

Discipline-Specific Writing Center Satellites

The first group of participants I interviewed were from discipline-specific writing center satellites from a mid-sized, Midwest university. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Kristin Walker used the term "discipline-specific writing center," but I chose to add "satellite" because I think it is useful to think of the writing centers which are located directly within the discipline they serve and are an extension of the "main" writing center. While this might not be the case for all discipline-specific writing centers, this is true within my research.

I interviewed several writing center tutors who worked for and / or coordinated the discipline-specific writing center satellites. This particular university was of interest due to their

sustained WAC program, which has been growing for more than fifteen years, in addition to the sheer number of discipline-specific writing center satellites that extend from their "main" university writing center. I use "main" here simply to identify the first location of the university's writing center, which is not discipline-specific, where the director of the writing center's office is located, where tutors are trained, and where general administrative work is done.

This Midwestern university has eight satellite locations, one of which I do not consider discipline-specific (the graduate studies satellite). Nancy Brown, the director of the university's writing center explains why the discipline-specific writing center satellites were created.

> When I became director, because I've done WAC and because my own interests lie in writing in the disciplines, I saw a lot of value and also a need for more discipline specific and targeted writing support. And, that pre-dated me in the sense that we had the collaboration with biology that [the previous director] set up but that was the only real disciplinary, piece or aspect of what we were doing at the time. And, so, it just seemed natural to me that we kind of reach out to different disciplines and find out what their particular [needs are], and their needs differ, and then, you know, we all know this, the genres differ, the conventions differ, the students differ and so that's kind of what spurred us on and we quickly discovered there was need and now we have something quite complex and nuanced and sophisticated, I think, in terms of how we are going about meeting those needs, but there's still a lot more to be done. (NB 1)

The current discipline-specific writing center satellites on this campus have been open and running for at least five years or more, and only two (both of which are no longer considered satellite centers) have been unsuccessful. One possible reason for the strong beginning of this

university's discipline-specific writing center satellites could be attributed to the director's positive relationships with faculty across disciplines, as she mentioned above. Yet, I am sure there are a number of other reasons as well. Therefore, I was interested to interview participants in order to identify their perceptions of how and why these satellites began, their tutoring practices, and the institutional structures involved when developing and maintaining such sites.

I interviewed participants from the satellites at the business school, nursing school, and from the sciences (which included three different satellite centers), five satellites in total. These particular satellites were chosen either because of the longevity of the satellite and because the writing center director at this university suggested I interview a specific person. For example, you will meet "Jennifer[2]" later in the chapter. The writing center director suggested I interview Jennifer because of the length of time she has been working in the writing center and because she has great experience with the satellite centers as the coordinator of three satellites in the sciences.

Writing Support Spaces

The second site I researched is what I call a "writing support space." The writing support spaces are distinctly different from a writing center in that they do not intentionally align themselves with the writing center that is located on their main campus. While the writing support spaces' practices often mirror those in a traditional writing center, it is purely coincidental. The spaces I researched did not intentionally use writing center theory to train tutors and build practice within those centers. The director of one writing support space, however, did build upon rhetoric and writing theory to develop the center.

At the time I began my study, it was difficult to track down "writing support spaces" that were not writing center satellites. While I learned at one time that there were writing support

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[2] Pseudonyms have been used for all participants to keep names and identities confidential.

spaces for students in medical school, law school, and other similar spaces, it was challenging to find these spaces on universities' websites. If I was lucky enough to identify a writing support space, it was equally as difficult to find a person who was recognized as the "director" or "coordinator." Therefore, the writing support spaces that I researched were through referrals.

The first participant I interviewed from this group is from a legal writing center from large, west coast university. While this writing support space was named a "writing center," they were not aligned with the university's writing center on main campus. In fact, "Amy," who you will meet again later in this chapter, suggests, "I'm fairly certain there is one [a "main" writing center on campus], I just haven't interacted with them at all" (AD 3). Amy is the head legal writing fellow at the legal writing center. The tutoring practices in the writing support space located in the law school are similar to those in a traditional writing center, but Amy is trained by law school faculty, not by writing center professionals. The goal of this center is to help law students with the writing they do, primarily in their first-year legal writing classes.

The last two participants I interviewed are from an engineering education writing, research, and communication center located in a large, mid-Atlantic university. One participant is the co-director of the center, and the other is the co-director's graduate student who regularly uses to the center. The goal for this center, according to "Carol" the co-director, is to "create a space that takes all this research that we do on disciplinary communication and figure out how to put it in the hands of faculty and in the hands of students" (CD 2). Carol is clear to distinguish the center as more than a writing support space, "we create a space in which people can come and write," (CD 11) research, and publish. Carol uses, as will be further discussed in Chapter 6, *The Idea of a Writing Laboratory* by Neal Lerner as a model for the center. Carol's student, "John," finds this model helpful because

there is something about sitting in a room with other people and you're all doing the same

types of activity. I find [that] valuable, so even though I don't necessarily want

everybody to talk to me the whole time I'm there, because I want to focus on writing,

knowing that they're there, and we're all writing, and we're kind of a group together,

working through this process, I don't know (pause) community, I guess is the best way I

can describe it. (JW 4)

Spaces such as the one Carol created offer a sense of community to graduate writers, and while

students do write during their time in the center, it does not operate like a typical writing center.

There are no tutors available to help students with their writing; although Carol would like to

make that happen eventually. "[I]f I had all the money in the world to staff it, I would like to do

more mini-lessons, mini-sort of tutorials around different writing tasks" (CD 9). But, it is more

important to Carol that this space functions for graduate students to come and find a sort of

community, as John put it. Researching the writing, research, and communication center will

offer an alternative perspective to writing centers. While, potentially, the outcomes for both the

discipline-specific writing center satellites and writing support spaces might be similar, to help

students, both spaces reach their outcomes in different ways. This perspective might offer insight

into writing center theory and practice.

Participants

For this dissertation, I interviewed ten participants total. While every single participant

might not be predominantly highlighted in this dissertation, they were all quite helpful in gaining

perspective about writing in the disciplines, writing studies, and writing center theory in general.

It is important to offer brief description of all participants in this chapter because they were all

influential to the development of this dissertation.

Almost all participants chose to be identified by their real name and institution, but none of them objected to pseudonyms. While it is not my intention to represent any person poorly, there are times in this dissertation where outside readers might criticize participants within this study, and I do not want any of my participants to be subject to criticism. In order to protect the identities of my participants, I chose to assign pseudonyms to all participants. Below I will offer brief descriptions of each participant and will offer as much information as I can for readers to identify and follow the participants in subsequent chapters. However, the vagueness and brevity within the descriptions are intentional.

Nancy Brown

Nancy is the director of the university's writing center at a mid-sized, Midwest university. Additionally, Nancy is the director of the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program. She has been working at this university for nearly twenty years and has been director more than five years. Nancy values the development of discipline-specific writing center satellites, which she partially credits to her tenure as a WAC director, and works hard to develop and foster relationships with faculty and administrators across campus.

Helen Miller

Helen is a faculty member in the business school at a mid-sized, Midwest university where she has been teaching business communication for over ten years. Helen has a background working in "industry," meaning she spent a significant amount of time in the workplace before becoming a business communication instructor. As an instructor, Helen was hired by business school administrators to become the satellite coordinator approximately five years ago. Along with a tutor from the university's writing center, Helen created the satellite and grew its business substantially over the last several years.

Lisa Williams

Lisa is a faculty member in the business school at a mid-sized, Midwest university where she has been teaching business communication for over ten years. Lisa also has a background working in "industry." Lisa was hired by the university writing center director several years ago to tutor in the business school's discipline-specific writing center satellite.

Mary Jones

Mary is a faculty member in the English department at a mid-sized, Midwest university where she has been teaching and working as a writing center tutor for over ten years. Mary worked in the education school's discipline-specific writing center for several years. The satellite center in the education school was unsuccessful and has since closed. She is now teaching a bridge course in the Nursing department which was developed through the writing center, and she works as a writing tutor with those Nursing students.

Jennifer Johnson

Jennifer is a faculty member in the English department at a mid-sized, Midwest university where she has been teaching and working as a writing center tutor for over eight years. Jennifer is the satellite coordinator for three discipline-specific writing center satellites on campus: biology, psychology, and the sciences.

James Anderson

James is a graduate student in the English department at a mid-sized, Midwest university where he recently began working as a writing center tutor and teaching first-year writing as a graduate assistant. James was asked to tutor in the business school's discipline-specific writing center satellite alongside two business school faculty.

Linda Smith

Linda is the Agriculture Life Science and Scholarly Communication Librarian at a large, mid-Atlantic university. She works in a discipline-specific fashion as a liaison to the Agriculture and Life Sciences Department where she works with students and faculty to collect and synthesize research within their discipline. Recently, Linda has developed a bi-annual, two-day writing support workshop for students in the sciences. She invites faculty from various disciplines to help students understand how to read and write in the sciences.

Carol Davis

Carol is co-director of the writing, research, and communication center at a large, mid-Atlantic university. Carol is faculty in the engineering department and has extensive background in the university's English department as a rhetorician. She developed the support space for engineering education graduate students to have a place to write while being able to access resources and circulate research. Carol is responsible for bringing in thousands of dollars of grant money into her land-grant university.

John Wilson

John is an engineering education PhD student at a large, mid-Atlantic university. Carol is John's mentor and advisor. John uses the writing, research, and communication center regularly and is partially responsible for organizing an engineering graduate writing group, which he has co-authored articles about the development and sustainability of such a group.

Amy Dillon

Amy is a law student at a large, west-coast university. Amy is the head legal writing fellow for the legal writing center, which is separate from the university's writing center. Amy performed remarkably well in her first-year legal writing class and was recruited by her professor

to work as a legal writing fellow. Besides working one-on-one with first-year law students, Amy is responsible for the daily administrative tasks of the legal writing center, including writing staff schedules, training, and the daily operation of the center.

Research Methods and Methodologies

Interviews

I chose primarily to rely on interviews in order to collect data for this dissertation. Interviews with my participants offered the opportunity to gain rich qualitative data about how and why discipline-specific writing center satellites are developed, their tutoring practices, and the institutional structures that affect the creation and development within those spaces. I was interested in gaining rich perspectives on these key areas and conducted "intensive interviews." Kathy Charmaz defines intensive interviews as "gently-guided, one-sided conversation that explores research participants' perspective on their personal experience with the research topic" (56). Since "researchers use intensive interviewing to study specific topics about which the research participant has had substantial experience," (Charmaz 57) interviewing could help me identify exigencies because many of the participants began their disciplinary spaces. From the answers my participants offered, I was able to compare tutoring practices because participants had often tutored at more than one location and in more than one discipline, and I was better able to understand the institutional practices that underscore the creation and development of disciplinary writing support spaces. I used this method as I developed my interview questions[3]. Charmaz states,

Key characteristics of intensive interviewing include:

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[3] Please see Appendix A for my interview questions.

- Selection of research participants who have first-hand experience that fits the research topic

- In-depth exploration of participants' experience and situations

- Reliance on open-ended questions

- Objective of obtaining detailed responses

- Emphasis on understanding the research participant's perspective, meanings, and experience

- Practice on following up on unanticipated areas of inquiry, hints, and implicit views of account actions. (56)

As a graduate student, I worked with Helen, Jennifer, and Nancy in the writing center. During the time I worked with them, however, this project was not yet conceived. Still, it was particularly important for me to remain objective and follow up with clarifying questions even if I believed I knew the answer. As I mentioned to all my participants at the beginning of their interviews, the interview questions were just a guideline, and it was acceptable to move away from the questions if necessary. Naturally though, the participant would wind up answering questions that we had not yet come to, which allowed for further explanation when the question was finally asked. In addition, a number of participants offered artifacts they referred to during their interviews[4].

Prior to any interviews, I sent a recruitment e-mail to the participant asking them if they would be interested in being interviewed. Once the participants agreed, I conducted face-to-face interviews with nine participants and interviewed one participant remotely using Skype. At the start of the interview, I asked each participant to read and sign a consent form. I recorded all

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[4] See Appendix B named "Archival Data List"

interviews on my password-protected laptop as well as a digital recorder. I began to transcribe

interviews[5] and write memos[6] while I was still collecting data because of the iterative nature of

grounded theory. The transcription of interviews, and the subsequent writing of memos, allowed

me to ask additional clarifying questions to other participants (and sometimes the same

participant) which, I believe, enriched my data collection. While I used grounded theory to

collect my data, I also used it to guide my data analysis.

Grounded Theory

"[G]rounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting

and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves" (Charmaz 1).

Additionally, "Grounded theory begins with inductive data, invokes iterative strategies of going

back and forth between data and analysis, uses comparative methods, and keeps you interacting

and involved with your data and emerging analysis" (Charmaz 1). I believed at the outset of my

project that I would be able to use grounded theory to interact with my data to identify theories

for tutor training in the writing center. However, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, the trajectory of

this dissertation came as a bit of a surprise and that was only because I used ground theory to

collect and analyze my data. As I collected mt data, and writing memos, I recognized themes

emerging even before I began analyzing my data. Grounded theory allowed me to constantly

interact with my data in order to further explore those themes, re-code, and re-examine.

Data Analysis

Johnny Saldaña argues that grounded theory "usually involves meticulous analytic

attention by applying specific types of codes to data through a series of cumulative coding cycles

that ultimately lead to the development of a theory – a theory 'grounded' or rooted in the original

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[5] Transcriptions are available in optional Appendix C

[6] I have included a small sample of the memos I wrote during the data collection and analysis process in Appendix D

data themselves" (51). For my data analysis, I conducted a number of rounds of coding. First, I began by "holistic coding," which Saldaña defines as an attempt to grasp the overall view of the data versus coding line-by-line (142). These themes were recorded in memos and included:

- Value systems

- Ownership of writing (in two terms): the paper – the student / consultant AND – who teaches / consults with writing

- Ethos: the profile of a writing tutor (consultant) vs. / w the faculty member

- Physical location / distance (but with that comes non-physical distance – abstract?)

- Working conditions in the satellite center

- Assessment (numbers and / versus narrative when sending it to stakeholders), but also just assessment in general

- Student agency

- Us vs. them dichotomy

- Content/form and how that does or does not connect with disciplinary writing/writing

- HOCs (disciplinary / specialist) / LOCs (Generalist)

- Learning by doing (or teaching) – especially when we think about the GAs Jennifer worked with (first-semester vs. GAs who had taught at least 1 100-level bio course)

- Adaptability

- Who makes the decisions for the center?

- "Discipline Specific" "help" (importance of)

- There seems to be an underlying assumption here about **transfer**

- The construction of writing center narratives NOT written by writing centers

- Where *else* could funding come from? (and if we had outside funding, [how] would that help with our agency?)

- Rhetorical situated learning

- Situated learning

- Access

- "Peer Review Groups"

- Examples of advantages of interdisciplinarity

- "value added" in the writing center

Once I completed a "big picture" view of my data, I stayed in the first phase of coding, but moved to "initial coding." Saldaña adapts Anslem Strauss and Juliet Corbin's definition of "Initial Coding" and defines it as "breaking down qualitative data into discrete parts, closely examining them and comparing them for similarities and differences" (100). I used my interview questions as a guide to break down my data into discrete parts. I hand-coded all of the interviews and then compiled a spreadsheet for each interview (see Appendix E) so I could compare them for similarities and differences. Through this analysis, I was able to recognize significant crossover with the initial themes I identified above.

Surprisingly when I coded using my questions as a guide, I discovered that the answers to my interview questions were fairly similar to each other. For many participants, the exigence of the discipline-specific writing center satellite was to provide access to students and offer a kind of "customization" of tutoring (research question 1). The tutoring practices of the discipline-specific writing center satellites mostly remained the same as those in the "main" writing center (RQ 2). Finally, there were a number of various institutional structures that informed the creation and development of the centers. The most commonly mentioned institutional structures were

those that created roadblocks, such as funding and value of the site within the institution (RQ 3).

Consequently, since the themes I saw emerge during the collection of my data and the

transcriptions of my interviews seemed to be richer than my interview questions, I began

thinking about data from a big picture view, once again. I then compared my "big picture" view

to the list developed in Chapter 2 and cataloged the similarities into three categories. See Table 1

for the three categories that overlapped with my data and the common issues still prevalent in

writing center studies. As you will see, I organized several "issues" into more than one category.

Table 1: Catalogued Coding Phase 1

Generalist / specialist	Remediation	Situated Learning
Staffing / Administrating issues (Wallace and Simpson) Tutor training—how to train the tutor "effectively" (Child) Generalist / specialist debate (Samson)	Many writing centers are still viewed often as "remedial" (Wallace and Simpson) Faculty's ignorance about what the center does; they see writing centers as skill-and-drill shops / to "fix" students' work (Wallace and Simpson) The writing center's position within the English Department often marginalizes it from the rest of the institution (Wallace and Simpson) Writing centers only help or cater to the "Educationally disadvantaged" (Ricker)	Staffing / Administrating issues (Wallace and Simpson) Tutor training—how to train the tutor "effectively" (Child) The writing center's position within the English Department often marginalizes it from the rest of the institution (Wallace and Simpson)

	The need to continually explain what we do (Wallace)—to some extent lab / center nomenclature debate	

What I gained from this was the development of three categories: instead of exigence, situated learning become a stand out; instead of tutoring practice, the generalist / specialist debate rose to the surface; and instead of institutional structures, the "students can't write" narrative became prominent. In other words, grounded theory allowed me to interact with my data to move beyond the analysis of the data my initial interview questions yielded and to allow me to identify patterns that interacted with writing center scholarship.

I then developed three main categories to subsequently code including (a) generalist / specialist debate, (b) narratives, and (c) literacy / situated learning. Once these categories were defined, I once again hand-coded my transcriptions to find evidence for each of these three categories. I used general key words with the surrounding parts of the transcription to identify evidence for each category, as shown in Table 2. The second phase of coding then included another round for each of these main themes. From this second phase of coding, I was then able to create a narrative about each theme, which were then developed into the next three chapters of this dissertation.

The data and analysis offered in this dissertation is not representative of all discipline-specific writing center satellites and / or all writing support spaces. In fact, one limitation of this study is that I was unable to interview disciplines-specific writing center satellite coordinators from more than one university. However, I do believe this study is a way to begin a conversation

about the ways in which the generalist / specialist debate and the "students can't write" narrative continue to undergird writing center narratives. Ultimately, I offer an alternative to these constrictive notions—situated learning.

Table 2: Key Words Coding Phase 2

(a) Generalist / Specialist	(b) Narratives	(c) Literacy, Situated Learning
Surface errors	Students can't write	Situated learning
Grammar	Students are bad/terrible writers	Embedded
HOCs, MOCs, LOCs	General faculty criticism of student writing	Immersion
Global issues	Remedial / remediation	Learning
Customization		Social construction
Content/form		Context / contextualized
Tutoring practices		Where students "live"

Chapter 4 – The Generalist / Specialist Debate: Tutoring Practices

I demonstrated in Chapter 2 that writing center theory has seemingly echoed the trajectory of composition theory from generalist to specialist. This chapter will explore the generalist / specialist debate in writing center literature. There a number of prominent scholars in the writing center field who have written thorough literature reviews on expertise (specialists) (Dinitz and Harrington; Mackiewicz "The Effects") and the generalist / specialist debate overall (Kiedaisch and Dinitz; Hubbuch; Walker). Therefore, I will begin this chapter with only a brief overview of the debate. More importantly, I will show the move within recent writing center scholarship where professionals have been encouraged to replace the generalist / specialist binary. As have many before me, I will continue to explore this binary and offer evidence of the advantages and disadvantages of the specialist tutor in discipline-specific writing support spaces and suggest that future scholars might consider this debate as a starting point to ask questions about students' learning.

Brief Overview of the Generalist / Specialist Debate

The Generalist Tutor

In *The Longman Guide to Peer Tutoring,* Paula Gillespie and Neal Lerner put their novice tutors' minds at ease and write, "you don't have to be an expert on the subject matter of the paper the writer is working on, and you don't even have to be an expert on grammar and correctness—knowing that something isn't right is probably enough" (26). Gillespie and Lerner suggest in their tutor training guide that this kind of generalist tutoring is acceptable so long as the tutor begins the session by asking the student questions, asking the student to read their work aloud, and focusing on higher order concerns (HOCs) or global issues—not grammar. The authors argue, "your job isn't to offer content expertise […] You need to respect writers' need to

discover—with your help—the information they need to clarify a point or expand an argument" (Gillespie and Lerner 28). A quick survey of tutor training manuals or articles on tutor training reveal that tutors are typically trained as generalists. Generalist tutors ask probing questions about the student's paper, look for places in the student's work that needs more explanation, and offer suggestions for overall structure, including whether the student is addressing the assignment and if the student offers evidence to support their argument. As Gillespie and Lerner argue in their training manual, tutors do not have to be experts to do this job. Generalists do not need to have discipline-specific knowledge because they can "help the students recognize what must be stated in the text" (Hubbuch 28) because of their "outsider" (to the discipline) status. Dory Hammersley and Heath Shepard argue that the "generalist approach is effective and valuable" (18). "As generalist tutors, we bring out knowledge of writing to the consultation while the writer brings his knowledge of the subject matter. In most cases, this combination gives us everything we need for a successful consultation" (Hammersley and Shepard 18). Scholars advocate for generalist tutoring, but they also worry that specialist tutoring can cause for a misappropriation of student work and unearth strong potential for plagiarism (Clark and Healy).

The Specialist Tutor

However, Jean Kiedaisch and Sue Dinitz explore the limitations of the generalist tutor. Kiedaisch and Dinitz videotaped twelve writing center sessions and analyzed them to determine the effects of a tutor's disciplinary knowledge. After the session, the authors asked the students and tutors to assess how well they believed the session went. Almost all of the students and the tutors reported that the sessions went well. However, when faculty viewed the tapes, they did not agree with the students' and tutors' assessment of the session. Additionally faculty noticed a "correlation between the tutor's knowledge of the discipline and the quality of the session: the

disciplinary knowledge of the tutors in the excellent session were rated as high, while that of the tutors in the weak sessions were rated low" (Kiedaisch and Dinitz 64). The faculty believed that a session went better (i.e. the tutors were more helpful and offered adequate advice to the student) when the tutor had similar disciplinary knowledge to the student's paper. Those who advocate for the specialist tutor suggest, a "tutor's knowledge of how to think and write in the discipline" is important (Kiedaisch and Dinitz 72). Further, "[g]ood tutoring strategies alone [are] not enough" (Kiedaisch and Dinitz 72). Some even argue that specialist tutors are not just better than generalists, but that generalist tutors can be detrimental to a student's paper, and overall writing, when working with engineering students (Mackiewicz "The Effects"). Michael Pemberton agrees that generalist tutor is often insufficient.

> Though this *pedagogy of the generic* may be a useful and effective approach for some students, assignments, and contexts (particularly first-year composition courses), I am concerned that it may do a disservice to students who are writing in a multidisciplinary WAC program, particularly because […] the central purpose of writing across the curriculum is to familiarize and train students to become fluent in exactly those discipline- specific rhetorical features that a "generic" writing center pedagogy is geared to overlook. (Pemberton, "Rethinking" 118 emphasis in original)

Although Pemberton is contextualizing writing center help specifically within a writing across the curriculum program, this excerpt raises questions not just about WAC, but also about writing center theory and practice. What is it that those on both sides of this debate arguing for? Potentially, we are all engaging in the conversation to help students and their writing. But, what does this *mean*? "Helping students and their writing" brings up questions about value, authority in writing, plagiarism and a plethora of other issues writing center work has been speaking to for

years. Because the generalist / specialist debate is so slippery, some scholars have attempted to remove the binary.

Attempts at Removing the Binary

Kristin Walker was one of the first to suggest the move away from the generalist / specialist binary and offer a new perspective. "Instead of polarizing the issue, I suggest that generalist / specialist tutor arguments be restructured around tutor training theory and its relationship to social constructionism" (28). Walker attempts to bypass the questions raised above in order to focus more on tutor training and less on the generalist / specialist binary. Several scholars follow Walker's lead.

In "Designing Tutor Guides to Enhance Effectiveness Across Disciplines and with Special Demographics," Julie L. Moore, Erin SanGregory, Sarah Matney, and Julie Morris suggest that "although the tutors possess effective writing and interpersonal communications skills, they often don't possess knowledge regarding the modes of writing in disciplines different from their majors" (pp. 1 – 2). Therefore, Moore "planned to teach [tutors] about the writing they know so little about, specifically by working with them to create a series of tutoring guides for writing in different disciplines" (Moore et al. 2). The guides serve a dual purpose: "serving to train tutors in our writing center courses about discipline-specific expectations and providing quasi 'cheat sheets' for tutors to consult right before, or even during, tutoring sessions" (Moore et al. 2). In other words, Moore is training, and equipping, her generalist tutors with specialized resources.

Bonnie Devet highlights the problems with generalist tutors and, much like Walker, offers a new theoretical lens in which to view tutoring practice. "When tutors sense they lack expertise to ask questions of larger import, they can also yield to the temptation to fix only

surface problems (comma splices and diction)" (n.p.). Devet suggests that students need "a wider

perspective on what it means to write in the academy" (n.p.); therefore, directors need to train

their tutors for the diversity of writing students bring into the writing center by using a metagenre

and ecocomposition approach. Devet writes, "[w]ith centers as hubs for writing in the

disciplines, it is time to put to rest the dichotomous debate between having either specialist or

generalist tutors" (n.p.). She is right, but her focus remains with teaching tutors how to work with

students in the disciplines. In other words, like Moore, Devet is equipping her generalist tutors

with specialized resources.

Alternatively to Moore et al. and Devett, Catherine Savini suggests an alternative that

potentially does not highlight the specialist. She suggests that "writing consultants can teach their

peers how to find their own way into a discipline" by disclosing their own limited experience,

posing questions, and teaching students how to use model texts (Savini 3). Even though it is not

practical for tutors to learn all assignments in every discipline, "tutors may be able to help

students assess their own genre awareness by asking the right kinds of questions" (Savini 3).

When the tutor uses a model text, the student can gain skills to question their own discipline.

"When consultant and tutee work together to investigate disciplinary expectations, the tutee

learns actively, and the consultant avoids either misguiding the tutee or enforcing generic

conventions" (Savini 5). Savini's approach does not privilege generalist tutors over specialists or

vice versa as much of the scholarship surrounding the debate in writing center studies. Yet, it

does reinforce the seminal North-ism, that writing centers create better writers, not better writing

("The Idea").

> Granted, a departure from the writer's text might feel like a distraction to time-strapped
>
> students and tutors, but if our mission is to help students become better writers in the long

run, then time devoted to teaching students how to read texts as models is worthwhile.

(Savini 4)

Savini's model calls into question the purpose of writing centers, assumes that students want to be better writers overall, and suggests that writing center theory still relies on this seminal North-ism.

While attempting to remove the generalist / specialist binary, these scholars have only reinforced the specialist side of the debate. The one exception to this statement is Savini's piece where she applies an underlying assumption about North's work and his, "we want to make better writers, not better writing" narrative, is equally as problematic. As further described in Chapter 5, scholars speaking at recent International Writing Center Association (IWCA) conferences have been calling this bluff and suggesting that the work writing centers do actually help the writing, and that, too, is acceptable work.

Lack of Empirical Evidence

As Sue Dinitz and Susanmarie Harrington argue, there is a lack of empirical evidence within this debate. Most of the scholarship published on this debate has been theoretical. Therefore, the vocabulary around this argument focuses on "effectiveness," (Hammersley and Shepard; Moore, et. al; "The Debate" Walker) and there is little evidence to support "effectiveness," with either generalist or specialist tutors, in writing center sessions. To date, there have been few studies who have provided evidence for "effectiveness" (Dinitz and Harrington; Kideaisch and Dinitz; Mackiewicz). It might prove to be useful to examine my data set, particularly because my research sites are discipline-specific writing support spaces, to find any commonalities and / or discrepancies within the existing specialist tutor literature.

In the following sections, I will explore evidence that reinforces the advantages and disadvantages of specialist tutors. I will also look at a legal writing support space and the ways in which it values specialist tutoring. Finally, I argue that if writing center professionals do not make considerations to move away from the generalist / specialist binary, we risk being usurped by models like the legal writing support spaces which, as McKinney suggests, would put writing centers' integrity at risk.

Evidence of the Advantages and Disadvantages of Specialist Tutoring

Discipline-specific writing center satellites are remarkable places to gain insight into specialist tutoring. Since the satellites are physically located within the college / discipline they serve (at least in this study), the tutors become immersed in the discipline (there will be more on the situated nature of discipline-specific writing center satellite tutors in Chapter 6). By nature, the tutors within those satellites work almost exclusively with students from the discipline the satellite supports. Therefore, the tutors become familiar with the assignments, the faculty, the tone of writing, and the complexities required from students' writing within a particular discipline. The business satellite I studied was a particularly interesting site to interrogate specialist tutoring because of the diversity of staff (two tutors are faculty and one tutor is trained as a writing center tutor), and the interviews of these three tutors show evidence of the complexities of the generalist / specialist debate.

Disadvantages of Specialist Tutors: Business School

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a significant concern in the business school I studied. As she began to develop the satellite, Helen Miller, business school satellite coordinator, says, "I know that many [faculty] were at first concerned, and I probably was too, at first, as to, is this person just going to

give my students all the answers kind of thing" (HM 5). Since Helen is faculty in the business school as well as the satellite coordinator, she has her ear to the ground, in a sense. She attends faculty meetings where decisions are made about developing a discipline-specific writing center satellite, and therefore hears the arguments for and against such decisions. Although the satellite has been open for five years, she still wonders, "how much do we help a student" when they are writing materials to apply for jobs such as a resume or cover letter? "I feel like when I correct their grammar," the person represented on paper is not accurate to the student who wrote it (HM 5). In other words, Helen brings up issues of authorship. If Helen is "making corrections" to the students' paper, is she the author or is the student?

Helen further explains her unease with working with students on the content of their writing. "I have [worked with] management grad students, and I feel like I'm going beyond what I should, that I am, mmm, affecting content" (HM 16). Yet, Helen suggests that because of her knowledge of business, she can help students better. "[F]or me to be able to say, 'That's defined correctly,' or 'You're not using that correctly,' because of my knowledge, that's one thing, you know, again, if I can stop there …" (HM 18). However, Helen feels comfortable telling students what is "right" and "wrong;" yet, she will not push forward to ask them about content.

This kind of "directive" tutoring, many argue, can be unhelpful to students. Yet, Hubbuch suggests that an advantage of the specialist tutor "is that he or she knows the appropriate questions to ask" (25). Additionally, "Not only is the knowledgeable [specialist] tutor able to provide a student with necessary technical information about writing conventions but also to evaluate the quality of work the student is doing" (Hubbuch 26). Helen is evaluating students' work and making judgments on whether or not she tells them the "correct answer." As many of us know in writing center theory, this kind of directive tutoring often shuts down the writer.

"[D]irect answers, while they can be beneficial to the student as a novice in a particular filed, may be detrimental to the student's development as a writer and active learner" (Hubbuch 26). Hubbuch shows us that she values the North-ism of helping the writer improve over time. Although, Helen suggests that other work is done in the satellite.

Proofreading

"I've had [faculty] give me their assignments to look at the assignment description. I've looked at professor's resumes. I've looked at their research papers and read them" (HM 13). Faculty will give Helen their assignments, resumes, research articles and expect proofreading to be done, and there could be a number of reasons why this exchange takes place. For example, the satellite is funded by the business school which might signal to faculty that they can use the service, which is absolutely encouraged. However, faculty who ask Helen to proofread their work potentially see her as an editor and may not be familiar with the scope of writing center work. This example ignores the one-on-one tutoring model that writing centers were built upon. Regardless, Helen might not feel like she has a choice to turn faculty away, even if they are explicitly asking for editing help. Additionally, she says, "95% of the people walk in and want us to proofread their papers, and no matter how many times we say we're not there to proofread their papers, [it] is still what we end up doing" (HM 10). Or, it is still what Helen ends up doing. While this scenario is not representative of all three tutors in the business school, as we will see later, another tutor in this same satellite feels pressure to tutor in the same way as Helen. Since Helen does not have the vocabulary to respond to students who come into the satellite for "proofreading help," she ultimately gives into students' presumed needs. The focus on surface errors, and not global issues, is one of the primary concerns with generalist tutors. While there is evidence to the contrary (Dinitz and Harrington; Kiedaisch and Dinitz; Mackiewicz "The Effects

of Tutor Expertise"), and although Helen is very much considered a "specialist tutor," she continues to focus on surface issues because she feels uncomfortable "affecting content."

James Anderson, a writing center tutor who was asked to help tutor in the business satellite, says,

> So much tutoring, for at least one of the instructors that works in that center, [it] ends up becoming drill and kill, especially for citations and especially for their works cited page, that's what she expects from her own consulting work, and from my consulting work in turn. (JA 39)

James believes, "that's part of why the frequent fliers exist" (JA 45). He explains further.

> I think part of it is that the ESL / ELL students that we have, [are] not necessarily competent in their writing skills, but then again, that just [raises] another question. Well what are we doing to build that confidence as writers, and what are we doing to help the instructors of those students do the same and be somewhat, socially responsive to that […] there is such the drill and kill need and so the questions that get asked by the other consultants that work in the space are usually [grammar related], but [students] come in asking for help with grammar, so it would be "bad customer service" of me to not give them the assistance that they ask for. And to some extent, we all experience that as consultants, right, when someone says they want help with grammar, there's a part of you that like goes, "Oh, maybe I should help them a little bit with that." I think most of us know a little bit not to like spend the whole session on what a coordinating-conjunction is but pointed out repeated mistakes. (JA pp. 45 – 46)

The "bad customer service" James is referring to in the excerpt is how Helen defines her service in the business satellite. Helen suggests it would be "bad customer service" not to have a

business writing center satellite. "We are really, truly, available and there would be, you know, it's kind of almost like bad customer service not to come to them" (HM 19). Helen also uses "bad customer service" language to justify providing proofreading services to students.

The Ivory Tower Effect

Since the discipline-specific writing center satellite in the business school doubles as an office for both faculty who tutor in the satellite, their jobs as teachers and tutors can become conflated. Helen asks, "how much are we teaching versus correcting?" (HM 9). When students from Helen's business communication classes visit the center to ask for help with one of Helen's assignments, is she a teacher or a tutor? It is possible that tutors in generalist centers face this issue as well, since graduate assistants often work as tutors and teachers of first-year writing, but the occurrence is likely not as high as with Helen and her faculty colleague. Regardless of Helen's self-imposed role as a "teacher" or "corrector / tutor," James is concerned about the tone the satellite sets for students. James worries the business school satellite is in danger of reengaging the "banking concept of education" (Freire) where teachers hold all the knowledge and enter it into a receptacle, and students come to withdraw said knowledge. The banking concept of education privileges a unanimous voice of authority, James argues.

> [I]t contributes to a unanimous voice of authority that is problematic for consulting work. Particularly as a grad student, writing center work is also in this weird place because— what constitutes ownership and plagiarism, right?—an issue that we have to sort of fight against on an administrative level all the time, but at the same time, it sort of dis- acknowledges the work we do, and not that writing center consultants should take some sort of ownership, but that writing is social and should invite these kinds of feedback on its own, and when you don't invite those questions, and you're making statements, it

problematizes that relationship, especially one so tenuous as writing center administrator

who needs funding. We need funding from them [the business school's administration],

and when they see us as hands on, taking ownership of a paper, then that puts in[to]

question our funding for the following year, and it puts students and the role of an

unknowledgeable person knocking at the gate, hoping to receive some knowledge from

an expert on the inside. (JA 21)

James brings up more questions about authority and writing. Who "owns" the knowledge? In a

model the business satellite might be perpetuating, James suggests that students see the tutors

within the satellite as an all-knowing expert who is there to dispense information and answers.

From what Helen says above, that might not be so far from the truth. It seems logical to hire a

faculty member from the discipline to tutor at the satellite center, but James suggests, "but then

that also calls into question the values of writing. Who gets to say the writing is, is valued or not

and what practices should operate in that space" (JA 39). However, James adds,

I think minimalist tutoring can sometimes fall into the position of making that still

remedial. I don't necessarily think that people should be directing "this is what's right,

this is what's wrong," either. I think that there's maybe something outside of this divide

that we need to consider. And then there's the issue of people bringing different identities

and different backgrounds into writing. So often we play a role, whether formalized or

not, in helping marginalized students sort of navigate this sort of hegemonic culture that

is academic, and then what do you do with people bringing other grammars and other

discourses into writing that are just as sophisticated and rhetorically savvy moves, even if

they're not necessarily valued. (JA 15)

In this satellite, James says, the value of writing lies within the instructors. There's an assumption "that we see in the satellite that the instructors hold all authority and value in writing, and that the instructors shouldn't have to necessarily engage in interrogating what those values are or what they mean" (JA 38). The idea that the instructors hold the value and authority in writing perpetuates an "ivory tower" model for this discipline-specific writing center satellite.

What Does it Mean to Have Disciplinary Experience?

Furthermore, James mentions that once these models are in place, it is difficult to change because those tutors inside the satellite become complacent with their practice. "I think there's a tendency to revert into these sort of like complacent not even Stephen North, like pre-Stephen North writing center pedagogies" (JA 14). James highlights faculty's ignorance of the writing center that North was frustrated by in "The Idea of a Writing Center." James says that even though he is classically trained as a writing center tutor, he is often falling into these patterns himself. "I find myself falling into those complacent sort of rhythms—like not question asking and sort of articulating fewer questions and [offering] more statements" to students (JA 28). The reason James feels as though he has begun to become complacent is likely because of the prominence of the two other faculty members who work with James in the business satellite center.

> [With] the center being small, as it is, usually the times that I've been working there, it's been the two of us helping one student. So, one of us is consulting and the other one is doing something else, but it invites a sort of eves-dropping and instead of being a collaborative, when they do sort of put their voices into the conversation, instead of it being a collaborative, "Come help me on this" sort of collaborative consulting work, it becomes more of "I will take over the session for a few minutes" kind of gesture. I guess

I've invited that because of some unfamiliarity [with the business discipline], especially when it's one of their students and [faculty is] asking a question that I cannot necessarily discern from the prompt and the instructor is sitting right behind me. I might as well just as the instructor, but then, of course, it turns into their consulting session. (JA pp. 22 – 23)

Because James's background is in English, he feels as though he might be at a disadvantage with tutoring in the business satellite. Unlike most of the other satellite coordinators, James had only been working in the business satellite for one semester at the time of our interview, and he did not have any kind of business background. While he was becoming immersed in the discipline, though, the faculty tutors in the center would undermine his authority during sessions because they did not seem to believe he was "qualified" to help business students.

I think that they at first thought that I was either insecure, especially since my background is in English studies and I'm consulting in the [business school], so I think a lot of that question asking and inviting conversation [with] the students was read as unfamiliarity with business writing and unfamiliarity with these genres, when I was trying to do other sort of moves, practice wise that's grounded in writing center research. (JA 20)

James suggests that the tutoring strategies he learned from writing center theory were perceived as inexperience. The lack of "inexperience" among "experienced" tutors in a particular center is a new research area. Since there is little empirical evidence of these discipline-specific writing support spaces, there is opportunity to better understand how tutors' experience affects other tutors in the same space.

The disadvantages we see in this section mimic the characteristics that scholars name as the negative effects of specialist tutoring. The directive tutoring we see from Helen "may be detrimental," Hubbuch argues, "to a student's development as a writer and active learner" (26). Helen is a directive tutor because she worries about content, and James, although not because he wants to be this kind of tutor, finds himself directing the student more than asking him questions. This directive tutoring, then, can potentially result in what Paulo Freire calls the "banking concept of education." Freire argues that "Narration (with the teacher as narrator) leads the students to memorize mechanically the narrated content. Worse yet, it turns them [students] into 'containers,' into 'receptacles' to be 'filled' by the teacher" (pp. 71 – 72). The danger, Freire says, "The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world" (73). Directive tutoring can happen with both generalist and specialist tutors yet can look slightly different for both. However, Helen has demonstrated that specialists, as well as generalists, focus on surface errors and offer students grammar advice. The evidence in this section has shown that there is the potential as specialist tutors to be just as "detrimental" (Hubbuch) to students and their writing as generalist tutors.

Advantages of Specialist Tutoring

From the Business School

Although there is quite a bit of evidence to suggest that specialist tutoring could be harmful to students, there is also evidence that it is useful. Lisa Williams, faculty of the business school and tutor in the business satellite, says that her background helps her to tutor students. In this particular case, Lisa would not have likely worked in the main writing center. In fact, she was asked a number of times to tutor in the business satellite because she is a WAC fellow. As a

business communication instructor, she did not feel comfortable working in a writing center as an "expert" which is similar to the apprehension instructors across disciplines felt when tasked with teaching writing in Chapter 1. "We've worked in industry, we understand the purpose of a resume and a cover letter" (LW 7). In addition to her background, Lisa believes that practical application is useful for students who come to the business satellite. "I just think that the practical application, a better understanding of here's why you do what you do, or why you need to do your writing in this specific format" is helpful (LW 11). Lisa further comments on the importance of this practical application in business writing.

> I look at a piece of writing from an employer's perspective, or from a manager's perspective, so if you're missing words or you have bad grammar or bad punctuation, this is a reflection on you as an employee, and I'm making judgements about you as an employee. This is all I know about you is this piece of writing. (LW pp. 8 – 9)

A discipline-specific writing center satellite can create spaces for this kind of "practical application" tutoring to happen.

Unlike her faculty counter-part in the business satellite, Lisa focuses on content with students during a writing center consultation. One reason is because, "your manager is never going to care about the citation. Unfortunately that's the truth" (LW 27). Lisa offers an example of working with a student.

> I tend to focus on content, one example yesterday, I had a student who was writing a paper on, an HR paper for a HR class on Mitsubishi, and he's using a lot of sentences like, "They did this to help them" type of thing, and I'm like, "well, who's 'they' and who's 'them' and what is this?"—those types of content issues, again, trying to get him to be very specific in what he wants to tell me instead of [me saying] "well, you should

have maybe put a comma here." In business, you know what? [Commas] are not very

important, knowing who "they" is is very important. (LW 25)

While it might seem as though what Lisa has done is a generalist practice, because of Lisa's background and experience, she knows what is important to a manager in the workplace. She was "asking the right questions" (Hubbuch) because she knows the practical nature, and the rhetorical considerations, of the report the student was writing. Lisa did not offer a right or wrong answer, she lead her session with the student by using rhetorical considerations. Lisa encouraged the student to think through who the audience was for the report and the kinds of tone, explanation, and definitions needed in order for the audience to understand the report.

Lisa has shown us that specialized tutoring can be helpful when the tutor has experience in the discipline; in this case, Lisa has years of experience in the workplace, in addition to teaching in the business school, which only makes her more knowledgeable. Lisa sets up the session with student as a kind of "expert," and then asks the student questions that help him situate his learning through his writing.

From the Desk of the Writing Center Director

Unless they are "regulars," students rarely venture back into the center to tell us the results of our help with of their work. So, while we cannot assess effectiveness of specialized tutoring, the writing center director seconds the notion that specialist tutoring is useful.

It has to do with going out to where the students are. Instead of asking them always to

come to us and, and you know, that can work fine, and certainly they do, but to go out to

them, I think is really valuable and worthwhile too because, not that we have to make

everything easy for everybody, but it just, it's convenience … I use nursing as an

example. When we, in the early days, when I had just started to take on this role, we were

seeing a lot of nursing students. I was hearing things in consultants that, quite frankly, baffled me. I couldn't figure out why APA was, why students were terrified of it. They were missing the forest through the trees, and they were more concerned about that than they were concerned about content, and so you know the light bulb went on one day and I thought, "well there's more to this, and I need to be talking to the nursing faculty about why this is the case and what they're doing in their classes." And, that's when that whole process of collecting their syllabi and looking at their assignments and all the different things that we did with them really took off. And, I think that the piece about having tutors who understand those things and having a couple of tutors, it's impossible to train every tutor in every discipline to that level, but to have at least, because we can all be generalists, and there's real value in that and there's a lot in the literature that speaks to that, but I think there's also real value in having some specialization and having a core group or small number who can speak to the needs of the students of those particular disciplines. (NB pp. 1 – 2)

The writing center director, Nancy, suggests that while generalist tutors are useful, and there is evidence of that in our literature, specialist tutors are useful as well. Nancy does not suggest a dichotomy of generalist and specialist; she offers a both / and view of this debate.

Additionally, Nancy mentions an added advantage for discipline-specific writing center satellites and specialist tutors: relationship building. Nancy argues that Jennifer does essential work by developing relationships in the sciences (NB 17). While further research could, of course, be done to determine how the relationships between tutor and student affect a writing center session, I think Nancy is speaking to the importance of camaraderie within a session. This is, of course, not discipline-specific; however, potentially the reason that students can relate to

Jennifer is that she is learning the discipline right along with them. In a sense, Jennifer is mirroring Savini's suggestion where "writing consultants can teach their peers how to rind their own way into a discipline" (3). More on Jennifer in Chapters 4 and 5.

However, there are always disclaimers; with the good comes the bad. Nancy speaks to the importance of understanding the professor's expectations, and subsequently, being a specialist tutor.

> It's an advantage and a drawback, too. Sometimes, it's good when a consultant doesn't know, because they might raise some issues that, frankly, I'm, you know, blinded to or another consultant is blinded to because they do know it so well. That can also stifle students' creativity, too. If you're driven by, "Oh, I know, [professor] wants this, this, and this," so, I'm kind of guiding the student to provide this, this, and this. But, who knows? Maybe left to their own devices, they would have done something a little different that would have been just as acceptable and successful. (NB 12)

Nancy questions the differences with specialist and generalist tutors. A specialist can help guide a student when they know the assignment and instructor in ways that a generalist cannot. However, a specialist might take too many liberties in "guiding" the student, where the generalist would have left room for creativity and potentially, allowed the student to write something just as successful.

As we have seen in this chapter, the generalist / specialist debate is complex, as all the interviewees demonstrate in their excerpts. There are levels of "expertise" and content knowledge that should be taken into consideration (Dinitz and Harrington). What defines "expertise" or a "specialist tutor"? How is "expertise" different from content knowledge? How much guiding is too much guiding? Not enough guiding? These questions could continue for

pages. It might be helpful to look at a writing support space that is not aligned with a writing center to gain a slightly different perspective.

Legal Writing Support Space

Amy Dillon, a law student, is a writing fellow and does administrative work for a legal writing center. However, while "writing center" is in the name, it is not in any way affiliated with the university's writing center. Therefore, I will refer to it as a legal writing support space from here forward. Amy explains the writing support space.

> The way it works is that every law student has to take this first-year law writing course, legal analysis research writing, and it's basically an introduction to the entire style of legal writing because it's very different, especially for me, it's very different than any other kind of writing I've ever done, and each section, so they are very small sections [compared] to other law school sections, they have like twenty, twenty-one students in each one, and each section has a legal writing fellow assigned to it. So it's basically sort of somewhere between, we're not teaching assists, but we are in class with them, we are helping in small group activities in class, so it's like somewhere between a tutor and a TA. And in addition to in class [help], there's also the legal writing [support space], which is just essentially a place for students to come to receive one-on-one support. (AD 1)

The writing support space Amy describes here, "a place for students to come to receive one-on-one support," almost sounds like it came right from writing center scholarship. Admittedly, she does not have much experience with writing center theory and practice, and was chosen to be a writing fellow because she performed well in the first-year legal writing course the previous year. Yet, the one-on-one tutoring is the same as in a writing center. However, the differences

arise when the legal writing fellow is immersed into the class with the first-year law students. Of course, all legal fellows have taken the class before, but it is their job as a fellow to take notes, help students with questions, help with group activities, as Amy said, and be available outside of class time. Therefore, the students see their legal writing fellows in class and not just in the writing support space.

Additionally, Amy suggests that a "main campus" writing center might not be helpful to law students.

> I don't know that, if law students went to an all campus writing center, it just wouldn't be helpful because, a lot of the things you're being told to do in legal writing really contradict things you would do if you were just writing a paper for undergrad or something like that. So, I think from that aspect, it doesn't really make sense, and there's also just the aspect of like having something that's localized in the law school. (AD 3)

Amy expands on the kinds of writing law students do in the legal writing support space.

> We'll do things like what's called a predictive memo. So that's sort of saying, "Okay, we have this client, how is existing law going to apply to their case, and what's the outcome going to be?" and so that's like kind of predicting what the court will do. There are things we do that are more persuasive, so like in a pellet brief, the trial court has ruled on this case, and now we want to convince the court of appeals that they should either uphold that ruling or they should reverse it, so that's a very different style. So, predictive memo is fairly like neutral I guess you would say, and then when you're writing a brief, you have to be persuasive, like that's your goal. So there's definitely different elements that go into that in terms of how you structure it, what kind of information you provide, how, the way in which you write. You still have to come across as like rational and reasonable,

otherwise, the court's just going to be like "whatever," but you can't say anything too outrageous. I've read some that do, but you have a little more creative liberty there. And then the other one that we do less with is what's called a bench memo. So that's the idea that like, if you were a law clerk to a judge, and the judge gets these two filings, or these briefs or whatever, has all this information, and you look through it, and you're basically analyzing everything and saying like, it's still pretty neutral, but you're saying like, "Here's who I think should win this," essentially. You're basically preparing the judge for all the arguments they're going to hear, and what strengths and weaknesses those arguments are. So it's like you're reading what the parties have submitted to you, but you're also researching on your own—so sort of somewhere in between the two. So, that is what I would say the big pieces that we deal with in terms of the first-year students. When you get in billable classes, it gets a little more diverse in terms of the writings, a number of students do more academic research, like scholarly writing, but that's not something we really handle, or really help people with in the writing center. (AD pp. 7 – 8)

These genres have very specific purposes and conventions, and law students should not be taking any creative liberties to change their conventions. As Amy puts it, "nobody cares what you think and everything you [write] has to have substantial support from existing case law or a statute or legislative history" (AD 5). When there is so much at stake in highly competitive law schools, students cannot risk working with a tutor who is not familiar with existing case law. Thus, one advantage of a legal fellow model is that they, too are familiar with all of these genres because they have already written them the previous year. Furthermore, students regularly struggle with

the switch from the writing they learned during their bachelor's degree and the writing that is asked of them in law school. Amy suggests the writing support space exists because

> I think the combination of recognizing just the importance of the class and then also how much people are struggling with it. [Faculty] realize that three hours of class time a week is really not enough. The faculty members even just adding on office hours on top of that isn't really enough to help people really succeed in the discipline. (AD 3)

The legal writing support space helps with writing, but also helps with the research necessary to support the writing in the first-year law class.

> Sometimes, we [help with] how do you find out how other courts have applied that to different situations, working with [students] to make sure they can find the information they need and they're researching the problem before they start writing. And then "okay, you're looking at this case. Are you properly identifying what the holding is, or are you trying to rely on something that's not actually, it might be persuasive, but it actually isn't binding," like the analysis component. So most of what we do is writing help, but there's also that element of it too. (AD 6)

As we will see in Chapter 6, writing support spaces offer more than just "writing," they also help with research and analysis, as Amy described here, as well. While offering research and analysis help specifically to students may not be in our purview, it could be useful to identify and research spaces such as this legal writing support space to gain new perspectives on writing center work.

Avoid Being Usurped

Researching these spaces is a way to push back against what Jackie Grutsch McKinney calls the "grand narrative" of the writing center: "*writing centers are comfortable, iconoclastic*

places were all students go to get one-to-one tutoring with their writing" (3 emphasis in original). McKinney warns us, "If we don't dislodge the writing center grand narrative, what we now conceive of as writing center studies is going to fracture" (90). Yet when we discuss tutoring practice, we recognize that each tutor learns and works differently. In what situations would we recruit specialized tutors? Would it be useful try and compile a "disciplinary guide" for each and every discipline within an institution, and what does this suggest about what the writing center values about disciplinary writing? Should we retrain all of our tutors how to use model texts, and attempt to train them in such a way that they *absolutely* do not fall back on tutoring for surface errors? But then what does that mean for students, like those Eugene Corman mentioned in Chapter 2, whose instructors' grade solely on grammatical mistakes? "In addition, focusing on whether to hire generalist and/or specialist tutors puts tutors in labeled boxes, an over-simplification which subverts opportunities to explore tutors' abilities to work with all clients" (Walker, "The Debate" 28). The generalist / specialist debate, as Walker argues, significantly narrows the view of the capabilities of a tutor.

The few excerpts from this chapter demonstrate that there are advantages and disadvantages to specialist tutoring which is, of course, not groundbreaking. However, we rarely see evidence in writing center scholarship of what "specialist" and "generalist" actually means within the writing center and the implications of such a binary. Additionally, as we start to taxonomize "generalist" characteristics and "specialist" characteristics, the line distinguishing the two kinds of tutors becomes blurred. My study has just begun to shine a light on considerations we have previously missed in scholarship, like the specialist tutor focusing on surface issues that we saw with Helen, and the tensions we see between the tutors in the business satellite, for example. From the work I have done here, I am convinced that we are likely asking

the wrong questions when we ask whether the generalist or the specialist is a better tutor. Instead of asking this question, we might investigate what other questions there are when we consider training and practices of our tutors. What might be lost or gained from examining generalist and specialist tutors? Are there opportunities for generalist and specialist tutors to work together, and what might that look like?

What we certainly should avoid is creating situations where others, especially those outside of the writing center, make judgements about our tutors. Dinitz and Harrington's study asked faculty to review tapes of students and tutors during writing center sessions which is problematic because the faculty are placed into a privileged position of authority to assess tutors' work. Even though both the students and tutors felt their tutoring sessions went well, or better than well in most cases, faculty argued that most tutoring sessions went poorly. Therefore, according to faculty in Dinitz and Harrington's study, the tutor was at fault. "According to the first professor, 'The tutor deferred too much to the student's judgements. When she [the tutor] asked if there were organizational issues and he [the student] said no, she accepted that rather than point out problems'" (Dinitz and Harrington 83). Dinitz and Harrington give another example, "The other professor echoes the first: 'The tutor gave up/in too quickly […] The tutor let some fairly significant issues slide when she appeared to meet with a bit of resistance from the student'" (83). It is not only troubling that Dinitz and Harrington position faculty outside of writing centers, who are not versed in writing center theory and practice, as an authority on writing and tutoring, but the authors agree with faculty, and bring the readers in as accomplices. "*As readers* might imagine, *we* found this linear structure focused on sentence level concerns both surprising and alarming" (Dinitz and Harrington 83 emphasis added). What we see emerging is a "Johhny Can't Tutor" narrative. Not only do the faculty in Dinitz and Harrington's

study suggest that Johnny can't tutor, the authors, who are writing center professionals, are corroborating that narrative and implicating other writing center professionals who are reading their article. Unfortunately, this is how we see these narratives circulate. In the next chapter, we will see how more of these narratives emerge through writing center work and among faculty.

Chapter 5 – Reinforcement of the "Students Can't Write" Narrative: Interviews with Helen and Jennifer

Perennial Discussion of "Students Can't Write"

Recently, there has been a turn to re-imagine the values and ideology of a writing center. As we saw in the previous chapter, scholars have built upon North's seminal piece "The Idea of a Writing Center" and have continued to trouble the complexities of writing center work. Since North's, and others', seminal piece, narratives have emerged to define the values of a writing center that accommodate a diverse student population. The need to create a tangible definition of a writing center emerges from writing center directors and administrators to showcase their ongoing value to institutional stakeholders. However, sometimes, as Jackie Grutsch McKinney argues, the definitions developed to show value are too constraining, leave things out, and marginalize important voices and situations from writing center work. Ultimately then, McKinney's objective "is to show how the writing center grand narrative as a collective, internalized story shapes writing center discourse and that seeing this story as dominant but not comprehensive allows us to change writing center work and discourse" (18). Which therefore allows us to "look for narratives that correspond with the writing center grand narrative, that reify it, and that diverge from it" (McKinney 18). In other words, she is looking for the interesting points of the story that rest outside of the grand narrative - on the periphery. This allows us to expand how we view, and talk about, writing center work in ways that can include the diverse student population and disciplines in which they align.

Narrative Construction

McKinney argues that one implication of reinforcing the grand narrative is, "If we don't dislodge the writing center grand narrative, what we now conceive of as writing center studies is

going to fracture" (90). There are two models that are "pressing the disciplinary boundaries" of writing centers: multiliteracy and "comprehensive writing centers" (McKinney 90). In multiliteracy centers, tutors are working with students on multimodal projects that include more than just a word processed document. Many classes now require students to create YouTube videos, Prezis, podcasts, and websites. Often, writing centers are not equipped or staffed to help with these kinds of assignments. Additionally, McKinney suggests that comprehensive writing centers offer "faculty workshops and retreats, campus events [that] focus on writing, and instruction for improving the teaching of writing on campus" (90). Neither the multiliteracy nor the comprehensive writing center has the same values or offer the same services to students. "In both of these instances, should the idea of a writing center - the story of writing centers - be inflexible to expansion, what we conceive of as writing center studies will split" (McKinney 91). McKinney warns readers that if this fracture happens, models like multiliteracy centers or comprehensive writing centers will create centers independent of the writing center and will leave only a much narrowed view of writing center work. In other words, McKinney warns that these centers will "take over" and how we understand writing center work will be replaced with visions that do not align with the values that are currently imbued in writing center work. But, if we do not have ways to accommodate those students who are in need of services that we cannot provide, such as practicing speeches, developing PowerPoint presentations, creating podcasts, or creating a website, they will go elsewhere. Although McKinney offers a good entry point for my own discussion about narratives, her need to define who we are and what we do is also problematic. For this dissertation, I will not examine the ways in which her narrative is problematic, though I will use her discussion as a starting place for a potentially fuller understanding of the complexities involved in trying to identify any one grand narrative.

Therefore, following on Neal Lerner's work, I will examine how such narratives offer a kind of branding of our work ("Rejecting").

Remediation in Writing Centers

Although Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and Writing in the Disciplines (WID) programs have grown over the last several decades, the perennial discussion of student's writing remains linked to remediation, as discussed in Chapter 1. David Russell argues that Mina Shaughnessy "founded the study of *basic writing*, a new, more politically and pedagogically sensitive approach to 'remedial' writing instruction, which would become important in the growth of the WAC movement" (Russell pp. 274 – 5). McKinney also reminds us that even as we take pause and ask is it "really a *consequence* that a writing center be seen as remedial," the remedial narrative is detrimental to writing centers and to students (68). "The remedial label is so despised that some students will avoid getting tutoring so as not to be seen as deficient, stupid, or ill-fit for academic work" (McKinney 67). Mary Jones, one of my interviewees who works with nursing students in a mid-sized Midwest university, wonders,

> [J]ust the whole idea of associating the writing center with remedial writing, as opposed to developing writers moving towards expert writers … who knows if it's as much as breaking the attitude as the [ability] to see that there are changes and improvements, if you will, rather than always coming with that assumption and then not seeing anything different. (MJ 35-6)

Mary brings up an excellent point about the general conceptions of the writing center: what kinds of narratives are we really up against? In what ways is the "remedial" label still laced throughout writing center narratives? What assumptions that surround the "remedial" narrative, and what effort is going into trying to "break an attitude"?

An early adopter of the notion that writing centers served remedial students, Robert H. Moore begins his 1950 *College English* article in this way: "Writing clinics and writing laboratories are becoming increasingly popular among American universities and colleges as remedial agencies for *removing students' deficiencies* in composition" (Moore 3 emphasis added). Moore notes, "The clinic [writing center] is primarily concerned with the diagnosis of the individual student's writing difficulties and the suggestion of remedial measures that might profitably be pursued" (4). Moore suggests that these "writing clinics" are available to detect writing deficiencies in order to develop a plan of improvement for the student. As McKinney stresses, this "remedial" narrative is taxing. One example of this consequence, as McKinney notes, is described in Neal Lerner's case study of Dartmouth's Writing Clinic ("Rejecting"). Lerner uses Dartmouth's Writing Clinic, which was established in 1939, to show how crucial the branding of a university is to underprepared students' identity and access. "From the Writing Clinic's point of view, the Dartmouth brand included a warning of sorts, for even in elite institutions, one needed to be on constant watch for students' *deficiencies*" (Lerner, "Rejecting" 15 emphasis in original). Lerner argues, "Rejecting the Remedial Brand," that the Dartmouth Writing Clinic is an example that "provides a troubling picture of a world in which underprepared students are branded out of existence" (13). Lerner is concerned with the same issues McKinney is—the exclusion of students who could find writing centers useful, regardless of their ability to compose.

Karen Rodis writes about another example of writing centers being deemed as "remedial." Case Western which is "a private university [that] accepts only those students who have proven themselves to be well prepared for an academic career" (Rodis 182). As Rodis argues, Case Western does provide services for help with writing; however, its writing center

was "conceived of as primarily a remedial service: students who receive[d] a 'D' in Freshman Composition [were] required in the next summer semester to take a one- or two-hour tutorial at the Writing Center in order to fulfill their composition requirement" (182). We know as writing professionals that it is rarely a good idea to "require" a student to visit the writing center; students feel as though it's a punishment, dislike being there, and close off (sometimes physically with their body language—crossed arms, pushing the computer / paper in front of the tutor, etc.) any willingness to absorb advice from the tutor. Even the very best tutor has difficulty bringing that student around to find use in the session, let alone the writing center as a whole. Often, those students who are required to visit the writing center rarely return for another visit. Unsurprisingly Rodis notes, "The Case Western Reserve Writing Center has not overcome its reputation as a remedial service; consequently, the number of students seeking or willing to seek help there is very low" (Rodis 183). The stigma surrounding Case Western's writing center has resulted a steep decline of clients. Additionally, the notion that writing center sessions, often no more than one hour, will "fix" students' writing suggests that the department, or the university, does not seem to understand what a writing center does.

Johnny Can't Write

Over time, the notion that students' writing was remedial began to create a "students can't write" narrative that is now deeply embedded in writing instruction. In 1955, shortly after Moore's "The Writing Clinic" article, Rudolf Franz Flesch wrote *Why Johnny Can't Read: And What You Can Do About It* where he argued that the public school system was not properly preparing students to read. In the 1950s, Flesch stirred the "literacy crisis pot" and began to sound the alarm for ineffective education.

In 1975 the "Johnny Can't Write" narrative took hold when *Newsweek* released their article, "Why Johnny Can't Write." The article opens, directed toward parents, "If your children are attending college, the chances are that when they graduate they will be unable to write ordinary, expository English with any real degree of structure and lucidity" (Sheils). The article furthered the movement against the education system demanding greater attention towards literacy and broadened Flesch's original K-12 argument to include higher education. The *Newsweek* article argues, "Willy-nilly, the U.S. educational system is spawning a generation of semiliterates" (Sheils). Flesch brought the "students can't write" narrative into mainstream media.

Rudolf Franz Flesch continued his condemnation of the education system with *Why Johnny Still Can't Read: A New Look at the Scandal of Our Schools*. While Flesch, and likely others, were trying to "uncover" why teachers in education were making "excuses" for students' inability to read, and subsequently write, they contributed to a deficit model narrative. The "Johnny Can't Write" narrative extends throughout the 20th century well into the 21st century. Throughout the last almost 100 years, poor Johnny can't read, write, choose[7], encrypt[8]. He can't sing, dance, saw, or bake[9], and in 2013, Johnny *still* can't write, and "… Employers are Mad About It"[10].

It is not just the media or those against the educational system who highlight what students *cannot* do. In 2010, a more public display of how Johnny can't write was the foundation of the Tumblr site "Shit My Students Write[11]." The site is a public forum for instructors to post

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[7] https://www.minneapolisfed.org/publications_papers/pub_display.cfm?id=3579
[8] https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=http://www.cs.berkeley.edu/~tygar/papers/Why_Johnny_Cant_Encrypt/OReilly.pdf
[9] https://www.amle.org/BrowsebyTopic/ProfessionalDevelopment/PDDet/TabId/195/ArtMID/819/ArticleID/367/Why-Johnny-Cant-Sing-Dance-Saw-or-Bake.aspx
[10] http://www.cnbc.com/2013/11/08/why-johnny-cant-write-and-why-employers-are-mad.html
[11] http://shitmystudentswrite.tumblr.com/

"shit" their students write in their classes. According to the site, their website is "Evidence of the true cost of educational funding cuts." While the idea of having a forum for teachers to congregate might, in some ways, be productive, this public site—one in which students can go and find their own work—is not. In other words, there is evidence everywhere (publicly, coming from inside and outside academia) that students *cannot* write. The remedial narrative has been consistent and prominent over the last hundred years throughout writing instruction and within writing centers.

Throughout the next sections of this chapter, I will focus on two interviews in particular to highlight the "students can't write" narrative as it was identified in my interviews. As I mention later in the chapter, there were several interviewees who implicitly or explicitly discussed the "students can't write" narrative; however, I chose the two to highlight below because I believe they offer insight about the ways in which faculty's views on students' writing permeates writing center spaces. In some ways, discipline-specific writing center satellites allow us to see a magnified view of issues within disciplinary writing such as this narrative. Because there is a concentrated set of faculty, students, and writing center staff in one location, the information I obtained during these interviews was quite specific and very interesting.

Interviewee Spotlight: Helen and Jennifer

Both Helen and Jennifer work as faculty at a mid-sized Midwest university as discipline-specific writing center satellite coordinators: Helen in the Business School, Jennifer in the sciences. Both of these interviews offered insight into how faculty feel about students' writing in the disciplines. While I occasionally make a nod towards other interviews I conducted, Helen and Jennifer's interviews will be my main focus. In the following two sections, I will offer an

overview of both Helen's and Jennifer's positions as satellite coordinators and share excerpts of their interviews.

In-depth with Helen

In the spring of 2011, Helen worked with a writing center consultant to develop the discipline-specific satellite center in the business school. Helen reflects on how the satellite center began:

> Well, when we first started, we were in a teeny-tiny office … and we were just begging for anyone to come by because it was also a little bit off the main drag, too. And, we were thrilled for anyone who walked in there, and I'm sure there were so many days that we didn't help anyone except for loaning our stapler. And, back then we, the only tracking we did was what we had, we would have people sign in that they were here and so I really don't remember helping a ton of people back then, but we were doing, we started the classroom visits and then we also … started with a lot of workshops that never really took off. (HM pp. 2 – 3)

At the inception of the writing center satellite, while the Dean of the business school was incredibly supportive, it took some time to develop a client base. In the beginning, as Helen mentions, the satellite writing center was located on the fifth floor of the business school in what could be considered a small faculty office. There was a desk with a small table, two chairs, a computer, and no more than two people could occupy the room at one time. If more than one student needed help, one student would often wait out in the hallway. Yet, after just one year, the business school offered a new space for the satellite center to reside. The space was moved from the small "closet," as Helen defines, it to a closed down bookstore on the first floor of the building. The new writing center was approximately six times the original space and was located

where most students entered the building. In other words, students and faculty walk by the

satellite center every single time they entered the building. Table 3 shows the overall change in

appointments from the opening Spring 2011 to the current semester[12].

Table 3: Total Business School Satellite Visits Since Open
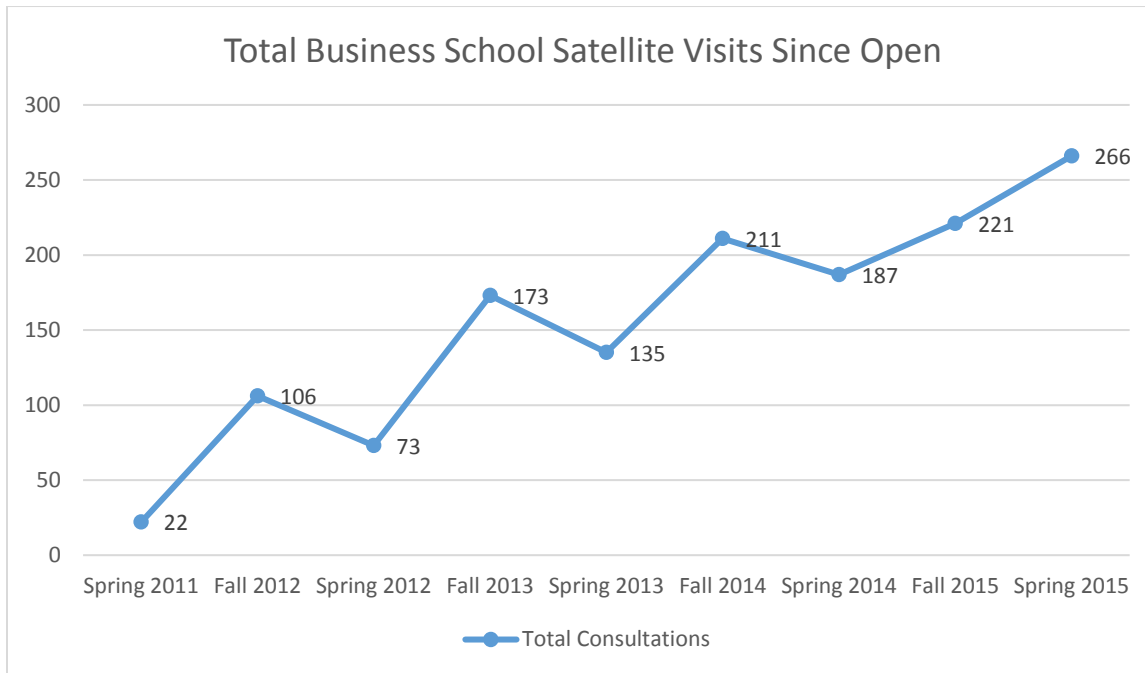
Helen theorizes the reason for the development of the business school's writing center

satellite, and its success over the years, is

> for the convenience. With us being off campus, that's huge. And the second [reason] is
>
> the customization of business writing. It *is* different than some of the other [written]
>
> genres … it's kind of almost like bad customer service not to come to them. (HM 11; 19)

Since the business school is its own campus, separated from the university's main campus, Helen

suggests students' lack of access to the main writing center is an excellent reason to develop a

writing center satellite. More to the point, she highlights the differences in disciplinary writing,

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[12] Spring 2015 was the last completed semester there were statistics for at the time of my interview.

which we discussed in Chapter 1, by stating that business writing is different from other kinds of writing.

Now, Helen says, "we're really close to 50% of new students and reoccurring students, or at least, you know, reoccurring that they've been here at least once before" (HM 5). Table 4 shows how first visits (students who had not been to the writing center satellite prior) have evolved over four years. First visits steadily rose from the Spring of 2011 through the Fall of

Table 4: First and Return Visits to the Business School Writing Center Satellite
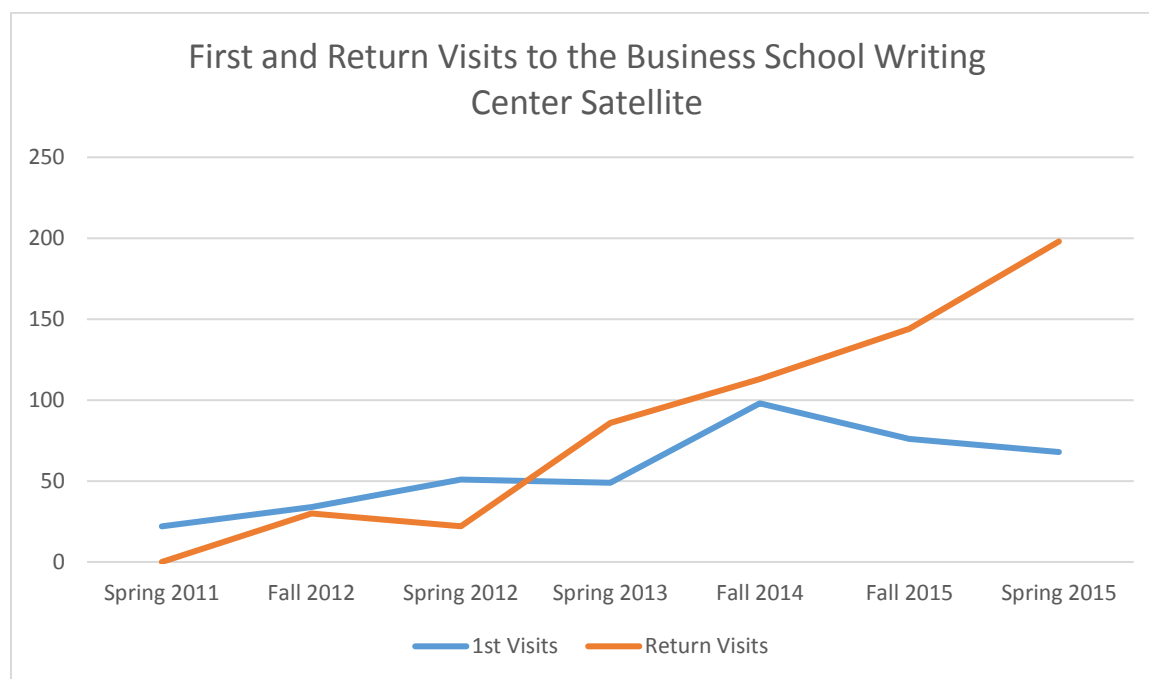
2014 then began to decline. At the same time, return visits (students who have been to the writing center satellite at least once before), overall, rose over the course of the satellite's life. The table shows that potentially, more students who visit the writing center satellite are students who have been there before, not first time visitors. However, Helen mentioned that the business satellite is beginning to hit capacity. The number of students the satellite serves is beginning to outweigh the number of staff that works in the business school's writing center satellite. Helen says, "reality that this is, you know, it's like a restaurant, you're only going to do as much

business as you have workers" (HM 31). Helen adds, "at some point, you can't do more volume … I will just always do the best, even if it's helping five people at one time" (HM 31). In fact, Helen brings up helping more than one student at a time frequently during our interview. Helen says this is because "we're frequently a one-person show;" (HM 26) meaning, there is often only one consultant working in the writing center satellite during business hours. Regardless of whether or not the tutors in this particular satellite help one student or five at a time, Helen believes that those who tutor in the satellite are helping students since the number of repeat visitors has steadily increased since the beginning of the writing center satellite. While I was waiting to interview Helen in the business school writing center satellite, several students came in asking for help. When Helen opened the doors for business, there were two students already waiting. Helen took the first student to work with and asked the second student to wait. Not long into Helen's session with the first student, a third student walked in asking for writing help. The first and third student recognized each other from the class they were in together, and both were working on the same assignment. Helen welcomed the third student to the table to join the first student, and the three of them worked through the assignment together. There were a number of times when Helen was unsure how to answer a question one of the students had, but the other student was able to respond. The one-to-two dynamic made for an interesting session. Helen reflects on this session during our interview.

> So, I was happy to hear this first girl said, "I'm learning so much." So, I'm thinking, "I
> really hope you are." Now, [student] has been here for years and her writing is getting
> better and better, but is it also just because she's been in the United States, speaking and
> writing English that anyone would be getting better, you know, I don't know. I really do
> think, I know we help with the paper, and I try as often as I can to explain why, if you

were listening at all, you might have heard me say once or twice as to, "I can't tell you

why that's a better word," you know. Sometimes it's harder, and sometimes it's because

I'm giving you over 50 suggestions, I will explain 45 of them, and because if I could

even English-ese of what is a past-participle kind of thing, it wouldn't mean anything to

them anyway. (HM pp. 8 – 9)

Although this particular session transpired by pure happenstance, the two students who came in

for writing help had a unique experience. As Helen mentions in the excerpt, there were times

when she was unsure of how to answer a student's question; in this case, the other student could

help when Helen could not. Helen reflects on the success of the session noting that the student

said, "I'm learning so much" with hopes that the session was beneficial to both students. In line

with this thinking, Helen employs the North narrative—to make better writers, not writing. Helen

gives one example as she discusses one useful marketing tool for the satellite: classroom visits.

I tell [the students in the classes] that we hope they know that we have a writing center

here, and it's for their convenience and because business writing is different and we're

here to assist them with their business writing and we're here to help them get started or

maybe clarify assignments, get organized, polish, finish and polish, and also, like the

APA, you know, dealing with the references, so whether they're at the beginning, middle,

or end, we can assist them with their writing. Sometimes, I haven't said this today—that

we're not that just to improve the paper, we're here to try to improve as a writer. (HM 8)

The North narrative permeates our scholarship and has been fodder during recent International

Writing Center Association (IWCA) conferences. Helen explains the writing center satellite's

goal is not just help with a student's paper, but that "we're here to try to improve as a writer"

(HM 8). Yet, she also suggests, "when 95% of the people walk in and want us to proofread their

papers, and no matter how many times we say we're not there to proofread their papers is still what we end up doing" (HM 10). Often in the business school, students come to the satellite with a half hour or less to dedicate to a session. Therefore, the tutors often feel pressure to do more directive tutoring than non-directive. As Helen explains here, she finds herself doing proofreading work, helping the writing, rather than talking about the idea of the student's piece overall, helping the writer. However, these two strands of narratives Helen explains do not match—North's narrative of working with better writers does not align with what Helen explains as proofreading work.

In addition to students' supposed value in the business satellite, faculty also see value in the writing center satellite according to Helen. She emphasizes the exigence of the support for the business school's writing center satellite is faculty's concerns about students' writing.

> [S]upport has grown over the years without a doubt. I know that many [faculty] were at first concerned, and I probably was too, at first, as to, "is this person just going to give my students all the answers" kind of thing. And, then still, the [question] for us is how much do we help a student when, let's say, and my worst case scenario is when I ask students who are writing letters and thank you letters for employment, and I feel like when I correct their grammar, they're being misrepresented [in their documents] of who they really are. So, that is still a dilemma to do this, so I know a lot of them [faculty] really support us, like they just don't even want to deal with students with writing problems so they really want us to work with them and fix them, you know, some people will draw a line and say, "I'm not going to grade this, you know, I've read this far, I'm not reading anymore." So, there's clearly a lot of support for it. (HM 6)

Embedded within this one short excerpt are two familiar topics: plagiarism and "fixing" students' writing. As Helen mentions, although faculty seem to be supportive of the writing center satellite now, at first, there was hesitation that tutors in the center will give students "all the answers." Even now Helen struggles to find the line between "teaching versus correcting" (HM 10). Helen wonders if when she helps the student with their grammar on a resume or cover letter, does that mean the student and their capabilities are being misrepresented to a potential employee?

In addition, the faculty support for the writing center satellite resides within the "Students Can't Write" narrative explicated above. Faculty "just don't even want to deal with students with writing problems so they really want us to work with them and fix them" (HM 6). According to Helen, faculty support the satellite because they believe the center can "fix" their "students with writing problems." Helen adds that faculty support

> might be because maybe we're getting worse and worse skilled students coming in […] in my own class, [I'm] going insane with basic subject-verb agreement, tenses, I mean, (whispers) *basic stuff* and so I would really working with James because he's teaching first-year writing this semester, and I'm like, "You really need to think about what you can do to, you know, solve this problem before they get here because they've all had these prereqs." And, I understand, just like some of my students, are getting passed out of that class who are not what I would consider, "good writers" yet, and the same thing happens in you know, the intro to writing [class]. (HM 7)

Helen's narrative echoes what faculty have been saying about students for quite some time—first-year writing is not properly preparing students how to write in the disciplines. Helen reasons that either students are coming into college less prepared and have poor writing skills and / or

their first-year writing classes and all the prerequisites they have taken are not enough to prepare students to be considered "good writers" by the time they reach the business school.

Helen considers what to do when students come into the writing center satellite looking for significant writing help.

[W]e had a student walk in here last semester […] who said, "I'm a senior, and I am still a terrible writer. Could you," you know, "really help me." And, of course, I'm intrigued as a consultant to everyone "yes," and so I actually said to James, "You know, if you when you're here, I'm not asking you to do it outside of here, but when you're here and you're not busy, can you kind of create an outline or something. How would we best approach someone like that that just really needs a lot of overall remedial help?" And so, when it comes to writing in general, when someone is just a "bad" writer in general, [the "main" writing center is] at least as equipped, and probably more equipped, especially with like me and probably Lisa, that neither of us are English majors and all that, to have that real technical knowledge of not only this is right, but why it's right which I can't always articulate, just, you know, maybe having more of a focus of language and so that's something I would definitely say that when it's really just writing in general, and starting from scratch, someone who really needs real help, I feel like [the "main" writing center] would be more equipped. (HM pp. 20 – 21)

This short excerpt demonstrates that this particular student who came to the business school's writing center satellite also uses the "Students Can't Write" narrative. The student is a self-proclaimed "bad writer" and ventures to the writing center satellite to get writing help. Since this is not a specific business assignment and is "someone who really needs real help" with writing, Helen feels uncomfortable helping with "basic" writing. While she asks James, a first-year

writing instructor and a writing center consultant, to come up with an "outline," she asks how the satellite center can help someone who needs help with basic writing skills.

The discipline-specific writing center satellite in the business school was built, in Helen's opinion, for convenience and customization. It has recognized large growth over several years and has the support of the faculty. However, we can see how the "Students Can't Write" narrative is demonstrated among faculty and permeates the writing center satellite throughout Helen's interview. We even got a glimpse into how students also use the "Students Can't Write" narrative themselves with the senior student Helen introduced us to who came to the satellite asking for help because he was a "terrible writer." Finally, Helen's interview demonstrates that the "Students Can't Write" narrative still lives under the surface. In Helen's interview, we see an example of how the North narrative writing center professionals often evoke can be misappropriated. Another example of faculty's narrative that students can't write comes from my interview with Jennifer about the discipline-specific writing center satellite in the sciences.

In-depth with Jennifer

Jennifer is the satellite coordinator for the discipline-specific writing center satellites in the sciences in a medium mid-sized university. Jennifer explains how the satellite center developed.

> So, the biology department, years ago, had writing support set up just for their writing intensive courses, and that was it. The writing support in the biology department was *only* for students in the writing intensive classes, and that was through Biology. It was a collaboration between the biology department faculty who had gone to WAC, WAC fellows and then the [writing center]. It was a collaboration that came out of WAC, so that's what we began with over in the science complex. Now, then a couple years after

that, the psychology department got interested in having something similar, so they kind

of got on board and starting having something pretty similar to what biology was doing

and then it was like a year after that when we finally got the science success center up off

the ground with the difference, with that being that it is open to *all* students in *any* of the

sciences. It's not limited in any sort of way. It's not just people in bio, or not just people

in writing intensive, so it has a lot farther reach in terms of disciplines, but also in terms

of levels of students we work with. (JJ_P1 pp. 2 – 3)

As Jennifer explains, at its origination, the writing center satellite was specifically meant to serve

those biology students who were enrolled in one of two writing intensive courses, but because of

the usefulness faculty saw with the satellite, more departments such as psychology asked for

writing support. The faculty who originally developed the satellite center were Writing Across

the Curriculum (WAC) fellows who had completed the workshop with the Writing Center

Director several years prior. The broadened scope, as Jennifer mentions, provides "a lot farther

reach in terms of disciplines." In other words, the satellite center is located in one college, yet

serves a number of different disciplines. Therefore, when Jennifer talks and works with faculty,

they represent a number of disciplines.

Jennifer goes into greater details and talks with me at length about how the satellite

center in the sciences began as just workshops, but then developed to serve multiple disciplines.

She also explained how the "main" writing center was involved in the development and delivery

of workshops, and the evolution of the satellite.

So these two faculty, from bio, one teaching each [one of the two writing intensive]

courses, they took WAC together that year, and they came up with the idea of designing

the curriculum for the two classes so that they kind of were doing the same types of

assignments and aligning them, which is a great idea, and then wanting the support of the

writing center to offer these writing workshops outside of class time because these are

still labs, like they need their class time to actually go out into the field and you know

collect e-coli samples you know, or be in the lab, you know, centrifuging something. and

so, they aligned their curriculums across the two courses and then they asked for the

writing center to kind of have these tailored workshops that would fit with that aligned

curriculum and then wouldn't take up their class time […] so at that point, they had only

five workshops and those five workshops, yes, they're tailored directly to the writing

assignments that students are doing at that point in the semester, those faculty members,

the WAC people I was talking about, they are the people who originally created those

PowerPoints for those workshops, so they wrote the assignments, they wrote the

workshops. They kind of, they started it all [but wanted the writing center to deliver the

workshops]. And, how those have been staffed has really kind of changed from year to

year. The bio department also funds two of their full-time Gas [graduate assistants] also

to do this, so technically, they have two full-time GAs, that's 20 hours each, that's 40

hours [total], and then they have me and my 10 hours, so theoretically, just for these two

writing intensive classes, they have 50 hours a week of like dedicated writing support [for

approximately 100 students per semester]. One of the classes has an incredibly high drop-

out rate, and so the number of students who actually finish that course is much less. I

can't speak to specific numbers of how many drop out, and I don't know if that's why

they wanted this writing support to kind of help get students actually through this. So

that's what it kind of began as was these workshops … so then, a few years later, again in

WAC that year, we had some psychology people who were in WAC that year, and they

heard about what biology was doing, and they were like, "This is a brilliant idea. We want this too." […] They saw the type of need in psychology, they focused more on it being, at least initially, an issue of their graduate students in psychology. And so in the beginning, I was working just with grad students in psychology. So that existed like that for a few semesters where bio was just the writing intensive classes, the workshops, and psychology was just consultation support for graduate students. [The overall discipline-specific writing center satellite] center then came about, gosh I'm trying to think, what was the impetus that even started it? I know what it was, at the time, in addition to working at the science complex, I was also working in our main location. We were starting to see this issue, for lack of a better word, this issue with students in 100-level bio classes coming over here, to the main location, to get help with their lab reports, and we were kind of like, hmm and so, you know, it kind of came to our attention, like, "Hey, it's kind of backwards that we are focusing all of our support on all this upper-level 300-level, grad level course and there is nothing for anybody floundering through 100-level classes." And that, I think, was the moment when we kind of, the wheels started turning and we started going "you know, we need to be reaching out farther to everybody at all levels," and that was kind of what the [satellite] was born from […] because the kind of help students in the sciences need isn't the same as students, say, writing in English paper or something like that.

Just to give you an example there is so much like vocabulary and content knowledge that students in the sciences are grappling with that and they can't possibly write a lab report until they've wrapped their brains around the concepts themselves and not to say that writing an English paper that there are not concepts and vocabulary, there

are, but they're often much more familiar to us. Whereas writing in the sciences, I mean, it's like a foreign language. It's a whole new culture, it's brand new, and so I think that was the problem was we were equipped to talk about lab reports from like an English perspective but not necessarily equipped to help more with like the scientific concepts inherent in it, or sometimes even the mathematical concepts inherent in these questions they were having, so I'd say that was part of it. I'd say the second part of it was we recognized from the assignment sheets and the rubrics that students were bringing in, we recognized that there was this big disconnect—what students in the 100-level classes were being told was good writing and how they were being graded and assessed and everything versus what the students in those upper level classes whose faculty members have been to WAC, they were being told good writing was something very different. And so there was a big disconnect kind of just within the whole department where it was very clear that for multiple levels, this problem needed to be dealt with differently from how we were traditionally doing it. (JJ_Part1 pp. 7 – 14)

Jennifer's perspective on how and why the science satellite was developed gives us an interesting view on the disconnect she mentions above. Jennifer offers a clear articulation of the disconnect of what WAC fellows consider to be "good writing" and what those who have not been through WAC consider, and grade their students on, "good writing." In other words, the goals of writing were much different for students of WAC fellows than those students of non-WAC fellows. The developers of the discipline-specific center identified that it would be more useful for tutors from the sciences to help their students with their lab reports, as opposed to English students in the "main" writing center. Jennifer finds it useful to have a "science" perspective when tutoring

students in the sciences versus and "English" perspective. These "expert" opinions touch upon the generalist / specialist debate that was discussed in Chapter 4.

To gain an additional perspective from faculty, Jennifer tells me about a time when she was invited to a grade-in with Biology faculty not long into her tenure as satellite coordinator in the sciences. She and a select group of faculty spent time together in one room grading sample student lab reports. As a group, they talked about why they gave each paper the grade they did. Jennifer noted that while this exercise was valuable, "it kind of turned into sort of like a me versus them thing … they very much want to say things like, 'Oh, this is terrible! Look at the grammar, it's awful!'" (JJ _Part 1 45). During the grade-in, Jennifer would respond with "'Well, the grammar aside, I think they're really starting to understand the concept here at this point.' Or, 'this section was really well organized'" (JJ _Part 1 45). She suggested that during that grade-in, the faculty in Biology wanted to focus more on lower order concerns (LOCs) like grammar rather than the Higher Order Concerns (HOCs) such as content that she wanted to focus on. Jennifer offered an interesting perspective on the narrative evolving from the faculty in that grade-in. "[M]aybe that was just because I was in the room. Maybe they thought that's what I would think was important" (JJ _Part 1 46). Jennifer does her part to attempt to revise the "students can't write" narrative, but it is so deeply embedded and continues to be perpetuated by faculty.

Jennifer also mentioned that faculty will say, "'I can't believe they already took ENGL 121 and yet this is the crap we get?' I hear that all the time" (JJ _P1 46). I asked her to elaborate.

> I think again because there's kind of this you know, no one likes to say, "Hey here's this body of knowledge I don't have," right. So, it's easier to kind of diminish or demean how hard writing is and how hard teaching writing is. It's easier to do that than it is to say,

'Hey, maybe we need to realign our curriculum or maybe we need to rethink our expectations of students coming in, you know, the first year' or whatever. So to me, I think that's another reason why faculty relationships are so important because you've got to have those kinds of conversations, you've got to start to unpack that kind of stuff and, the more kind […] of allies that you have in a department help you do that work because they start reviewing their class, they start talking to their buddy, their buddy starts reviewing his class, and it kind of has this domino effect right, but if you're not building those relationships with faculty, then that kind of insidious idea that teaching writing is something someone else does, and 'I don't do it, and all my students are idiots,' those kinds of terrible ideas still exist out there. And while, obviously, I am one person, I cannot eradicate all of the beliefs that people have like that, I can certainly try. (JJ _Part 1 47-8)

Both Jennifer and Helen emphasize the development of faculty relationships in terms of gaining support for the writing center satellite. As we can see from the above excerpt, Jennifer also discusses the importance of communication with faculty to change the "students can't write" narrative. Jennifer touches on what we unpacked in Chapter 1 with the difficulties of teaching writing in the disciplines and reinforces the notion that faculty do not feel comfortable teaching writing because they are not trained to do so. Amy, a legal writing fellow at a west-coast large, public university, recalls one of her staff saying, "'if I'm trying to teach someone the fundamentals of how to write, I'm not sure I'm properly equipped on how to do that'" (AD 7). She suggests that "for some of the more basic level stuff, the main campus writing center would be more useful" (AD 7).

Johnny Still Can't Write

While this chapter has highlighted only two interviewees, there were a number of other instances during the rest of my interviews where the "students can't write" narrative was implicitly and explicitly discussed. For example, Mary, the writing center faculty who teaches the nursing bridge course made several comments about the nursing faculty's perceptions of student writing. Mary noted that "bridge" courses for Nursing were created because of faculty's concerns with students' writing. "My understanding is that when this program was offered, faculty had some cautions and disappointments about student writing … First, it was piloted, and then it became a requirement for students to learn about the APA style of documentation" (MJ 2). According to the interviews with the both Mary and Nancy, the writing center director, APA documentation was a prominent focus in those classes. The director of the center mentioned a distressing moment she witnessed in the writing center when she just began as the director. "[I]n the early days … we were seeing a lot of nursing students. I was hearing things in consultants that, quite frankly, baffled me, I couldn't figure out why students were terrified of [APA]" (NB 2). She further explained, "They were missing the forest through the trees, and they were more concerned about that than they were concerned about content" (NB 2). Come to find out, students were (and still are, to some extent) so terrified about APA because instructors in upper-level nursing classes strongly emphasized the importance of it, and also graded quite strictly on how well their students knew how to properly cite references in APA.

Linda, the library liaison, posited in her interview, "there are basic principles of good writing that apply no matter what discipline you're in" (LS 10). One of the "basic principles" Linda repeatedly mentioned was the student's ability to form a coherent argument, but I was also interested in what principles constitute "good writing."

So, what a scientific article, is a format … in some ways, a formatting issue. You need to have your results section. You need have your conclusion section. You need to have your methods sections. You need to have a literature review section. You need to have your opening. You need to have your abstract. You need to have your title. All of those things need to be in place for it to be a scientific article, and so within those, they have different appropriate fundamental underlying principles of how you work with it, so within the literature review, it is absolutely appropriate to say, "Smith said 'apples are awesome'" and then you cite things and then the very next sentence is, "Barenstein says that apples are terrible" correct citation, and you just keep rolling through, and it's just line after line after sentence after sentence of citations of other people's work to be able to frame your scholarship. Doing that type of writing in your methods section, less appropriate, but you still need to make sure that you cite the methods that you're working with and if you found them other places, yes you need to put them in there. If you have the "Smith said," "Barenstein said," "[Jones] said," in your results section, and in your conclusion, it's absolutely inappropriate because those are the places where you need to be talking, and your voice needs to be foremost or that the panel of people that are working needs to be foremost and so there's different aspects within the scholarly paper of what we expect to see and where we expect to see it and how we expect to be able to work with it and, so that's a function of writing, to be able to appropriately reference the facts and figures and tables that you have. It's a function of writing to be able to work with the citations and different things that way. But, it's also a factor of library and information science to be able to interface with the information in a way that is coherent and accepted within the culture and the discipline within which you are working, so there's an aspect of writing

and scholarship and librarianship that are so intertwined that it is really difficult to tease

them out. (LS 12)

Linda brings up a good point when discussing what students should know when writing. Her

comments suggest that it is important for students to gain knowledge of how to cultivate and use

research and how to do that within a specific generic form. "Good writing" to Linda, or even

"basic writing principles," rather, are the identification and proper modelling of the IMRAD

format, proper citation practices, and the ability to identify and write coherently about relevant

information to the field.

As we see with Helen, Jennifer, Mary and Linda, the "students can't write" narrative is

the exigence for a number of different kinds of writing support. According to Mary, Nursing

faculty was disappointed in students' writing, so the idea of a "bridge" course and focused

writing center help was appealing. Faculty in both the sciences and in business complain about

student writing and how students should have gained a certain set of skills from prerequisite

courses when they reach their discipline-specific courses. Further, according to Linda, students

are not being taught "rhetorical skills."

In addition, as my interviews demonstrated, faculty are talking to those working in

writing centers about bad student writing. Helen suggested that there are teachers who "draw a

line" on a paper and will not grade anymore if they deem the paper stylistically unacceptable.

The "students can't write" narrative is circulating among faculty, among students, and

subsequently among those of us in writing centers. One particular quote that stands out to me is

Helen's from earlier in this chapter:

[S]upport has grown over the years without a doubt. I know that many [faculty] were at

first concerned, and I probably was too, at first, as to, "is this person just going to give

my students all the answers" kind of thing. And, then still, the [question] for us is how much do we help a student when, let's say, and my worst case scenario is when I ask students who are writing letters and thank you letters for employment, and I feel like when I correct their grammar, they're being misrepresenting themselves of who they really are. So, that is still a dilemma to do this, so I know a lot of them [faculty] really support us, like they just don't even want to deal with students with writing problems so they really want us to work with them and fix them, you know, some people will draw a line and say, "I'm not going to grade this, you know, I've read this far, I'm not reading anymore." So, there's clearly a lot of support for it. (HM 6)

This particular excerpt from Helen brings up a number of questions that began to surface throughout the chapter. This particular excerpt begs the question, what is writing? The question about writing is not new; yet, the "students can't write" narrative seems to be more prominent than the writing center field has recently believed. Further, questions are raised about the nature of "authentic writing." As Helen mentions above, she worries that she is affecting content if she "corrects their grammar." Which version, then, of the writing is the "true" version? Is the technically incorrect draft of a resume a "true representation" and then the revised (with a writing center tutor) is a misrepresentation of the student? Is the revised version still an accurate representation of the student because the student used the resources available to them to go to the writing center to acknowledge what they need help with (i.e. in this case, grammar)? What implications are there for this line of thinking? One implication is that it excludes process writing and only considers the product. Another implication is the discussion between directive and non-directive tutoring practices. While we can see throughout the interview excerpts with Helen that her style of tutoring is a bit more directive than some writing center theorists would suggest is

appropriate, the argument could be made that a non-directive tutor could lead the writer down a road that they would not have come by without the questions asked by the tutor. In what ways does this change the authenticity of the author? How does writing as a social process play into these questions? While this chapter brings up a number of different questions about writing and writing center theory and practice, all the questions can fit into one broader theme: issues with literacy.

Writing Centers are Overlooking Literacy Issues

As we will see in the next chapter, writing centers have begun to publish scholarship about specific kinds of literacies such as medieval literacy in the writing center (LeCluse), information literacy (Clark, "Information Literacy"; Ferer; Singh-Corcoran, Brady, Dadisman, and Diamond; Van Horne), and creating a literacy center for the community (Grigsby), to name a few. However, the broader notion of literacy pedagogy has been largely overlooked. The New London Group posits that literacy pedagogy plays a large role in education, but has traditionally been too "formalized, monolingual, monocultural, and rule-governed" (1). Therefore, they argue, this perspective needs to be broadened "to include negotiating a multiplicity of discourses" (The New London Group 1). They expand the notion of literacy in two ways: include cultural context and a variety of text forms (The New London Group 1). The New London Group believes that learning is embodied and social. "That is, human knowledge is initially developed not as 'general and abstract,' but as embedded in social, cultural, and material contexts" (The New London Group 17) within a community. A community that is, as we will find in Chapter 6, useful for writers. In the next chapter, I will offer a view of situated learning that might allow writing centers to begin to detach themselves from the dangerous narratives explored in this chapter and move towards a new theoretical framework.

Chapter 6 – Situated Learning in Writing Support Spaces

Literacy in the Writing Center

While we potentially cannot trace or track the deep roots of the "students can't write" narrative, we can still see traces of it throughout many faculty's descriptions of student writing. Even from my small research sample, we can see how this narrative permeates the writing center and subsequently students' description of their own writing (the student who self-identified as a "terrible writer" in Chapter 5). David Barton and Mary Hamilton suggest, "We need to start out from the position that people's understanding of literacy is an important aspect of their learning, and that people's theories guide their actions" (14). If people's theories guide their actions, we in writing centers can more fully develop theories that guide our actions to reduce the "students can't write" narrative.

In the early to mid-eighties, literacy was "a shorthand for the social practices and conceptions of reading and writing" (Street 1). In *Literacy in Theory and Practice*, Brian Street claims that the "autonomous model" often paired with academic literature is "based on the 'essay-text' form of literacy and [generalizes] broadly from what is in fact a narrow, culture-specific literacy practice" (1). Street suggests that this model is too linear and associates "progress" with "individual liberty and social mobility" (2). His attempt to broaden the perspective of literacy is to develop an "ideological model" of literacy. The ideological model Street focuses on the social aspect of reading and writing. "The model stresses the significance of the socialisation process in the construction of the meaning of literacy for participants and is therefore concerned with the general social institutions through which this process takes place" (Street 2). The socialization aspect is critical for Street for a couple of reasons. First, academic literacy is not the only literacy students need to gain, and it will not help them become social

beings. Second, students who acquire a social literacy will learn to question western liberal education in order to gain critical awareness (Street).

Writing centers scholars have written about literacy in a variety of ways and this literature has been linked to high school (Fels and Wells), medieval literacy in the writing center (LeCluse), information literacy (Clark, "Information Literacy"; Ferer; Singh-Corcoran, Brady, Dadisman, and Diamond;Van Horne), standardized literacy (Pemberton, "Artful Dodging"), creating a literacy center for the community (Grigsby), and in combination with the library and information literacy (Zauha). Literacy is clearly being discussed in writing center scholarship; however, it is consistently written about through a third channel. In "The Regulatory Role of the Writing Center," Nancy Grimm argues that there is a lot of intellectual work to be done if writing centers can "assume a more direct engagement with regulatory uses of literacy," (16)

> [b]ut above all, we need to acknowledge that literacy work is not innocent, that when we engage in literacy practices with others we are at the same time engaged in making or preserving knowledge, in community maintaining or community building, in changing or reproducing power relations. (Grimm, The Regulatory" 23)

Grimm clearly makes the argument for attention to literacy in the writing center. Though, since her work in the late 1990s, little has been written about the topic of literacy, specifically.

"Literacy" in school is much more than reading and writing, as a number of those before me have pointed out. "Literacy" in the writing center is also more than reading and writing, as few have pointed out. In this chapter, I make connections between literacy and situated learning. Then, I showcase a number of interviewees of both writing support centers and discipline-specific writing center satellites to determine if there are traces of situated learning within these spaces. At the end of the chapter, I suggest that since there are ongoing conflicts with the

binaries of the generalist / specialist debate and the narrative of the "students can't write"

narrative, it would be useful to use a new perspective as we continue to evolve writing center

theory and practice.

Looking Back Before Moving Forward

First, though, it would be useful to review questions and assumptions that arose over the

last couple of chapters. First, in Chapter 4, I wondered how we might be able to gain a new

perspective to move us away from the specialist / generalist debate. One underlying assumption

within this question is how do students best gain knowledge—do they learn more from a session

if the tutor has specific disciplinary knowledge or if they are generalists? Second, in Chapter 5,

considering McKinney's argument that grand narratives can be problematic, I raise questions

about what assumptions underscore the "students can't write" narrative. Both of these topics and

ending questions about knowledge bring me to the broader topic of literacy. David Barton and

Mary Hamilton suggest, "any theory of literacy implies a theory of learning" (13). Additionally,

"The notion of *literacy practices* offers a powerful way of conceptualizing the link between the

activities of reading and writing and the social structures in which they are embedded and which

they help shape" (7 emphasis in original). Barton, Hamiliton, and Ivanic argue, "Literacies are

situated […] the common approach is that literacy is seen as a social practice" (1). Situated

learning is a learning theory that highly values social structures.

Neal Lerner argues, "Situated learning offers writing centers the opportunity to show

their institutions how the ideals for learning to take place are enacted" ("Situated Learning" 53).

In other words, the consideration of studies in literacy and situated learning can help writing

center professionals move away from the individualized focus on knowledge and situate

ourselves in a social context.

> Practices are shaped by social rules which regulate the use and distribution of texts, prescribing who may produce and have access to them. They straddle the distinction between individual and social worlds, and literacy practices are more usefully understood as existing in the relations between people, within groups and communities, rather than as a set of properties residing in individuals. (Barton and Hamilton 8)

Therefore, as we make the move through situated learning into a more social process in the writing center, the onus of "bad writing" begins to fall away from students, and we begin to see the writing center as a place for interdisciplinarity, or the construction of knowledge across disciplines.

Yet, with a situated learning framework, we do not want to slip back into a generalist / specialist debate. As I hoped to show in Chapter 4, that binary is complex and slippery.

> That tutors' knowledge is not always specific to a task, a class, or a discipline is increasingly problematic as writing-across-the-curriculum initiatives offer writing centers the opportunity to support classes beyond first-year English. However, the idea of multiple, disciplinary writing centers on a single campus is one way to approach this problem, as is the understanding that teaching and learning are reciprocal processes. In other words, student writers bring the disciplinary and task-specific knowledge that is needed in a writing center session, and tutors need to be able to help them articulate this knowledge in ways that allow both participants to learn. ("Situated Learning" Lerner 70)

Taking my cue from Lerner then, I use this chapter to examine how interviewees from both writing-support spaces and discipline-specific writing center satellites might provide evidence of situated learning (or, its absence). First I will share excerpts from Carol Davis and John Wilson both who interact with the writing support space in engineering. Then I will move to discipline-

specific writing center satellites where I share excerpts from Jennifer Johnson, the satellite coordinator of the sciences; Mary Jones, a writing center faculty member who teaches a nursing bridge class; and finally, Lisa Williams, the satellite coordinator of the business school satellite.

Situated Learning in Writing Support Spaces: Spotlight on Carol and John

Carol Davis is co-director of an Engineering communication center in the Engineering Education department of a large, mid-Atlantic university. Carol's roots extend into English, Rhetoric, and Composition where, at one time, she was director of the Writing Across the Curriculum program for material science and engineering science and mechanics and also has an advanced degree in engineering. She and a colleague developed the engineering communication center for Engineering Education graduate students as a writing, research, and outreach support space.

> [T]he center houses our grad students, it houses research meetings, it houses data collection; it's a place where people can go and do interviews. We do observational research in there, all that kind of stuff and then as a support center, or, I guess, it's more as an outreach center. (CD 1)

Carol mentions that the center is a place where graduate students can go to engage in research, writing, and find support to publish their work.

Unlike traditional writing centers, the engineering communication center was developed not from remediation, but from a need to have situated writing, research, and communication support for graduate students. In the support space, "we do a lot of research, we publish articles, we do workshops, and we do workshops at conferences" (CD 2). Carol wants to "create a space that takes all this research that we do on disciplinary communication and figure out how to put it in the hands of faculty and in the hands of students" (CD 2). In addition, Carol finds it important

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to create a space where graduate students are in a space where situated learning can occur. "There's a real need for people to have time and focus to write to write with people who are doing the same kind of writing, so that you can share questions, ideas, [and] frameworks" (CD 6). The Engineering communication center is clearly different from a writing center; "we don't do a lot of tutoring—we create a space in which people can come and write" (CD 9). The center was built to serve as a resource for graduate students but also to help fulfill the requirements for accreditation.

Primarily, Carol suggests that the engineering school has a focus on outcomes. "Communication's a primary outcome for engineering … So, it is a required sort of graduation outcome that students be able to communicate effectively" (CD 5). The Engineering Accreditation Commission [ABET] publishes the "Criteria for Accrediting Engineering Programs" yearly. Named in the annual ABET document are eleven student outcomes; the outcome Carol mentions is "an ability to communicate effectively" (Engineering Accreditation Commission 3). If ABET deems the university's engineering students ineffective communicators, the institution could risk their accreditation, which places the importance of teaching writing and speaking communication in high regard. Carol posits, "I think that the idea that writing is sort of the center, that communication is at the center of this building is important" (CD 17). In other words, Carol suggests that the physical location of the center being in the "center" of the engineering school signifies its importance among administrators. "The college has a vision for the building, and the architects have a vision for the building, [the Engineering Communication Center] is in this really premiere spot in the building" (CD 17). Therefore, the kinds of activities happening in that space are highly regarded and viewed as important.

One such recent activity in the center is the implementation of writing days for graduate

students. These regular writing days

> emerge[d] out of graduate students. We had one faculty member [sic] who was really
>
> interested in creating time for grad students for themselves to write. So, it started [outside
>
> of the center] and then it sort of moved into the center and now it's kind of this protected
>
> space, and it's really self-sustained. (CD 2)

The reason Carol and her colleagues find this kind of writing support so valuable for their

graduate students "is that sort of the lines between writing formal writing, speaking, teamwork,

and everything else, are pretty blurry" (CD 3). In other words, writing, speaking, and teamwork

do not work independently of each other in a vacuum, so it is useful to have all of these things

contextualized. As Carol posits,

> I think there's room for sort of focused instruction on writing in writing classes, and I
>
> think students move across fields and across disciplines … it gives people more of a
>
> sense of connection, so … it's more useful because it's connected to the kind of writing
>
> and communication they're expected to do on their job. (CD 6)

Carol is discussing the importance of situated learning and suggests that based on the outcomes

from ABET, the center was developed to create a space for graduate students to write, and

subsequently publish, contextually. Carol explores the concept of what she calls "situativity":

> I think there's a sense that content and language are not really neatly separable and so
>
> when you do work within the disciplines, you get a better sense of meeting students
>
> where they live. I mean theoretically, it's all about situated learning and situativity, so if
>
> you adopt sort of a social constructivist, situated learning perspective, you know, it's all
>
> laden langer and communities of practice. So, you put writing embedded in those kinds of

places and you think about what it means in the context in which it's happening, rather than in some kind of abstract thing, which is sort of … rhetorical audience, purpose, activity theory embedding things in activity, rhetorical genre theory, exigence, all of that sort of stuff. (CD pp. 5 – 6)

In other words, Carol argues that the center allows for an embeddedness where "writing and communication becomes more connected and embedded to [graduate students'] normal practice because it sort of lives right there with them as opposed to a thing you go somewhere else to do" (CD 7). Carol is reinforcing the notion of "meeting students where they live" for the creation and development of support spaces. We heard this same sentiment from Helen in Chapter 5 when she talked about the importance of "meeting students where they lived" since the business school was physically located miles away from main campus.

Evidence of the usefulness of situated learning comes from one of Carol's graduate students, John. Since he is a PhD student in Engineering Education, he sees both academic writing and writing in engineering. He emphasizes the differences between these kinds of writing.

It's very interesting process to transition from traditional engineering background where you write, but it's very formulaic writing. I mean, there is a very specific way you write and this is formulaic, like academic writing is formulaic in another way, but looking at literature reviews—it was a writing I didn't understand on any different level so, a big portion of my first two-ish years was figuring out like how do you actually write. And I still, not that I have it down, but I still like, wrestle with that all the time. (JW 1)

John highlights the difficulty with learning how to write academic articles outside of engineering. Since one form of "success" in engineering is publication, and Carol focuses on the

importance of writing and collaborating across disciplines, John speaks to the steep learning curve of academic writing. Luckily, he received contextualized writing help from the engineering communication center and from Carol. She "has helped over the last [several] years, significantly, with structuring an argument and transitioning and being concrete in my writing and like all of these things that I would get, I think from a writing center, she's helped tremendously" (JW 20). Carol is contextualizing the instruction of writing in John's own work. This kind of situated learning has helped John better understand the complexities of academic writing.

Although John gets contextualized writing help from Carol, he does offer a suggestion for how the writing center might be useful: potential collaborations.

> I think there's more opportunity to learn about other people's work and learn about potential collaborations and I think the writing center is a really interesting way to do that because everybody is sharing, depending on the structure of the center, right, but everybody is potentially sharing their work and you may not know that you connect with somebody who is in on the other side of campus until you've reviewed their stuff and you're talking about it. I think potential collaborations, like, just natural collaborations could just form out of that, so I think that possibility exists both in like a satellite one within the, like, the engineering program or across a university type campus as well. (JW 29)

John offers an interesting perspective on how to view writing center sessions as collaboration. In fact, Kenneth Bruffee suggested "Teaching Writing Through Collaboration" in 1983. Bruffee argues that writing is a social act and is only individualized through convenience (25). "[W]riting groups, whether formal or informal, help students to learn how writers behave and to become

helpful and productive members of the community of effective writers" (Bruffee 28). A number of scholars have built off of Bruffee's seminal work to argue for collaborative spaces (Henschen and Sidlow; Jungck; Merchant and Haslett; Romero, Usart, Ott, Earp, and de Freitas; Sharples). As places like the Engineering communication center make moves to create communities and situate learning, we can begin to see they ways in which writing can become social.

Neal Lerner has made suggestions on how to create spaces conducive to this kind of writing in *The Idea of a Writing Laboratory*. Carol discusses the Engineering communication center within Lerner's framework.

> Our space is to write for graduate students as much as, more so than a space to get help on writing, so we don't do a lot of tutoring. We create a space in which people can come and write … In my dream world, would we always have sort of a staff person there to answer questions there, sure if I had all the money in the world—staff it. I would like to do more mini-lessons, mini-sort of tutorials around different writing tasks, but it's more about, it's like if you look at Neal Lerner's, have you ever read *The Idea of a Writing Laboratory?* So, it's more of that kind of a thing. That's kind of how I think about it (CD pp. 9 – 10)

Carol is referring to Lerner's notion of developing a writing center fashioned after a scientific laboratory where the lab is a place for students to experiment with their work and have access to useful resources. Lerner suggests this lends itself towards situated learning. "My belief is that educators in [the sciences and humanities] need to turn toward situated learning as a robust way of understanding and reforming science and writing pedagogy" (Lerner, "The Idea" pp. 9-10).

As we have seen from Carol, John, Neal Lerner, and others, it might be useful to do more in-depth investigation into situated learning and writing centers. As Nancy Grimm argues,

A revised vision of literacy teaching offers potential for reconfiguring the troublesome

relations among students, teachers, and writing centers and for addressing the

problematic institutional identity of writing centers, but it also challenges us to engage

critically with some long-standing writing center traditions, to penetrate the layers of

ways we have convinced ourselves of the necessary limits of our role in higher education.

("The Regulatory" 15)

While situated learning is important to engage conversations about literacy, we want to be

distinct from a center like the Engineering communication center. While the Engineering

communication center is valuable, the writing center *does* offer tutoring and one-on-one tutoring

which is a critical part of our work. We do not want these kinds of centers pushing us into the

margins or distinguishing writing centers all together, as McKinney argues could happen.

Therefore, it would be useful to identify evidence that situated learning happens in discipline-

specific writing center satellites.

Situated Learning in Discipline-Specific Writing Center Satellites: Spotlight on Jennifer,

Mary, and Lisa

Neal Lerner states, "The theory of situated learning is not reality, of course, but just an

approximation of reality, and any worthwhile theory is continually enhanced by subsequent

evidence" ("The Idea" 163). Without evidence of situated learning within the writing center, we

would have difficulty building a theoretical framework. Throughout my interviews, I do believe

that there is evidence of situated learning, but I must offer a disclaimer: since my methodology

for this study was grounded theory, the topic of situated learning only emerged from my coding;

therefore, I did not ask specific questions geared towards situated learning[13]. Since I did not

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[13] A list of my interview questions is available in Appendix A

specifically ask my interview participants about situated learning, I am using Neal Lerner to guide the analysis the organic responses of three of my interviewees, which you see in this section. In any event, there needs to be more work done to cultivate evidence of situated learning much more broad than my small study allowed for. While I will talk more about this in the next chapter, I think it is valuable to briefly mention the clear limitations of this study.

Lerner argues that learning to writing in a writing center satisfies most, if not all, of the conditions explored in definitions of situated learning ("Situated Learning" 60). Lerner has contextualized the definition to the writing center.

> In her conversation, the tutor models *expert* speaking and thinking about writing, coaches the student to talk about his text and context in similar ways, and, ideally over several conferences over the course of a semester, ensures that individual sessions build on one another as the student applies knowledge gained to new learning and writing situations. The tutor, too, is learning in these circumstances, expanding her repertoire of practice as she draws on her history as a tutor, writer, and student and responds to the student's particular needs. (Lerner, "Situated Learning" 61)

The attributes named here are within the "apprenticeship model" Lerner ("Situated Learning" 61). Lerner suggests that the writing center tutor (a.) models expert speaking and thinking about writing; (b.) coaches the student; (c.) scaffolds learning; and (d.) learns something alongside the student. In this section, I will offer evidence from three of my interviews of these four attributes to demonstrate that writing centers, specifically discipline-specific writing center satellites, are spaces where situated learning can occur.

Jennifer's Evidence of Situated Learning in the Sciences Satellite

As you might recall from the last chapter, Jennifer is a satellite coordinator in the sciences. She originally worked in the "main" writing center and was asked by the director of the writing center to develop and facilitate the satellite center within the sciences. While Jennifer does talk quite extensively about the kinds of information important for tutors to gain in the satellite center, she talks as though she is still learning the discipline. Therefore, her interviews do not offer much insight to her modeling expert speaking and thinking about writing, Lerner's first attribute mentioned above. The exception, however, is that there is evidence of modeling when she discusses training the biology graduate assistants (GAs) who also tutor in the sciences satellite. Jennifer does discuss how she trains the GAs by coaching them as she would a student, so I will reserve the evidence for the "coaching" section. In addition to coaching, there is evidence in her interview of scaffolding and that she learns from students in the sciences.

Coaching

During this particular point in our interview, Jennifer and I were talking about the potential differences between tutoring in the "main" center and tutoring in the discipline-specific writing center satellite. Jennifer explains,

> I find it more so with psychology where their concerns, like, as a discipline, their concerns about confidentiality of information make it so that many of their students are kind of uncomfortable having certain things read aloud. Just for example, I know there's one class, so people in the clinic psychology graduate program, they're learning to become therapists and clinicians, so there's a class they take, kind of like a writing in the disciplines sort of class, and one of the things they do is they learn to write like case notes. So after a therapist has worked with someone, they have to go and take notes on

the session. So even though the assignment they do is like a made-up person, but they still even when they come in to work with me, they still have to act as though this is a real person that I can't reveal for ethical reasons, I can't reveal personal information on. For situations like that, so especially in psychology, I know that they have real concerns about the ethics of confidentiality, and so that right there for disciplinary reasons makes sense why we would not read out loud their case notes on their therapy session. (JJ_P2 15)

Jennifer not only discusses the ways in which confidentiality and ethics play a role in tutoring practices in the writing center, but also speaks to how she coaches these students.

I'll say, "Great! I'm going to read that, while I'm reading that, I notice you don't have a title yet. Here why don't you work on writing a title while I read [your case notes]." So, they're not just staring at me while I'm [reading]. I read two, three minutes, however long it takes, and then by then I feel like I kind of know in my head what are those HOCs we've got to hit on here because those are already clear to me instead of becoming clear as the student reads [aloud]. So then I'll say something cheesy like, "Hey I don't want to interrupt you, but whenever you're ready, I'm ready to chat with you," and so then we'll kind of just into, and of course, I always start with the saying something I think they did really well before I'll say, "But here's a couple things I think we could work on or talk about together." Most of the times, students are, as soon as you say, "Here's the thing I think you should work on," most of the time they're like, "Yeah, that's the thing I really struggled with." So, I think it helps too because since I have the sense of the whole, they kind of, they get that validation that the thing they were struggling with was also the thing I noticed. And again, I think you might miss that opportunity if you're doing the

sentence by sentence reading out loud thing, I don't know. I think after that, pretty much

the consultation goes as you would expect. I just start it a little differently. (JJ_P2 pp. 12

– 13)

Here we see Jennifer slightly changing the well-known read-aloud protocol that writing centers

use for one-on-one tutoring sessions. She talks about the benefits of being able to quickly read

through a document without the student reading aloud. Jennifer suggests that she gets a bigger

picture of the document the student is working on. Then, when Jennifer starts to talk with the

student about some of the higher order concerns, the student feels validated because, often times,

those HOCs are what they struggled with in the first place.

In addition to evidence of coaching students, there is evidence that Jennifer coaches

tutors who also work in the sciences satellite center. The Biology department offers Jennifer two

biology GAs each semester to work alongside her in the satellite center. As the satellite

coordinator, it is Jennifer's job to train them. While Jennifer uses a number of materials to train

the Biology GAs, she suggests that much of their training is "water cooler talk." In other words,

it happens spontaneously and grows organically because of a particular situation. Jennifer further

explains an example of this and shows how she also coaches the biology GAs. During one of the

GA's tutoring session, Jennifer noticed that the tutor was offering strictly grammatical changes

to the student without consideration of HOCs.

I did see one of my GAs doing that in a consultation and as I think any of us would, you

know, I didn't interrupt the consultation, but afterwards, I kind of pulled her aside and

said, "You know, so I noticed this going on. Tell me why you choose to do that that way

you know, that's not typically the way we conduct a consultation." I'm not her boss, [so I

said] "I noticed this." "Tell me about your decision to do that." I mean, isn't that the same

practice we would do in a consultation? "I noticed this happening here, tell me your decision, why you picked that word." So, I tried to use that kind of same approach in "correcting" her. (JJ_P2 12)

Jennifer is careful about her word choice during this part of the interview. During this particular excerpt, she used air quotes when she said "correcting" meaning, as Jennifer mentioned, she is not the boss of the GAs, so she walks a fine line with training. Jennifer feels odd about "assigning" readings or work outside of the time the GAs are in the satellite because, again, she is not their boss. In this case, then, the water cooler talk and the opportunity that Jennifer utilized in this excerpt is where most of the training happens. Therefore, when she does have the opportunity to train, she finds it best to coach, much like a writing center session, as evidenced here.

Scaffolding

Additionally, Jennifer builds upon GAs' current knowledge when training. The biology GAs Jennifer train are also teaching a 100-level biology class. "I see my role over there, kind of as this sort of outsider, sort of insider person, kind of helping them realize what they do know" (JJ_P1 25). Jennifer explains what she means,

They have their own bio expertise knowledge but now they also have kind of seen like one the ground what it's like, what kinds of questions students have, how do you explain these concepts that kind of thing and I think that, even though it's, for most of them, it's only been a semester, but that little bit of teaching experience has helped them immensely in the writing center. (JJ_P1 26)

Since the biology GAs are teaching a lower level course, it helps give them a perspective they have not had in several years. Jennifer talks more about the importance of this.

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They've been so steeped in really intense biology knowledge for so long, that they have

forgotten what it's like to be a newbie. Whereas have now taught a semester or two,

they've dealt with those newbie students, because they're taking 100-level classes. They

are, many of them are freshman, are transfer students, they are new in every sense of the

word. New to [the university], new to biology, new to college. And, so it forces the GA to

kind of realize that these things they've known for so very long, are challenging to other

people. I think that's huge difference right there because that forces them to kind of start

sort of unpacking for themselves, you know, what they know about a concept—when did

they learn it, how did they master it? Like they start to sort of naturally unpack that and

they realize, this field, whatever it is they're studying, doesn't come naturally … now

they know what kind of the common questions are, or the common hang ups students

have having grading lots of lab reports now, they know, "Gosh, a lot of students do okay

with this part, but a lot of them really struggle with this part." That way, now, when

they're working in the [biology writing center satellite], they can focus on that more

challenging part with the student. They don't necessarily have to talk about the part that

everyone pretty much does okay on. So, they're kind of using their time more effectively

as well. (JJ_P1 pp. 27 – 29)

Jennifer suggests that because she is able to build upon the GAs' knowledge, the tutoring

sessions in the satellite become even more effective. Regardless whether or not the student is

reading their work aloud, the Biology GA can zone in on one problematic section and help

students trouble through that portion within the context of their own writing. Additionally, then,

we might assume that since the GAs are teaching the same class many students who come to the

satellite center are currently taking, the GAs may be building upon what the students have

learned in class to help them through a particular assignment. It is reasonable to think that GAs will reference a lesson from class or previous information to help students further contextualize their work. While this is speculative, the excerpts in this section show clear explicit intent to build on existing knowledge. In other words, we see evidence of scaffolding in this discipline-specific writing center satellite.

Tutor Learns

The satellite coordinator who develops and facilitates a discipline-specific writing center satellite needs to have a number of qualities to perform well, among them are: adaptability, an aptitude for the discipline, and a willingness to learn. Jennifer suggests,

> I wish I had a like a magic book that I said, "Oh, I read this and it explained everything to me." But, no. [I need a] willingness to say, "Hey I have no idea what you're talking about." "Let's figure it out together," you know? Which I think any tutor needs to be able to do that, but I think especially when you're kind of the fish out of water, thrown into a discipline that is not your own, you have to really be comfortably with saying that. (JJ_P1 20)

Many of the satellite coordinators have mentioned that the best way they have learned is through immersion in the discipline. The writing center director says, "there's a lot of immersion that goes on here. It's like learning a language, you get immersed in the culture of the discipline. We collect artifacts, we talk to people, relationships are critical, interactions are critical" (NB 3). The tutor who comes from the "main" center is naturally learning through immersion—this is an example of situated learning.

Jennifer is also learning from the biology GAs.

I came in with you know, this extensive knowledge in English-y things, right? And being really, really aware of the disconnect between those touchy-feely English-y things and all of these really like hard, specific, very detailed things that the science people, I'm using the term very loosely, the science people wanted to know. So, it's kind of like I guess for me, initially, I guess it felt like this clash between the subjective versus the objective, like I'm just used to talking about feelings and character development, and they wanted to know like, "well, is your data significant?" So, that, for me, was the clashing point, or clashing point, middle, whatever you want to call it. I think for the bio GAs, it's a little different because they are coming from the opposite side of that where they're really used to talking about. "Yeah, statistical significance, let me show you how to calculate that." But, where they're not comfortable is asking those more touchy-feely questions, like, "Well, how do you feel about this version of the draft," you know? I can't think of a touch-feely question to save my life right now, but you know what I mean. I think the meeting in the middle was kind of each of us, from our different perspectives, coming to that sort of middle point, being able to say, "I'm good with this, I'm uncomfortable with that," and like learn from each other so that we could kind of start to take on each other's qualities or values. That, to me, is kind of where the middle is when, you don't lose, like I haven't lost my English background, but I've kind of now gained these new pieces.

(JJ_P1 24)

Jennifer finds that there is evidence of interdisciplinarity in disciplines gaining and constructing new knowledge from one another, in the discipline-specific writing center satellite. As she mentions here, she is not giving up her English roots; she is gaining biology roots. And how valuable might that be for those of us working in writing centers?

At the beginning of her tenure in the science writing center satellite, Jennifer said, "it was just terrifying" because "someone is going to ask me X and I'm going to have no idea what they're even saying, which is interesting because when you have an extensive background in English, you're used to being really comfortable talking about certain things" (JJ_P1 22). Reflection was an interesting piece of my interview with Jennifer. She was reflective during the interview, but she also showed evidence that while working in the discipline-specific satellite, she was consistently reflective about her practice. Below, she reflects upon her choice to put the read-aloud protocol to the side.

> I find a lot more often what I do instead of doing the read aloud is the student will sit down, you go through the usual you know, "what are you working on today, blah, blah, blah" look at the rubric with them, whatever, and then you of course ask them of course the key question, "What part of the lab report do you want to talk about," just like we do in the regular writing center, and lab reports, because they are already split up into parts. They already have headings, and so they'll identify like a specific section and you know usually that's fairly short, say maybe a page or two, so a lot of times what I'll do is, I'll just read that quick to myself silently, and then that gives me a much better idea of where the whole things going, and I know that that's really kind of the opposite of what we really do in the writing center, or in a the main location of the writing center, I don't know. So for a while I was just worried that I was being lazy, like that maybe that was laziness kind of creeping in there, but I think the benefit to doing it that way, just reading, just again, that one section, so it's a page or two, it gives me a sense of where this student's going in a way that I think I would miss if we were kind of doing sentence by

sentence, reading, [it] kind of gives me a larger sense of like the rhetorical whole. (JJ_P2

10)

The importance of mentioning reflection of the satellite coordinator in a discipline-specific

writing center satellite within the context of situated learning is to suggest that situated learning

can happen without abandoning what we know about writing theory and writing center theory.

Reflection is a critical part of writing theory and writing center theory but is not critical in

naming the attributes of situated learning the way Lerner adapts it in "Situated Learning in the

Writing Center." While reflection may be implied in Lerner's article, it is important to mention

here to show that I am in no way suggesting we abandon our traditional practices, but consider

them from a new perspective in addition to what we already know.

Mary's Evidence of Situated Learning in Nursing

Mary, as you might remember from the "Johnny Still Can't Write" section of the

previous chapter, is writing center faculty who teaches the nursing bridge course. In my

interview with Mary, I found evidence of all four attributes that Lerner names as situated

learning: (a.) models expert speaking and thinking about writing; (b.) coaches the student; (c.)

scaffolds learning; and (d.) learns something alongside the student. For Mary, as you will see, all

four of these attributes work together when working in a discipline.

Modeling

Mary tells me, "I'm a strong writer. My master's is in literature not writing. You know,

somebody has to read what's written, right (laughs)" (MJ 21). I find this statement valuable to

mention because it frames not only how she models, scaffolds for, and coaches her students, but

how she learns from them as well. In their nursing class, students are asked to write an annotated

bibliography. Mary uses her expertise as a "strong writer" to help coach the students.

[Students] also in that class have to write an annotated bibliography, so we talk about that

process, the formatting, and in all of these, why these are valuable genres, who's the

audience, what's the purpose. So, we're bringing kinds of things that you need to think

about when you're writing a paper. (MJ 10)

Mary is referring to the rhetorical considerations writing teachers highlight in order to create a

strong argument within students' work. Although Mary has a literature background, working in

the writing center has allowed her a new perspective on rhetorical situations. She says,

Even though overall, I think I'm a strong writer, I'm continually learning. I think the

professional development sessions [in the writing center] we have [are] very important.

Talking and listening to people. Reading, you know, I've read some things about

[rhetoric and composition]. Just being around people you [learn from], learning from that,

so I perhaps don't have the vocabulary, the jargon, I have it a little bit more know, but I

certainly am committed and I keep, I get excited about, learning about rhetoric and comp.

(MJ 22)

Mary has an additional layer of learning; since she has a literature background, she is tasked with

learning about both nursing and rhetoric and composition. While she is simultaneously learning

about rhetoric and composition, she is teaching in the nursing discipline and is therefore able to

use her knowledge that is continually growing about things like rhetorical situations to model

that knowledge for students.

Coaching

Mary's situation is a bit unique because as a writing center consultant, she teaches in

Nursing. She suggests it is an advantage.

I think by having a writing consultant go into nursing classes, it establishes relationship. It's a lot easier, I think, to say, "Hey, come visit us [at the writing center]. We want to work with you." And, sometimes you can also again, on the spot, answer questions. (MJ 11)

Mary elaborates on being both a teacher and a writing center tutor through a slightly different perspective than we saw with Jennifer.

Teaching a writing class, you're also tutoring the students, but one difference I find, and this would be whether I'm teaching first year writing or this nursing class, for instance, as a opposed to being a writing consultant, is that I feel like I can, I've established some trust and boundaries so I can be a little more risk taking in telling students things about their writing. So, for instance, I will tell my students I teach, "I'm going to let you know if you've got broccoli in your teeth." And, what I mean by that is if you're continually missing a word or you're not getting this pronoun referent, because you know, you don't want to have broccoli in your teeth. But, I think I can do that because there's a level of trust and there's a level of sharing, you know, getting to know the person. (MJ 18)

While this is in the classroom and not in the writing center, it is still evidence of situated learning. Mary builds upon the knowledge she has gained in the writing center to act as a coach to students in her classes.

Scaffolding

Other evidence of scaffolding comes from the workshops she and others in the writing center have developed for nursing students.

With the nursing workshops, they are targeted to students who are taking the writing intensive class as well as a class that is a 200-level class that has writing in it. So, the

workshops are about APA style documentation … We try to use nursing examples to try to show how it looks in the nursing context, and then the workshops for the writing intensive class are very much geared towards their assignment. They need to write what they call a "hot topics" paper, and they also do a policy letter to a legislature I think about the same hot topic. So, the workshops are geared to that, to support them in their writing. So, we look at how to make an argument, how to organize a paper, how to have your points, how you're going to refute them. It's a workshop that could apply, I think, in any kind of you know hot topics, making an argument, needing to debate and refute something, taking a stand … but we gear it with nursing examples. (MJ pp. 9 – 10)

The workshops are designed to explicitly build upon the knowledge students are gaining in class to specifically help with the composition of their assignments. Tutors from the writing center deliver these workshops in nursing classes. Mary will deliver them for others who teach the bridge course as well. She notes that it is helpful for students to have a voice different from the teacher's as they gain writing skills. In this case, those teaching the bridge class are also part of the team who designs the workshops. Therefore, the workshops themselves are very closely linked with the nursing class and are developed to carefully build upon students' existing knowledge.

Tutor Learns

Mary mentions above that she is committed to learning more about rhetoric and composition in the writing center. Below, she also discusses learning from nursing students.

I think a writing consultant can be invested in a, a more personal way or stronger way, it's not to say that any topic I wouldn't be interested in learning about. Sometimes it's a great opportunity [to learn about Nursing]. I'm like, "wow, I never knew that!" You

know (laughs). I wish I had chosen that as my major. But, I think there's an engagement and an investment and an interest both professionally and personally that keeps an added spark. Now, with the nursing, I never wanted to be a nurse. And, as a person of my age, basically, you know, you think of teaching or nursing as the two options that a woman had (laughs), so I've really become aware of that profession and the people and what's at stake, and if I hear of anybody who is going to the hospital, I say, "Don't you dare complain [about] the nurse. You just don't know how much that person has to do." So, I think, here's an example of where that's not my field or background, but I'm drawn into it, especially as I learn from the students (MJ pp. 16 – 17)

In a sense, because she works with nursing students in a writing center capacity, she has a newfound respect for their jobs. She has a better understanding of what it is like to be a Nurse and how difficult it is to juggle a number of different responsibilities. "[T]hese are students who already are RNs usually working fulltime or part-time, and they are pursuing a bachelor's in nursing. Some of them have been out of school for, you know, maybe five, ten, twelve, fifteen years" (MJ pp. 1 – 2). Where Jennifer is learning about the specifics of the discipline from her students, Mary is learning about the profession. Because so many of the nursing students on campus are non-traditional, Mary enjoys a robust perspective when working with these experienced students.

Lisa's Evidence of Situated Learning in the Business Satellite

Lisa is a member of the business communication faculty at the business school and was asked last year to work in the business school's discipline-specific writing center satellite. Although she did not have previous experience working in a writing center, for several semesters, she worked with a tutor from the business writing center satellite in her own

classroom. With the tutor, she redesigned several assignment prompts, one assignment in particular that was focused on skill-and-drill grammar exercises, and that tutor went into her class to do group consultations. Lisa asked her business communication students to write a lengthy business report in groups. She carefully scaffolded assignments, and she asked the tutor to come into her class once the groups had chosen topics for their report. The tutor went from group to group asking her students about rhetorical considerations such as audience, purpose, and context. Lisa and the business satellite tutor worked together for several semesters.

While evidence of situated learning in Lisa's interviews is significantly less than with Jennifer and Mary, introducing Lisa's situativity (Durning and Artino) is valuable because it offers explicit evidence of situated learning between a writing center tutor and a student. In Lisa's excerpts below, we see evidence of her as a model and a coach.

Modeling

Like both Jennifer and Mary, Lisa has an interesting background. She worked at a Big Three motor company for many years before she decided to start teaching business communication. She finds that having industry experience in the classroom is quite valuable. Lisa states, "we've worked in industry, we understand the purpose of a resume and a cover letter" (LW 7). Since Lisa has worked in industry, she can model the language that can be included in resumes and cover letters for students. Although there is a career center on campus, Lisa suggests that while "they do a lot of great things like, they'll embed your LinkedIn link to your resume and things like that" (LW 7), tutors like her in the business satellite center are better prepared to work with students on their resumes. "I think that at least some of us in the [sic] business writing center have a better understanding of what employers are really looking for in a resume because we've done that, so we've got really strong, practical application there" (LW 7).

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In fact, Lisa brought up the importance of "practical application" a number of times during our interview.

Coaching

Lisa also brought up "practical application" when talking about coaching.

I'll practice interviewing even with the student. [For example,] so we're here to talk about the resume. Lets' talk about the purpose of the resume. Alright now let's take your resume and let me interview you based on the resume, and is this interview going where you want it to go, because this is all I know about you are you telling me the things you really want me to know. So again, more of that practical application. (LW 10)

The way Lisa describes her interaction with students is not the picture of a typical writing center session. Again, we see the tutor move away from the read aloud protocol and use the student's resume as a starting off point to begin the hypothetical interview. The interaction between Lisa and the student helps the student in two ways. First, the student gets to practice interviewing skills. Second, the student can understand that how a resume is written can often determine the course of the interview. In other words, Lisa contextualizes the resume so that the student can better understand the implications of the outcome of writing their document.

Evidence of Situated Learning in Discipline-Specific Writing Centers

Excerpts from Jennifer, Mary, and Lisa who all work in discipline-specific writing center satellites demonstrates variation of situated learning. Although Jennifer's experience of situated learning does not focus on students within the discipline like Lerner suggests, the discipline-specific writing center satellite offers interesting variations of situated learning in writing centers. Lerner's perspective that situated learning is happening in writing centers is from the

tutor's point of view, a discipline-specific writing center satellite can continue to broaden and enrich this view ("Situated Learning").

From Mary's excerpts, we see that her perspective of Nurses overall has changed by working with nursing students. Mary is able to gain a full picture nursing students about what their job entails. Lisa contextualizes writing center sessions for students so that they understand *why* they are writing documents such as resumes. In these spaces, in just in my small study, we see evidence of situated learning. From this evidence, I am encouraged by the fact that we see situated learning happening for both students and the tutor. As Lerner states,

> situated learning holds much promise in helping us understand how and why students *potentially* learn in writing center sessions. If anything, the theoretical construct brings to mind more questions than answers, questions that offer an agenda for reflection on practice and systematic research. ("Situated Learning" pp. 68 – 69)

There is value for writing center scholars to conduct more research to gather a wide range of evidence that situated learning can and does happen in writing centers. Looking toward discipline-specific writing center satellites to cultivate this data would be interesting and useful—it is a concentrated site for data collection and it opens perspectives that we may not be able to see from a "main" writing center.

Situated Learning Theory in the Center

In Chapter 4, we saw how the specialist / generalist debate is not incredibly useful for the evolution of writing center theory and practice. In Chapter 5, we saw evidence that the "students can't write" narrative is still woven throughout faculty's stories about student writing. In a more promising turn, we can see from this chapter that there are glimpses of evidence of situated learning in writing centers. Yet, although coveted scholars in the writing center field have written

about the topic (Grimm, "Rearticulating"; Lerner, "Situated Learning"; Lerner, "The Idea"; Paretti), situated learning gets overshadowed by both the generalist / specialist debate and the "students can't write" narrative. The overshadowing of situated learning might be because, as Lerner argues, writing center work is too insular ("Unpromising Present"). Most articles published in *Writing Center Journal* cite other articles from *Writing Center Journal.* As we can see in this chapter, there is an opportunity to move outside of our writing centers and begin to better understand what is happening in the disciplines. Additionally, it is important to consider Elspeth Stuckey who believes that our notions about literacy are dangerous and "has pushed many into the margins" (60). Stuckey argues, "We may want to believe that something about literacy resists domination; what we have to believe is that literacy is an idea our society has not yet finished with" (60). In fact, writing centers are just beginning to explore literacy, and now situated learning. Writing center scholars can gain a valuable perspective on learning if we find ways to research discipline-specific writing center satellites. Discipline-specific writing center satellites allow for writing center scholars to be physically located in a discipline that is not their "home" discipline. Jennifer, Mary, and Lisa showed us that we can not only gain a lot from the discipline, but also from the students who reside in that discipline.

The topic of situated learning and the development of theoretical frameworks of situated learning for writing centers is important to acknowledge at this time in writing center history. I invoked Lerner at the start of this chapter to highlight the social nature of writing, and I will do so again to emphasize the importance our move toward situated learning. "Situated learning offers writing centers the opportunity to show their institutions how the ideals for learning to take place are enacted" (Lerner, "Situated Learning" 53). We can see writing support spaces like the engineering communication center materialize that engage the social nature of writing,

research, and communication. Writing center professionals might take the time to reflect on what

this means. Are disciplines creating writing support spaces because the writing center is not

robust enough to serve the entire campus population?

Additionally, as a writing center community, we seem fractured on which framework to

use in our writing center sessions: should we be directive or non-directive tutors? Should we be

generalists or specialists? A move towards a theory of situated practice in writing centers might

quench the need to further perpetuate deeply rooted binaries.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have examined discipline-specific writing support spaces in order to gain a better understanding of their exigencies, tutoring practices, and institutional structures. I argue that the narratives like "students can't write" are still circulating within some writing centers. Additionally, the generalist / specialist debate is becoming more complex with no potential "solution" in sight. Furthermore, since, as Lerner suggests, writing center scholars are too insular with their research, we have a difficult time widening our perspective ("The Unpromising Present"). Throughout this dissertation, I have argued against this insularity and hope to invite the continued investigation of texts outside of the rhetoric, writing, and composition discipline. We can then integrate these interdisciplinary texts into our future scholarship to broaden our perspectives and subsequently better accommodate students across disciplines. This scholarship could offer some clarity as we try to expand our scholarly purview in order to identify some of the questions writing center professionals should be asking.

While I think it is crucial to broaden our perspectives by integrating disciplinary work with our own, my research serves as a bridge. Approximately half of my interviews were with writing center professionals who work in a discipline-specific writing center satellite, and the other half are affiliated with writing support spaces separate from writing centers. Instead of just plunging into a discipline that is not our own, my research sites and interviews demonstrate the importance of easing our way into disciplines, recognizing what we know, and recognizing what we do not know. This "bridge" is crucial to build a theoretical framework for moving forward with research in disciplinary-specific writing center satellites and similar spaces.

My participants were an incredibly rich source of knowledge. The use of grounded theory to collect, code, and analyze my data allowed me to unearth unexpected information. In Chapter

4, I suggested that the generalist / specialist binary significantly narrows the capabilities of the tutor. I highlight a number of participants within this chapter, and one in particular was rather insightful—Helen. Helen, and her colleagues, offered evidence of the messiness of taxonomizing the qualities of the "generalist" or the "specialist" tutor. Chapter 5 shows how deeply ingrained the "students can't write" narrative is within institutions. More importantly, although writing center professionals generally take a strong stance against speaking about students and their writing in any kind of negative way, the narrative is still being perpetuated and circulated within writing support spaces. Chapter 6 suggests a separation from the generalist / specialist debate and the "students can't write" narrative and offers a consideration of situated learning within the writing center. The interviews highlighted in Chapter 6 show evidence that situated learning can happen in discipline-specific writing center satellites. I argue that the topic of situated learning is important to acknowledge in order to create a space to talk about students and their learning instead of their deficiencies.

As Joyce Kinkead reminds us, writing center professionals should take caution not to make generalizations from their own centers, but it is useful to identify themes across centers. In this dissertation, the themes that I have identified from my data set were the generalist / specialist debate, the "students can't write" narrative, and situated learning. This dissertation demonstrates the parallels between composition and writing centers, yet suggests writing centers keep an independent identity. While my research does not tell us everything we need to know about narratives within institutions and discipline-specific writing center satellites, it does demonstrate that these old narratives still circulate. There is a need to consider new perspectives for writing center work. Since I agree with Neal Lerner that writing center scholarship would benefit from interdisciplinary work, in Chapter 1, I offered a brief overview of literature that highlights the

teaching of writing in the disciplines from the disciplines. The small corpus of texts I summarized to contextualize writing within the disciplines identifies a number of questions raised by those teaching writing in the disciplines such as, Who owns writing? and How and where should writing be taught? Conducting interviews in disciplinary-writing support spaces allowed me to interrogate these questions within a unique space. There has been little research about discipline-specific writing center satellites within writing center theory, and my work begins to acknowledge and fill this gap. Therefore, the following research questions guided this dissertation:

- What are the exigencies for creating writing center satellites and writing support spaces in disciplines?

- How do writing center satellites expand or complicate what we know about the theories and practice of writing center studies?

- How do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of writing center satellites?

However, as I discussed in Chapter 1, these questions led me to discover broader issues within writing centers, as these condensed disciplinary centers magnified writing center practice and theory.

In this concluding chapter, I will discuss what I have discovered specifically related to my research questions. Although grounded theory took my research in an unexpected direction, I still deem it important to speak to the original questions that guided this study. Then, I will offer implications about the generalist / specialist debate, the "students can't write" narrative, and the use of situated learning within writing centers. Then, as I briefly mentioned in Chapter 3, I will

further explore and identify the limitations of this study. Finally, I will make suggestions for future research.

Guiding Research Questions

At the outset of this project, I was interested in identifying the exigence of discipline-specific writing center satellites and writing support spaces along with understanding the tutoring practices and the institutional structures that affect the creation and development of these spaces. Overwhelmingly, those affiliated with both discipline-specific writing center satellites and writing support spaces said that access was one of the main reasons for the creation of the space. For example, Linda says she, "meet[s] people wherever they're at," and Carol gave "meeting students where they live" as the reason for the development of the writing support space. Helen says that for the business school satellite, "it's kind of almost like bad customer service not to come to [students]." Helen says that because the business school is off-campus, and the fact that such a high percentage of the students there are commuters, it is important to meet students where they are.

Secondly, many of the tutors in the discipline-specific writing center satellites mention that tutoring practices should remain the same as those in the "main" writing center, but it is the outcome of the writing that changes. Lisa says, "I don't think [tutoring] should change, I think that should be true for any writing consultant. What changes is the goal of the piece." In other words, tutoring practices across satellites, regardless of discipline, should be similar.

Finally, and not surprisingly, funding was one of the most mentioned institutional structures that affected the creation and development of the writing support spaces. Interestingly, the writing support spaces not affiliated with a writing center seemed to have better funding support than the discipline-specific writing center satellites. Writing support spaces have external

funding (grants, donations, etc.) as well as institutional funding. Again, because of my small sample size, which I will further discuss in my limitations section, this is not representative of all writing support spaces, but it is a notable finding that writing center professionals might consider as they continue to evolve their own spaces.

These research questions ultimately guided me to the development of three main parts to this dissertation: the generalist / specialist debate, the "students can't write" narrative, and situated learning. The implications for each of these is explored below.

Implications for Generalist / Specialist Debate

The consideration of best practices for tutoring is one way this dissertation contributes to writing center studies. Peer tutoring guides often privilege generalist tutoring. Generalist tutors are those who can work with any student, from any discipline, on any kind of paper because the tutor knows the "right questions to ask" and the generic conventions of writing. Susan Hubbuch even calls these tutors "ignorant" (23). The idea of a generalist tutor in the writing center has continued, I believe, as a strategy to train tutors to work with anyone who walks into the center. Additionally, I believe it is an attempt to not marginalize students and continue to be accessible to all of those writers across campus. We use generalist strategies especially for new tutors because they are inexperienced and are not "expert" writers. As cautious and nervous as these new tutors are, they need a safety net, and generalist tutoring strategies provide them that safety. As we saw in Chapter 4, the generalist is at risk of "correcting grammar" instead of helping with disciplinary content.

On the other hand, specialist tutors are those who have some kind of expertise in the discipline in which the student is writing. Many find specialist tutoring useful, as studies in this dissertation have shown, because specialist tutors have more awareness of the rhetorical

considerations within disciplinary writing. With more knowledge of the discipline and / or the content knowledge with which the student is writing, the specialist tutor can more appropriately offer advice to the student writer. However, the problem with having specialist tutors on staff is that it is a logistic nightmare. While it is not completely uncommon for writing centers to staff tutors from various disciplines, it is incredibly difficult to match up every student from every discipline with a tutor that has their specialized disciplinary knowledge. Therefore, we are kind of stuck at a kind of crossroads—generalist tutoring is too general and specialist tutoring is not practical.

My study has shown evidence of both advantages and disadvantages of specialist tutors. Specialist tutors often have practical knowledge of the discipline and as such can help facilitate situated learning. Yet those who are opposed to specialist tutoring suggest that having too much disciplinary knowledge can cause the tutor to be too directive during a session. In other words, specialist tutors have to be careful not to give students the "answers."

My data shows that specialist tutors can have content knowledge but they can inappropriately focus on surface errors of writing as well. Some suggest directive tutoring and / or focusing on grammar is not necessarily a bad thing (Rice). However, in this particular instance, the tutor we know as Helen was apprehensive of working with students on their content. Especially in a business school where plagiarizing can cause the school to lose its accreditation, Helen primarily focused on grammar, punctuation, and citations and stayed away from challenging the student on the content of their writing. Helen is not potentially prepared to ask students guided questions without "giving the answers" because she was not classically trained as a writing center person.

If some specialist tutors primarily focus on surface errors, what does this mean for what a writing center is supposed to do for students? What does that mean for the development and creation of writing center satellites? As we develop discipline-specific writing center satellites, and as we continue to find new ways to train our tutors to be able to accommodate writers across disciplines, it would be helpful to remember that all tutors value writing in different ways. As Harvey Kail, Paula Gillespie, and Bradley Hughes argue, "If you have ever trained or supervised peer writing tutors or been a peer tutor yourself, you have probably noticed that tutoring is as beneficial for the tutor as it is for the writer, maybe even more beneficial" (n.p.). Yet, rarely do we have the chance to research the tutor as an individual and how they affect their surroundings. Aside from Kail, Gillespie, and Hughes's work on "The Peer Writing Tutor Alumni Research Project," much of our research has been concerned with the tutor as a group, as a new set of tutors, or as a set of tutors in a discipline-specific satellite. What I am suggesting is that although writing center scholarship in the 1980s did focus on cognitive learning, we have moved beyond that kind of thinking for the tutoring of our students. What might we gain from better understanding how the individual tutor learns what to value? How does the tutor learn how to value the teaching of writing? How does the tutor learn how to value tutoring as a pedagogy? How does the tutor learn how to value assessment and feedback from faculty? How does the tutor value writing center pedagogy verses disciplinary-specific writing center satellite pedagogy? In other words, what influences the tutor beyond their traditional tutor training?

These questions, among many others, cannot be answered through the generalist / specialist debate binary. These questions are just the beginning of a conversation about the role of the tutor situated within the writing center, the discipline-specific writing center satellite, and within a writing support space. It would be useful to move away from the general / specialist

debate if only to gain a different perspective on how tutors learn and write themselves. It is essential for us to understand how tutors learn and write so that we can better understand how they work with other students.

Frankly, the questions that we are asking within the generalist / specialist debate may not strictly include disciplinary knowledge and expertise. The questions that we are asking may come down to different learning styles. If that is the case, the general / specialist debate is not getting us any closer to the consideration of these questions. Ultimately, as writing center professionals continue the general / specialist debate, they are ignoring other key issues within writing center theory and practice—for example, how do we best train tutors? If we think about the future of this debate, we might see more arguments for specialized tutors based on how critical writing and communication is becoming increasingly important across the disciplines. If that is the case, and writing center theory and practice is based on generalist tutoring, we potentially edge ourselves out of being able to provide writing help to students.

Implications of the "Students Can't Write" Narrative

The implications for writing center professionals also extend into the connection between writing classrooms across disciplines and the writing center. As I have hoped to demonstrate in this dissertation, the public nature of the "students can't write" narrative is troubling. Faculty tell students that they can't write. The Internet tells students that they can't write. Businesses tell students that they can't write. "Not knowing how to write" should not fall on the students, and yet, they take the brunt of the blame. Students come from their writing classrooms into our center defeated, stressed, sad, angry, scared, and worried. Any emotion that comes to us as writers are multiplied. If their teacher has asked them to come to the writing center, the student likely deems that advice as punitive. They think "I can't write," and they equate that with "I am dumb."

As writing center directors, scholars, and researchers, we are not going to be able to eradicate the "students can't write" narrative. However, it would be useful for writing center professionals to think about alternatives to this the narrative. Although my participants did not suggest that "students can't write," they discuss the implications of when faculty circulate the narrative. As seen above in the research questions that guided this study, I asked about the exigence of why the satellite centers were created. Beyond access, a number of satellite coordinators suggested that their satellite was created due to the fact that faculty was disappointed with student's writing. This is incredibly discouraging.

As long as the "students can't write" narrative is alive and circulating, the writing center has the potential to continue to be viewed as remedial. As we saw in chapter 1, teachers in the disciplines did not receive training to teach writing, and they often feel uncomfortable assigning and assessing writing in their classrooms. Often faculty in the disciplines do not know where to turn when they feel their students can't write, or they feel their students are not on a level that they should be by the time they reach their disciplinary writing classes. Many times, their solution to this "problem" is to send students to the writing center—ultimately students are sent to the writing center to get their writing "fixed." And as long as the narrative continues, the remediation continues.

Implications of Situated Learning

Using situated learning as a lens to reconsider writing center theory and practice might be useful for writing center professionals to move away from the generalist / specialist debate and the "students can't write" narrative. Neal Lerner suggests,

> tutors need to embrace their role as more experienced members of their communities of
>
> practice and offer more explicit guidance in terms of how they would approach a writing

task, in effect making visible the thinking and problem solving that the novice writer

needs to learn. ("Situated Learning" 69)

My evidence shows, as Lerner suggests, discipline-specific writing centers allow for tutors to

"bring the disciplinary and task-specific knowledge that is needed in a writing center session"

("Situated Learning" 70). This move seems to be our attempt to emerge from insularity. As

colleges become increasingly more interdisciplinary, so too do writing centers. Situated learning

might allow us to not only re-consider our identity and ask questions about how students learn,

but also explore disciplinary spaces from a new perspective as well.

By sheer nature, discipline-specific writing center satellites are situated within the

discipline. This situatedness allows for tutors to gain a unique interdisciplinary learning

experience outside of the traditional writing center model. As we saw with Jennifer throughout

this dissertation, although her training for a satellite center for the sciences was minimal at best,

she is learning more about biology, psychology, physics, and a number of other disciplines than

she ever could have in the main center. Jennifer did not use a training guide to learn how to tutor

in the sciences. In fact, a tutoring guide would not have even been helpful. Because of situated

learning, Jennifer is expanding her writing center knowledge about the disciplines, making

connections with students and faculty across campus, and building credibility for the university's

writing center overall. For tutors, a discipline-specific writing center satellite is an excellent

resource to appropriate situated learning theory. However, if tutors are not first classically

trained as writing center consultants, one implication might be that the tutor sees writing as a

kind of "test," much like Helen.

As Jennifer learns the discipline at the ground level, she can relate to the students who

come into her satellite. Both Jennifer and the student are literally situated within the discipline,

which is important for learning. For the student, however, we might consider how much situatedness is enough for learning. Is the fact that there is a writing center directly in students' disciplines enough to help them learn how to write in their discipline? How might we build upon Lerner and consider a situated learning theory in discipline-specific spaces? Regardless, as Jennifer and Nancy remind us, the satellites are not distinct from their home center, they are all closely connected.

Situated learning has implications for tutor training within writing centers as well. If we consider the knowledge tutors in discipline-specific writing center satellites are gaining from their situated learning, how might we contemplate the ways in which that knowledge could be brought back into the main center to train tutors in the "main" space? If a "main" center is willing to have meetings where the satellite coordinators regularly share their experiences and what they have been learning in their discipline-specific writing center satellites, it is likely that a corpus of disciplinary knowledge could be developed. If the writing center director was to keep track of this disciplinary knowledge, it might later be examined for patterns across disciplines to use to develop new tutor training materials.

Limitations of this Study

This dissertation has included interviews from three different institutions where I asked questions about the writing support space's exigence, tutoring practices, and institutional structures. One institution represented the discipline-specific writing center satellites and two institutions represented the writing support spaces. Conducting interviews from satellite coordinators from one institution does not allow me to claim that their responses and actions are representative of all discipline-specific writing center satellites. Nor can I claim that conducting interviews with those affiliated with writing support spaces from two institutions are

representative examples of those spaces. I can suggest, however, that the responses I gained from the interviews from three institutions offer new insights into disciplinary writing and the practices in which writing center tutors use when working with students. Therefore, my findings from my interviews can be useful to scholars of writing center studies, writing across the curriculum, and writing in the disciplines as an example of the ways in which writing center tutoring can affect students and their disciplinary writing.

Additionally, I chose to limit my methods to interviews of tutors. While I believe interviewing students and / or observing their sessions might have enriched my project, I think the tutors' perspective of the exigence of the center, the tutoring practices within the center, and the institutional structures that affect the center was insightful in ways I would not have captured through observations. The tutors' perspective from discipline-specific writing center satellites allowed me to identify the acknowledgment of deep-rooted writing center practice and theory, regardless of where the satellite is physically located. Because of this, I was able to recognize the generalist / specialist debate, the "students can't write" narrative, and situated learning as they manifest within writing support spaces from my participants' interviews. In other words, interviews with students and / or observations of sessions with students would have resulted in a completely different project.

Furthermore, because of the time constraints of this project, I was unable to interview participants from more than three institutions. This study yielded results that could be enriched by adding participants from multiple institutions. I will further discuss my plan to extend this study in the next section, but including additional institutions will prevent me from making sweeping generalizations about my results in the future. In addition, adding new institutions to this study will confirm or disprove the results I have explored in this dissertation.

Finally, my experience as a writing center tutor for the past six years may well have clouded my objectivity. Additionally, since I have worked in a writing center satellite mentioned in this project, I undoubtedly brought biases with me into the interviews with the tutors from that satellite. I spent three years working as a tutor at the business school's discipline-specific writing center satellite. I began as a volunteer, and was then hired to be a graduate assistant to tutor half-time in the center and teach first-year English. I was asked my second semester to help develop the business discipline-specific writing center satellite because my background was similar to the discipline. This dissertation exists because of my experience in the discipline-specific writing center satellite—while I worked in the satellite, new questions about writing center theory and practice combined with disciplinary writing emerged. Since that time, I have continued to think about those questions. So while my previous experience might have led me to conduct my interviews and / or analyze my data less critically than if I did not work in the discipline-specific writing center satellite, my experience led me to this dissertation. However, while speaking with my participants, I was aware that my knowledge of the satellites could change the trajectory of the interviews. Therefore, I consciously remained as objective as possible, and I used my interview questions as a guide to keep the interviews focused.

Suggestions for Future Research

There are a number of avenues for future research that I would like to explore to continue this conversation within writing center studies and writing across the curriculum. First, since a limitation of this study was the small data set, the next logical addition to this project would be the addition of a number of other institutions. To date, there are several institutions that would lend a valuable perspective to this study. First, Neal Lerner and Mya Poe published *Learning to Communicate in Science and Engineering: Case Studies from MIT* in 2009. In their book, Lerner

and Poe conducted a series of case studies that followed student writers in Science and Engineering. While they do not frame their work through a writing center standpoint, both are familiar with writing center studies, and the book offers views from a writing curriculum situated within a specific discipline. Interviewing both Neal Lerner and Mya Poe about their experiences at Massachusetts Institution of Technology (MIT), and their current projects with writing support spaces, would enrich this study.

Secondly, in August, I begin teaching within a new, evolving business curriculum in the Farmer School of Business at Miami University of Ohio. The Howe Writing Initiative is the leading force in the development of the new curriculum. The purpose of the Howe Writing Initiative, an extension of the Howe Writing Center, is "to support Farmer School of Business students and faculty with their writing needs so as to promote professional and academic success and to prepare all graduates to be excellent writers" ("The Howe Writing Initiative"). There is a satellite center in the Farmer School of Business that supports both students and faculty with their writing. Within this initiative, Dr. Heidi McKee, the director, has worked with the Farmer School of Business to develop a foundational business curriculum. The curriculum includes four required core classes for incoming freshman in the Farmer School of Business. The development of the curriculum is described below.

> Over the past several years, there have been significant changes to the business
> landscape, including the increased emphasis on analytics in decision-making and the
> often-time instantaneous connectivity of various stakeholders. As an outcome of
> assessment and curriculum-focused discussions, the Farmer School has developed its
> Business Quotient (BQ) core curriculum […] a first-year integrated core curriculum

focused on the art and science of business decision making, business ethics and business

communication. ("The Howe Writing Initiative")

I will be teaching BUS 102: Foundations of Business Communication, "[a]s part of the Farmer

School of Business's first-year integrated course curriculum, this course introduces students to

the fundamentals of business rhetoric, laying the foundation for effective oral and written

business communications" ("The Howe Writing Initiative"). Teaching a foundation course

within this curriculum will allow me to include curriculum development into this research

project. The addition of curriculum development would be useful to recognize the ways in which

writing centers partner with disciplines in order to create foundational curriculums. This will

offer insight into what both the institution and the Farmer School of Business value about writing

and how that intersects with writing center studies.

Finally, while I found the interviews with participants from the discipline-specific writing

center satellites in the mid-sized, Midwest University to be interesting, as I mentioned in my

limitations section, this one center is not representative of all discipline-specific writing center

satellites. Therefore, I would like to identify more satellite locations in a number of different

institutions and interview satellite coordinators of those spaces. Including a broader spectrum of

discipline-specific writing center satellites in future studies could potentially lead to the

development of a situated learning theoretical framework to use in writing centers and writing

center satellites. Additionally, these centers push the boundaries of one-on-one tutoring that

writing center professionals recognize as foundational tutoring practice in writing centers. In the

business satellite, we see different pairings such as one tutor with two students (one-on-two) and

two tutors with one student (two-on-one). During my Master's as a tutor, I would often partner

up with another tutor during sessions with students; this created a two-on-one tutoring session. I

remember the experience being useful because I felt more comfortable as a novice tutor to be able to divert a student's question to another tutor without the risk of feeling stupid. I wonder what research on these configurations could lend to tutor training and / or the generalist / specialist debate. Clearly I have more questions about this project and topic than I even did when I began. Ultimately, this is just the beginning of a larger body of research to come.

Conclusion

As I have hoped to demonstrate in this dissertation, discipline-specific writing center satellites continue to perpetuate the generalist / specialist debate and the "students can't write" narrative which potentially allows for writing centers to be viewed as remedial. As I suggested in Chapter 6, using a situated learning lens might allow writing center professionals to move their center from a remedial status to a space where we question "how do students learn?" instead of "why can't students write?" While, as I mentioned above, there has been valuable research done in writing center research and scholarship in an attempt to move writing centers out of the margins, many of us still maintain a marginalized status to some faculty and administrators within our institutions. Unless we shift the perception of, and the narratives coming from, writing centers, we might be replaced by writing support centers that are not affiliated with writing centers. These writing support spaces, as shown in this dissertation, provide students a plethora of discipline-specific resources, often including research and communication. If writing centers do not distinguish themselves as a place that can help students across disciplines, writing centers might move from a marginalized position into having no position within the institution at all.

For writing center scholars, professionals, and students, the findings of this dissertation mean that as writing centers attempt to accommodate students who write in the disciplines, our identity potentially becomes distorted. Therefore, we must pay special attention to the narratives

we use in the writing center and subsequently circulate to our faculty. We have an opportunity to reconsider those narratives and offer a new theoretical framework for how we conceive of and define writing center work. If we do not adapt a situated learning theory in writing centers, we might consider other alternatives so that writing support spaces, such as those highlighted here, do not replace writing centers altogether. Those of us who are involved in writing center theory and practice have a responsibility to consider the alternative venues students might seek for help and to, as a community, identify best practices and theoretical frameworks as writing centers seek to accommodate disciplinary writers.

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Appendix A – Interview Questions

Expanding our Definitions: A Study of Writing within Disciplinary Writing Support Centers

When at all possible, interviews will be conducted face-to-face, one-on-one, and in-person. If in-person interviews are not feasible (because of travel, schedules, etc.), then the researcher will conduct an interview via Skype or Google Hangouts.

Questions are open ended and are meant primarily to begin the interview. The interviews conducted will be a guide; although, it is not imperative that each and every question gets asked and answered. It is more important for the interviewee to explore their thoughts about writing center satellites (and writing support spaces).

Section 1: Development of Writing Center Satellites (or Writing Support Spaces) (Q1)

1. Why was the writing center satellite (or writing support space) in your discipline created?
2. Why would a writing center satellite (or a writing support space) be created for specific disciplines as opposed to, or as an extension of, the "home" writing center?
3. What might the writing center satellite (or writing support space) provide to students that the home center does not?
4. What might the home writing center provide that the writing center satellite (or writing support space) does not?

Section 2: Tutoring Practices **in** Writing Center Satellites (or Writing Support Spaces) (Q2)

5. What are some of the typical genres of writing students need help with when they seek writing support at this location?
6. How do you find that the practice of tutoring changes based on discipline?
7. What kinds of practices do your tutors engage in that is different from the tutoring that happens in the home center?
8. What are the advantages and implications to writing support located in a specific discipline?
9. How do you train your tutors to work in the writing center satellite (or writing support space)?

Section 3: Institutional Structures (Q3)

10. Who funds the writing center satellite (or writing support space)?
11. How do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of writing center satellites (or writing support space)?
12. What other kinds of institutional and administrative issues emerge when developing a writing center satellite (or writing support space)?

Appendix B – Archival Data List

1. Syllabus / (something else) for the writing center tutor training class

   The syllabus, the readings, and the type of assignments will help give me a feeling for how the tutors are trained in the "home" center. The required readings for the course will allow me to see the theoretical lenses that this particular writing center values in terms of tutor training

   WRTG 379 Course Syllabus Fall 2015

   WRTG 379 Class Schedule Fall 2015-1

2. WAC Numbers (from Mary)

   There is a two-year gap in the numbers for the progression of the Spring WAC initiative. The budget has been the same as it was when WAC started in 2000 – despite the rising numbers of attendees. The director of the UWC will ask colleges / deans, etc. for money to help absorb the cost of the additional participants. (What colleges do they come from – is there a trend in who – from what college – comes to the "workshop")

   Also, the disciplinary literacies showcase agenda

   WAC_Fellows-yr_email-1

   final agenda Jan 2016

3. COB History (from Helen)

   Shows the numbers from number of appointments since the first semester the COB was opened (though, I think there is some data that is missing from the first couple of semesters).

   UWC history

4. Training Materials from Jennifer (Bio / graduate students, etc.)

   Jennifer sent me the training materials she uses to train the GTAs who she receives from Biology to help them better understand writing center work / practice.

   F15 BIO GA ELL training

   F15 BIO GA Intro to Consulting training

   F 15 BIO GA LD training

   Interactive Using APA CHHS

   W16BIOGATrainingSchedule (originally on google docs / I downloaded the copy)

Appendix C – Optional Transcripts

January 12, 2016

BM: Okay. So, I think first what I will have you do, if you don't mind is just give some kind of like demographic information, so how long you've been here at Eastern and then how long you've been with the center, and then your capacity in, uh, in coordination with nursing

JV: Okay, um, my name is […]`, and I completed my masters in literature at Eastern Michigan in 2005, so I've been teaching as a part-time lecturer since then, and during grad school, I also was a graduate assistant

BM: Oh, cool

JV: So, I've

BM: I didn't know that

JV: …. Been teaching here, in, for quite a few years then. I've taught literature classes as well as then first-year writing classes

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Which became the primary teaching focus for quite a few years, in addition to working in the University Writing Center

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Which has had some, um, changes in terms of formatting, but currently I work as a writing consultant

BM: Mm hmm

JV: And, that can involve a one-on-one consultations as well as doing workshops in the classroom

BM: Okay

JV: And, through the university writing center courses that we sometimes call "bridge classes" have been developed particularly for, um, nursing and for this RN to BSN program

BM: Okay

JV: So, these are students who already are RN usually working fulltime or part-time, and they are pursuing, a bachelor's in nursing

BM: Okay

JV: So, it's

BM: So, their kind of more non-traditional students

JV: Correct

BM: Okay

JV: Some of them have been out of school for, you know, maybe five, ten, twelve, fifteen years

BM: Yeah, right

JV: And, others might have been out for a year or two years out of their associate degree program

BM: Okay. Okay, cool. Um, so, mm, okay, so I have like five questions from that, but I'm (laughs)

JV: (laughs)

BM: I always, I make these questions, I spend so much time on them …

JV: I know, and then you …

BM: … and then I totally go off script

JV: Questions begat questions

BM: I know (laughs), good and bad. Okay, so why do you think, so, we'll kind of modify these, um, but so why do you think that um maybe the bridge courses and the relationship with nursing was created. Why did it need to be established?

JV: My understanding is that when this program was offered, faculty had some cautions and disappoints about student writing

BM: Mm hmm

JV: So, they added this class. First, it was piloted, and then it became a requirement.

BM: Wow

JV: Um, for students to learn about um the APA style of documentation

BM: Okay

JV: Because that's what they will use throughout their nursing program. Also to introduce them to the technologies and support provided by EMU

BM: Okay

JV: And, basically, the title of the class is "Reading and Writing in Nursing Studies"

BM: Okay

JV: So, it's to ease them in to academic reading and writing. So learning how to read academic journals

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Learning how to write an academic paper

BM: Mm hmm

JV: As well as talking about, you know, genres within nursing, um that, that kind of thing

BM: Okay, so how is that class, then, um, it seems in line with first year writing in that we teach them how to read academic jour, uh, academic sources, and we start to teach them how to write research paper, or academic type genres

JV: Mm hmm

BM: So, where does it kind of like fall in line with that same thing, and then where does it deviate because of nursing or because of discipline, you know,

JV: I think I find it more sophisticated

BM: Mm hmm

JV: And, uh, I want to use the word "deep," but

BM: Mm hmm, yeah, right

JV: Uh, more complex

BM: Instead of it being kind of more surface

JV: Yes

BM: It's able to drill down a little bit further into one discipline

JV: So, the, and then we have, we have tweaked and revised this course extensively

BM: Mm hmm

JV: So, um, these are the two main papers that they write in the hybrid version of the class, which is a 15-week course. They will write a critical review …

BM: Mm hmm

JV: … of an article. And, they will write a literature review, which involves an annotated bibliography. Um, so it's, it's more complex then I would say first year writing deals with

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Um, I think the expectation for how they write, um, and using APA system is, it has a little more pressure on it

BM: Yeah, yeah

JV: Um, I would say that many faculty in the School of Nursing are very committed and particular about APA style

BM: Mm hmm

JV: So that is, even though there's a reason for that and why APA exists, there's a certain pressure students feel

BM: Right

JV: So, I, I feel I need to have them really strongly embedded in APA

BM: Right

JV: once they leave my class

BM: Because they probably get, uh, graded on ..

JV: Yes

BM: Yeah, on how well they do on APA in future classes. Okay, um, I had a, just a question about technologies and support at Eastern. You talked that they do that in the, in the course, or that it's provided to them. Um, what is that mean?

JV: Uh, first, um, because work is submitted online

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Through the Canvas program, they need to learn how to navigate that system

BM: Okay

JV: Um, Canvas is just been instituted within the last year for all classes

BM: We're starting to use Canvas, too

JV: Yes. I, I think it's, I really like it

BM: Yeah

JV: I think it's pretty user friendly

BM: Mm hmm

JV: it makes sense

BM: Yeah

JV: It's aesthetically more pleasing to me than what we had before (laughs)

BM: (laughs) right. Well, yeah

JV: It wasn't too hard, was it?

BM: (laughs)

JV: Um, so they need to learn to do that

BM: Okay

JV: And, um, especially if students have been out of school or a while, like writing word documents, knowing how to safe, cut, paste …

BM: Ah, okay

JV: … send us attachments. Those are …

BM: Interesting

JV: … new, um requirements

BM: Okay

JV: And, uh,. Especially sometimes, they will go and buy a new computer and then they have to learn

BM: Right

JV: that variation

BM: Right

JV: Um, as well, there's the support of the UWC Online

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Which the Rn to BSN is fully supported so that students have the opportunity to submit work to writing consultants and that's been a real positive, um, experience

BM: Yeah

JV: A little hard, maybe on the writing consultants (laughs)

BM: Yeah

JV: … you know at the end of the semester

BM: So, they do that uh, um, asynchronously, right?

JV: Yes

BM: We download the paper, make comments,

JV: Yes

BM: and then send it back.

JV: Yes

BM: Okay

JV: A, um, I think, you know, there's like a, what, 24-hour

BM: Yeah

JV: Turnover, you know, it depends on when they submit it

BM: Right

JV: But, yes, they can do that at any point

BM: Okay

JV: at anytime. And as well, they um, okay, that was not technology so I won't talk about that

BM: No, that's okay

JV: Those are the technologies. So, getting used to the website, um, using Canvas

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Also, uh, one of the librarians here, the Health Science librarian has done a series of videos

BM: Oh!

JV: On introducing the library, um, how to use the databases

BM: Is that Sarah?

JV: it's a kind of tutorial. No. This would be Elizabeth Pickerelli

BM: Oh, okay

JV: I'm not sure if I said her last name correctly, but… yes. So that is something that the students do on their own, um, I can show it to you later

BM: Okay, yeah

JV: But, it's, it's very helpful because she walks them through, particularly using the databases and …

BM: Right

JV: … subject words and limiters and then also talking about plagiarism and just, uh, understanding what's available

BM: Mm hmm. Yeah, that's really cool

JV: And, this is, usually students are really excited that students can access all of this from their home

BM: Right

JV: you know, off campus

BM: Right, yeah, that's nice. Um, hm, okay, so maybe you kind of already answered this, but why would a writing center satellite, or why would this particular program, uh, be created for a specific discipline as opposed to or as an extension of the home writing center

JV: In this case, I believe it's very much tied to the Director of the writing center

BM: (laughs) yeag

JV: And, her, her vision, her capabilities, her connections for relationships

BM: Mm hmm

JV: So, she not only directs the writing center, but she works with the writing across the curriculum program

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Of which I also, um, am part of

BM: Mm hmm

JV: So, I think a lot of this comes out from established relationships

BM: Right, she had talked a, I interviewed her yesterday morning, and relationships was a huge component of this

JV: Mm hmm, that's not to say that, um, perhaps a, a college or university wouldn't go to the writing center director and say, "Hey can you help us with this?"

BM: Right

JV: Or, "Can you talk about this?" But, um ..

BM: Well, and probably also, it's unique because I also did interviews at the College of Business yesterday

JV: Okay

BM: And, the other theme that kind of, um, arose, was location, right. So, for the College of Business, they're a couple of miles off campus

JV: Yes

BM: They never come to main campus

JV: Mm hmm

BM: So, it's kind of the same thing with these nursing students if they're working fulltime, they're not coming to campus, I'm assuming

JV: Right

BM: For the most part

JV: Mm hmm

BM: So, um, you're filling a need in that you're offering them support, um, where they potential might otherwise not have it

JV: Yes, mm hmm

BM: Yeah

JV: And with this totally online program, you know, there's students, they could be out of state maybe

BM: Right

JV: I know there's some from Northern Michigan, from the western side, so

BM: Cool, that's really exciting

JV: It is

BM: That's neat. I kind of … anyway

JV: Want to take the course? (laughs)

BM: … want to be a nurse (laughs). Um, uh, okay so I definitely think that we've answer the what might the writing center satellite, or this program, provide to students that the home center does not

JV: Mm hmm

BM: I think that we've just covered that, but, um, on the other side of the coin, what might the home writing center provide that the writing center satellite does not

JV: I value face to face

BM: Yeah

JV: encounters

BM: Yeah

JV: Uh, as, um, I think there's something about instant feedback, gestures, facial expressions

BM: Mm hmm

JV: um that is different from when you're only looking at the, the paper or the material in front of you. I, I do think that Bryan and Claire do a fantastic job of, of feedback for people

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and so it's as personable as it can be

BM: They are working on UWC Online

JV: UWC Online. Yes, right. In fact, one of my students, um, named Kevin, just, just a great guy, he, he took advantage of the UWC (laughs)

BM: (laughs)

JV: so much that, you know (laughs)

BM: Yeah

JV: We brought him to share at the WAC

BM: Oh

JV: last, well, it was either last summer or last spring or the spring before. And, so Claire, who often had Kevin as her person to give feedback for, they got to meet for the first time

BM: Oh, that's cool

JV: it was, so it was really fun (laughs) to have, so it can happen

BM: Yeah

JV: But, yes, I, I also think, um, um, perhaps, yeah, there's just more of that give and take

BM: Mm hmm

JV: with face-to-face

BM: Right, right. Okay. So, we'll switch to tutoring practices

JV: Okay

BM: Or, teaching practices.

JV: Okay

BM: Um, what are some of the typical genres of writing that students need help with when they seek writing support, um, or, you know, workshops, what are some of the topics of the workshops, uh, I'm looking for kind of like specific genres

JV: okay

BM: That, that they write or need help with writing

JV: With the nursing workshops, they are targeted to students who are taking the writing intensive class

BM: Okay

JV: As well as um, a class that, that is a 200-level class that has writing in it. So, the workshops are about APA style

BM: Mm hmm

JV: documentation

BM: And, is that the same one that you give out of the

JV: writing center

BM: Yeah, or is it tweaked

JV: It's, it's tweaked. It's, we try to use nursing examples

BM: Okay

JV: Try to show, um, how it, how it looks in the nursing context, and then the workshops for the writing intensive class are very much geared towards their assignment

BM: Okay

JV: They need to write what they call a "hot topics" paper (laughs)

BM: Okay (laughs)

JV: And, and, uh, they also do a policy letter to a legislature I think about the same hot topic

BM: Mm hmm

JV: So, the workshops are geared to that, to support them in their writing. So, we look at how to make an argument

BM: Mm hmm

JV: how to organize a paper, how to have your points, how you're going to refute them

BM: Mm, okay

JV: So, it's a workshop that could apply, I think, in any kind of you know hot topics, making an argument, needing to debate and refute something

BM: Sure

JV: taking a stand, taking, it's a position paper, really

BM: Yeah

JV: but we gear it with nursing examples

BM: Cool

JV: and, then there's also, they also in that class have to write an annotated bibliography, so we talk about that process, the formatting, and in all of these, why these are valuable genres

BM: Mm hmm

JV: uh, who's the audience

BM: Mm hmm

JV: what's the purpose. So, we're bringing kinds of things that you need to think about when you're writing a paper

BM: Right. All the rhetorical considerations

JV: Mm hmm

BM: Um, so what do you think that the workshops add to the teaching to, you know, to the kind of bridge courses, versus, um potentially just having them as a lesson

JV: The workshops, the set of workshops we do is actually uh just for those classes

BM: Okay

JV: Obviously, I, I can uh transfer some of the

BM: yeah

JV: the, the PowerPoints and that to the online class

BM: Right

JV: but they have different ass, uh, papers that they're working on, um, so I think by having a writing consultant go into nursing classes, it establishes relationship

BM: Mm hmm

JV: it's a lot easier, I think, to say, "Hey. come," you know, "come visit us here."

BM: Right

JV: Uh, we want to work with you

BM: Puts a face to a name in a sense

JV: It puts a face, yeah, mm hmm. And, uh, sometimes you, you can also again, on the spot, answer questions. We are thinking of putting some of these, in a, a video online format

BM: Oh

JV: because (laughs) because of trying to schedule and staff these workshops

BM: Oh yeah

JV: So, for instance, there might be 40 workshops that need to be done in a semester, just because, uh, there's different

BM: Right

JV: teachers with the class

BM: And, so that's not the class, necessarily, that you and Ann

JV: That's not the class that I'm *teaching*

BM: Right

JV: It's, it's when I go into a classroom

BM: Gotcha

JV: a nursing classroom

BM: Okay

JV: But, I love the, um, the collaboration that the school of nursing is doing and supporting

BM: Mm hmm

JV: So, I think that's something to think about when you think about writing centers and

BM: Mm hmm

JV: collaborations and you know, who's open to that?

BM: Right

JV: Who's open to support it?

BM: Well, can you talk a little bit more about that because, um, in my head, I'm guessing that the relationships between you and faculty there um is different (laughs) then between the, um, uh, the writing consultant at the college of business and the faculty there

JV: Oh, okay

BM: and, so it would be interesting to see you know, both, and both both places relationships are crucial

JV: Yes

BM: Um, but, you know, how, it sounds to me, and this is an assumption I am making, it sounds to me that nursing seems to value the work of writing centers

JV: Mm hmm

BM: And, it seems to me that their buy-in wasn't all that difficult to get, so

JV: Again, having the support of the dean

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and the director of the school of nursing

BM: Mm hmm

JV: was critical

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Um, many of the nursing faculty have participated in writing across the curriculum

BM: Mm hmm

JV: It's probably, well CHHS, the college of health and human services is one of the fastest growing (laughs) colleges on campus

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Adding a PA for instance

BM: Oh, that's right

JV: a physician's assistant program

BM: that's right. That was happening right when I was leaving, I think

JV: So, and, so, also there's a nursing shortage

BM: Oh

JV: I think that's safe to say, some people might (laugh) disagree

BM: Yeah, yeah

JV: but, there is a shortage in nursing faculty

BM: Mm hmm

JV: So, I don't know

BM: Interesting

JV: how many new faculty have been added to the school of nursing, but, you know, w2e might be talking about 4 or 5 a year

BM: Wow

JV: for the last couple years and probably some more coming in in the fall

BM: wow

JV: Michael Williams, the program director

BM: Mm hmm

JV: encourages faculty to take writing across the curriculum

BM: Ah

JV: So, that's kind of an entry point

BM: Mm hmm

JV: I think, into hearing about student writing

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and what support there is. Uh, and then, many of the faculty who teach these particular writing classes are very enthusiastic (laughs) about writing center and writing, so they, they welcome

BM: Yeah because of the relationships that they've had with Ann, and um

JV: Ann and even myself, or, cause usually we try to uh you know, they might see us three times in a semester

BM: Right

JV: So, over a series of semesters

BM: Right

JV: you get kind of, you know, get to know

BM: get to know them

JV: And, um, yeah, just, um, so establishing rapport

BM: Mm hmm. We talked a lot about, um, with Ann, we talked about ethos a lot, and she was mentioning how important it was to have, you know, like, she said, you know, "Joy has a great ethos with people in the nursing school. Beth has a great ethos with people in the Sciences."

JV: Mm hmm, mm hmm

BM: And, um it's important to kind of have a persona in a sense

JV: Mm

BM: So, um, I guess that's not a question, that's more of a statement (laughs)

JV: (laughs) Well, it's interesting, I was at the Livonia campus

BM: Mm hmm

JV: just on Thursday for my class and you know, there I run into a forming nursing students, I run into two of the nursing faculty

BM: Mm hmm

JV: And, it's, so there's, it was just really fun

BM: Yeah

JV: There was a camaraderie. So, I think you

BM: Yeah

JV: It's true, you build, um, um those relationships that add, then, to how you're trying to support students

BM: Right. And then they probably, you know, it's kind of a word of mouth sort of thing

JV: Sure

BM: as well, so faculty

JV: Mm hmm

BM: probably talk to each other and then, yeah. Cool. Okay, um, so, this is maybe one that we can think about college of education, in two

JV: Okay

BM: So, how do you find that the practice of tutoring changes based on discipline. So, do you find that as you're working with students in the college of education, that you're tutor practice changes? Um, or, even in working with students in nursing

JV: Um, I think the ultimate goals are the same

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Clear writing

BM: Mm hmm

JV: expressed well

BM: Yeah

JV: organized, um, you know, engaging. So, that, that kind of thing, knowing your audience

BM: Yeah

JV: So, I think all that is the same

BM: Mm hmm

JV: in a sense. I think with college of education students, I am very aware that they are going to be representing themselves publicly

BM: mm

JV: with students and with parents and with

BM: yeah

JV: other stakeholders. So, that I do feel that there's, it's very important that those later order concerns (laughs), which are really rhetorical

BM: Right

JV: audience concerns

BM: Right

JV: are, are in place. And, sometimes I think they're maybe not quite as aware of the importance of that

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Um, having taught in high school and middle school myself, and having five kids and now grandchildren who will be in school, I have a huge love for education

BM: Yeah

JV: and public education

BM: Yeah

JV: So, I um, I feel like I'm kind of aware of, I mean, education has changed a lot, but I still feel like I'm aware of what teachers face

BM: Mm hmm

JV: So, I think I come with a different, as a writing consultant / tutor, I, I bring that prior knowledge, shall we say.

BM: Yeah, so that, it's your ethos

JV: Yeah

BM: and, um, how important do you think that is, cause, Ann, um, suggested, or you know, we had talked about this before that I went to the college of business because my undergrad was in bueinss management

JV: Yeah

BM: Um, you know, you are in the college of education because you have, that kind of background. Cindy, I think that she has

JV: She's in social work

BM: Yeah

JV: She, uh, well she worked for quite a few years at Michigan in the social work department

BM: Right. So, you know, we all kind of have this like,

JV: Yeah

BM: um, can you speak to that a bit, and like the importance of it, and maybe um, I don't know, the affordances and implications of that

JV: I think a writing consultant can be invested in a, a more personal way

BM: Mm hmm

JV: or stronger way, it's not to say that any topic I wouldn't be interested

BM: Right, right

JV: in learning about. Sometimes it's a great opportunity. I'm like, "wow, I never knew that!" You know (laughs)

BM: (laughs)

JV: I wish I had chosen that as my major. But, um,

BM: Hey, and I'm going to do it again

JV: I think there's an engagement and an investment

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and an interest both professionally and personally that

BM: Yeah

JV: that, you, you know

BM: keeps you

JV: keeps an added spark

BM: Yeah, yeah, I agree. I absolutely agree

JV: Now, with the nursing, I never wanted to be a nurse. And, as a person of my age, basically, you know, you think of teaching or nursing as the two options that a woman had (laughs)

BM: (laughs)

JV: Um, so, I've really become, um, aware of that profession and the people and what's at stake, and if I hear of anybody who is going to the hospital, I say, "Don't you dare complain the nurse."

BM: (laughs)

JV: You just don't know how much that person (laughs) has to do

BM: Right

JV: So, I think, here's an example of where that's not my field or background

BM: Mm hmm

JV: but, I'm drawn into it, especially as I learn from the students

BM: Yeah, I think all, I, that's something that I want to talk about to Beth about later as well. Um, because I don't think she had a lot of background in Biology or the sciences

JV: Mm hmm

BM: Um, but, you know, Ann suggested her mind works that way

JV: Yeah, yeah

BM: So she kind of was able to adapt really quickly. Um, so that will be a good thing to talk about later, too. Um, uh okay, this is kind of the same of the same question. [stricken from the

record] Um, what kind of, what kinds of practices do your tutors engage in, um, or, well, I guess there are no, did anybody else work in the college of education besides you?

JV: No, it was just a year appointment

BM: Okay.

JV: Um, can I …

BM: Yeah

JV: One thing that comes to mind with this question is, how, because in some ways, teaching a writing class, you're also tutoring …

BM: Right

JV: … the students

BM: Right

JV: but one difference I find, and this would be whether I'm teaching first year writing or this nursing class, for instance, as a opposed to being a writing consultant, is that I feel like I can, I've established some trust and boundaries so I can be a little more risk taking in telling students things about their writing

BM: Okay …

JV: So, for instance, I will tell my students I teach, "I'm going to let you know if you've got broccoli in your teeth."

BM: (laughs)

JV: And, what I mean by that is if you're, you're continually missing a word

BM: Mm hmm

JV: … or you're not getting this pronoun

BM: Yeah

JV: referent, cause you know, you don't want to have broccoli in your teeth

BM: Right

JV: But, that's, I think I can do that because there's a level of trust

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and there's a level of um sharing, you know, getting to know the person. So, whereas if I'm in a tutoring situation meeting a student for once, I maybe approach it a little less

BM: yeah

JV: silly (laughs)

BM: (laughs) Yeah, yeah. Right. Okay. Um, what are the advantages and disadvantages or implicaitons to writing support located in a specific discipline

JV: I think that's tremendous

BM: yeah

JV: I think it's just so valuable

BM: Mm hmm

JV: for the student, of course, in particular, and then the faculty

BM: Mm hmm

JV: because you build a repertoire. I think you probably found that in the school of business. You kind of knew what are the assignments

BM: Oh yea

JV: so you knew how to cut to the chase and say, "Make sure you do this,"

BM: Right

JV: Or, "hey, let's make sure we cover this," so

BM: Mm hmm

JV: It, it just, um, adds value

BM: yeah. That's interesting, so kind of, like, going back to the broccoli in your teeth, maybe part of that with having an established clientele or even the discipline kind of allows you to cut out that front part

JV: Sure, mm hmm

BM: of, you know, like um, we kn, we potentially already know the assignments they are working on. In the college of business, we often already know the faculty, so we don't even have to ask those questions, you know, we've probably seen it three times that day already (laughs)

JV: (laughs) right

BM: So, we're just getting right in there (laughs)

JV: Yes

BM: Yeah, okay, that's cool. So, what are the disadvantages of working in a satellite location, or having you know, um, a satellite that's dislocated from the home center or separated physically

JV: Well, I think it's usually one person at a time

BM: Mm hmm. Right

JV: So, you don't have a mutual support or sharing there

BM: Right

JV: Um, perhaps it's nice for students to have a variety of writing consultants

BM: Mm hmm

JV: And, even if people are alternating in a, a the non-home satellite, it's still kind of that same (laughs)

BM: Right

JV: And, maybe, maybe the consultant, maybe we can get stuck (laughs)

BM: (laughs)

JV: in a rut a little bit

BM: Oh yeah, I had an experience, um, when I moved to Virginia, I met a, a somebody that came into the writing center, and she moved from Michigan as well

JV: Oh, yeah

BM: so, both of us kind of had that bond, you know

JV: yeah, right

BM: Um, we were both missing home. We had just moved there, but it, so she started coming to me. She just started her master's in communication, and she started coming to me every single week, and she got really overly dependent.

JV: Oh, sure

BM: And, she was coming to me for two years. And, it came to a point where I really didn't feel like I was doing anything anymore

JV: Yeah

BM: There was nothing else I could provide

JV: Right, mm hmm

BM: And she wouldn't go to anybody else. So, I do think that there's a danger in that, too.

JV: That's yeah.

BM: Yeah, and that's a, that danger is heighten when you're in a satellite potentially just because you often only have one or maybe two people in there

JV: Mm hmm

BM: Yeah. Cool. Um, mm okay so what kind of training, um did you receive to work in the writing center satellite

JV: (laughs)

BM: Ann laughed at that question, too (laughs)

JV: (laughing) Well, I, I'm a strong writer

BM: Mm hmm

JV: My master's is in literature not writing

BM: Mm hmm

JV: You know, somebody has to read what's written, right (laughs)

BM: (laughs)

JV: So, in some ways, I am not

BM: It stops recording when it sleeps. I have been trying to keep on top of that, but

JV: You know they have these little chicklets or something that you can put in

BM: Oh, really

JV: It's like the little, you know, thing

BM: Like a USB thing

JV: Yeah, I think it's called a jiggler

BM: Oh really?

JV: Uh huh

BM: I will have to look at that

JV: And, um, a, a, a person let me use his, but I also was looking it up, but I also think you can download something on the internet that puts it in ther

BM: Oh

JV: I'm not sure. You're much more tech savvy than I am, so (laughs)

BM: (laughs)

JV: Anyway, I thought, "Oh isn't that amazing, that's a great idea!"

BM: Yeah, that is a really good idea. I know I need it for this because every time it

JV: Sure, you have to

BM: I mean, I have this as a, you know

JV: Right

BM: Anyway

JV: It's nice. So, anyway, my background not being in, um, rhetoric / composition

BM: Mm hmm

JV: even though overall, I think I'm a strong writer, so I'm continually learning

BM: Mm hmm

JV: I think the professional development, uh, sessions we have is very important. Talking and listening to people. Reading, you know, I've read some things about it. You know, just being around people like, like you (laughs)

BM: Yeah

JV: learning, learning from that, so I perhaps don't have the vocabulary, the jargon

BM: Mm hmm. Well, you didn't, you probably do know

JV: I have it a little bit more know

BM: Yeah

JV: um, but I certainly am committed

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and I keep, I get excited about, you know, learning (laughs) about rhetoric and comp. And, it's a little bit, you know, of a newer kid on the block in terms of not rhetoric itself, but um how it's, how it's done now

BM: Right, right, exactly. Um, can you talk a little bit about the professional development. I mean, you know, I know, I know what we do there, but it would be nice to just kind of, um, you know, especially Cin, you know, it might have changed over the last there years since I've been gone, so can you talk just a little bit about that

JV: Sure. Well, Ann and Kim in particular, and then they sometimes consult with Cindy and I, for instance, we usually have weekly

BM: Mm hmm

JV: administrative meetings about what is need

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and what would work well, so um, a couple things that we often have would be someone coming from ESL

BM: mmm

JV: to talk about working with ESL or ELL learners

BM: So, you have people come in to talk about

JV: Yes

BM: what works best for them, potentially

JV: Uh, from, EMU

BM: Yeah

JV: a professor or someone who works with that population

BM: Oh, okay

JV: we've had a really nice video, I don't know if you've seen it, it's from Oregon state

BM: mm mm [no]

JV: I'm trying to remember the na. and it interviews students and faculty and their experiences with

BM: Oh cool

JV: uh

BM: I will have to look at that

JV: with um writing. Um, we'll talk about, I think this is always a fun one, reading strategies, reading with a purpose

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and so we're given a piece of reading that would be like totally something that wouldn't interest us (laughs)

BM: Right

JV: and then (laughs), how do we, how did we cope with that.

BM: Yeah

JV: What did we do to kind of, because of course, when you're working with writing, you're also working with reading

BM: Right

JV: Uh, we haven't maybe done this as recently, but the collaborative assessment

BM: Oh. Okay

JV: which is where, you know, you're basically looking at a piece of student writing and noticing what's there and it's just a different way to look at that piece of writing

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and sort of, what are the strengths, what's really happening here? What do you think the student's doing?

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BM: Do you ever, kind of, in professional development share your experiences in, I know that Jane and, and Susan don't often, well, I've heard that Susan does attend those more than

JV: Mm. Mm hmm

BM: other people, um, um but, do you share kind of like, "Well, oh, I ran into this genre," or "I", is there any kind of cross-pollination, in a sense of disciplinary um or genre tutoring practices

JV: Yeah. Informally …

BM: Mm hmm

JV: Um, which then might be shared in the group, but I don't know that that's been a focus.

BM: Yeah

JV: That might be a good thing to do

BM: Mm. Okay.

JV: where people from the, well and people have sometimes reported from the different satellites

BM: Yeah

JV: but, um, I'm trying to think if there's been that much focus on actual kinds of writing

BM: Right

JV: but, there, there could have been (laughs)

BM: yeah, yeah, yeah

JV: that sounds a little familiar

BM: Yeah, yeah. It, it almost seems like we did something like that when I was, when I was here, but that was a while ago

JV: Yeah. Uh, and the newsletter I think

BM: Yeah, I should have

JV: Jackie and Bryan I think tried to make that fun but also informative

BM: Yeah

JV: I often read that

BM: how long has that been um going

JV: I think this is the third year, it's either the third or the fourth year

BM: Okay. Maybe I will ask Bryan for some of those

JV: Sure

BM: Um, copies

JV: Yes, yes. And he's gone to, uh, all digital

BM: He has? Wow

JV: and, uh, so yeah, that's that's been good. Um, I think sometimes we've been assigned a reading or two

BM: Mm hmm

JV: To be prepared to talk about it in Friday meeting

BM: Mm hmm. Okay. And, that's, every other week

JV: Usually

BM: Usually, okay. Um, okay, so institutional structures. Who funds, well let's see. I guess who funds you with nursing?

JV: The school of nursing

BM: Okay. And then what about the college of education, were you, was the college of education, did they fund that, or?

JV: They did

BM: Okay. So, the College of Business is funding all three lines there

JV: Mm hmm

BM: Are there any satellites that aren't being funding by the college that …

JV: Um, Ann can, would know better

BM: I didn't think about that yesterday, but

JV: But, I think, I think Cindy and I believe Bryan and someone else, Jill Darling, maybe, are at CHHS

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and I believe that is funded through the dean of the college

BM: Okay

JV: I'm not sure with Pray-Harrold. I think perhaps Pray-Harrold is also sponsored

BM: Okay

JV: Um, so I think that, you know, that speaks well

BM: Mm hmm

JV: when the college is willing to support

BM: Yeah, absolutely

JV: On the other hand, it ain't that much money (laughs) so

BM: Right, so it's like, who's …

JV: (laughing) Right, I think you get a lot of buck for your …

BM: Yeah

JV: Whatever the phrase is

BM: The bang for your buck

JV: bang for your buck, yeah. Um,

BM: So, that's really interesting to think about that

JV: Mm hmm

BM: Like, okay, so we will fund you, but we're not going to um, you're not going on vacation anytime soon (laughs) you know

JV: (laughs)

BM: Um, but I guess that kind of talks, I think these kinds of issues are what I'm trying to get at with this question. Um, so how do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of writing center satellites. So, what kinds of things do you come up against, you know, the college of technology kind of ebbed and flowed.

JV: Mm hmm

BM: You know, the college of education, you know, what, did it, um, you didn't have a lot of students, or the college of education decided …

JV: They, um, Ann must have convinced them to fund the satellite there. The location was in the ground floor, down a faculty, so I would say location was a detriment. I mean, you could

BM: Location is a big thing

JV: You can advertise, you can

BM: Right

JV: But, especially maybe with newer students

BM: Mm hmm

JV: You know, are they going to go down that long hallway or are they going to go where they see it right next to the lounge or something

BM: Exactly

JV: So, I, I, I think you know, a structural question is just having a space because, at the college of business, you folks were (laughs)

BM: (laughs) we're still baffled by how that happened, but we're very grateful

JV: you, you were like treated like royalty, if you will

BM: I know

JV: I mean, that's great

BM: I know

JV: So, I, I do think that the physical location is

BM: Mm hmm, and I

JV: is important, and could be a detriment or a benefit

BM: Right, I guess, um, somebody had said, Jane told me this yesterday, somebody had uh a couple other ideas for what they might do for that space

JV: Oh

BM: And, apparently the dean was like, "Uh uh, nope"

JV: Right

BM: that's, that's, that's theirs

JV: designated

BM: that's what that is

JV: So, even though colleges are supporting a satellite

BM: Mm hmm

JV: the next, uh, important step is, I think the location

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and something that, you know, ideally can be consistent,

BM: right

JV: can be very visible

BM: right

JV: I mean, Beth has that a lot more over at um the science complex. Um, another drawback I would say was yeah, signage, maybe. I mean, I would put these bookmarks out in the lounge

BM: Mm hmm

JV: I would try to have some you know, posters, again, you have to get permission to put up everything

BM: right

JV: So, the signage is, you know, (laughs) smacked on the board with 50 other things overlapping it by then

BM: Right

JV: Put my up on top again (laughs)

BM: (laughs)

JV: But, you know, even have an arrow pointing this way or something

BM: Mm hmm

JV: um, the first semester they wanted me to have later hours, so like I think I stayed until 7:30 or 8, but really did not bring in any master's students

BM: Mm hmm. Right

JV: Uh, so, again, scheduling hours, opportunity and if a person is also teaching other things, they have that schedule to consider, so

BM: Right

JV: So, it's, it's hard to mesh (laughs)

BM: Right, connecting everything, right

JV: Uh, I tried to probably could have done a better job of this, but I did try to go around to faculty offices just one by one to say, "Hi, I'm so-and-so,"

BM: Yeah, right

JV: and, you know, here's a bookmark

BM: Right

JV: or you know. Um they did, I'm trying to think, I did come to a faculty meeting or two

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and just gave a little schpeal

BM: Mm hmm

JV: at the beginning of the semester, again trying to make that face-to-face,

BM: Right

JV: I'm here, love to work with your students, kind of approach

BM: Right

JV: Um, also at that time in the college of education, things were starting to have some stressors

BM: Yeah

JV: so, um, you know, in that sense, a little writing satellite isn't very important

BM: Right

JV: on their list

BM: Right

JV: on their agenda

BM: Right

JV: but I did find faculty, the ones, many of them, you know, were interested, some of them would suggest students come, so

BM: Mm hmm

JV: It maybe could have built but uh

BM: yeah, so

JV: it didn't seem like the right time

BM: it's, it, kind of, you know, all the stars have to align it seems like with these satellites, um, you know the college of business is in a better state than some of the other ones

JV: I know

BM: because they have lots of money (laughs)

JV: and now you've built years of, of this program there

BM: Right, it's been I think almost five now

JV: Wow

BM: and, um, this was, apparently the fall from the last winter to this fall semester was the first um time that it didn't, like, the clientele didn't like double since the previous

JV: Wow

BM: and so they have you know, but that location, I mean I think there are a couple things with that. One is the location is just so in your face

JV: Mm hmm

BM: um, you have to walk past it to walk into the building for the most part. But, also, um, Jane and Susan are both in there along with Thomas, and Jane and Susan encourage their students to

come in, so, I think they've seen a rise in the sense that most of their students are utilizing the space as well

JV: Yes

BM: which is good

JV: right, right

BM: Um, but so I think there are, um, so they're faculty, and that's the only satellite that has that college's faculty as as staff

JV: Very important

BM: So, so that's interesting, too. We talked a little bit about that yesterday

JV: so, so that is what Cindy, um, she works in the satellite, and she's also teaching social work classes

BM: Oh, okay, okay

JV: so, that's a strong knitted relationship there

BM: I guess I didn't realize that. Maybe I did

JV: There's um, there's hope that there will be a full time lecturer position out of the school of nursing for a writing consulting, person to do workshops that kind of thing, and teach classes, so

BM: Okay

JV: maybe that's, that's in the stars

BM: yeah, okay. Interesting. And so that would kind of, um, look like maybe you would have one course release for doing workshops, you would teach maybe two, and then would you do, would that, would there be any one-on-one consulting built into it

JV: I think that, there would be that too, yeah

BM: Interesting. That'd be kinda cool. Um,

JV: And there's, you know, there's always the politics of who gets the credit hours

BM: Right

JV: and whose, right, so

BM: So, can you talk about that a little bit more. Because I know nothing about that stuff

JV: Well, I, I don't know all the ins and outs so I can just kind of give what I think happens is that the writing center has been in the provost's office, well, originally it was out of English I believe

BM: Mm hmm

JV: and then it was out of the provost's office, which gave some flexibility. So, yeah, that's a huge question about where do you house the writing center?

BM: Right

JV: Because even if it's a university entity

BM: Mm hmm

JV: um, (laughs)

BM: Right, and that line is less fuzzy when there are satellites in disciplines

JV: Right

BM: but, still, you still have this home center

JV: yeah

BM: That needs to exists for the satellites to exist

JV: and because so many people (Hi Randy) in the writing center are teaching first-year writing often

BM: Mm hmm

JV: or are, uh, graduate students in

BM: Written comm

JV: English or kind of that, it, it kinds a little more entangled (laughs)

BM: Right

JV: Um, but I think there's sort of a competition for the credit hours, or who gets, you know, so if I'm teaching in the school of nursing

BM: Mm hmm

JV: even though maybe my home base is English, they're having to kind of release me to go to that

BM: Right

JV: At the same time, I wonder, and you probably know more about this, is, is there a trend for more hybridity where we don't have to just you know hunker into our own bunker

BM: Right

JV: Um, you know, we, we see that with, you know, you might take a Jewish studies class for history or for literature, you know, we have that kind of thing, but I don't, I don't know how much give there can be, but it seems like a writing center could make a case for

BM: Yeah

JV: being much more campus-wide

BM: Mm that's a really interesting question about the hybridity. You know, you're hired into the English department, you do English department things, but then, that gets really fuzzy

JV: So, I am not teaching in the English department, I don't have a mailbox there, I don't have a mailbox anywhere, but they create my PAVs, my contract-y things

BM: yeah

JV: for the writing center

BM: Okay

JV: for, um, yeah, so whatever I'm doing specifically the writing center, they, they create that

BM: mm

JV: account line whereas, if I'm teaching a nursing class, the school of nursing does it

BM: Okay

JV: and get this, the school of nursing somehow has figured out how to do it electronically

BM: (laughs)

JV: All you have to do is go in and put that little "X" there

BM: That's crazy! (Laughs)

JV: English department, I have to go in and sign on the dotted line and then say, "Would you please make me a copy," because I don't have a copy

BM: Right

JV: That makes it even worse

BM: Right

JV: I'm like, welcome to 2016

BM: Wow. That's interesting

JV: 2016

BM: Yeah

JV: Anyways so just kind of those logistic things are also

BM: Right, exactly. So, those are the, like I said, those are the kinds of things that I'm interested to kind of poke at. I mean, you know, it seems all flowery and daisy to have a, you know

JV: (laughs) yeah

BM: a satellite in the college of business because it's two miles off campus, it makes a lot of sense. But when you really look at it under a microscope, things aren't

JV: Mm hmm

BM: you know

JV: Mm mmm

BM: that clear cut. The boundaries are very fuzzy

JV: Yeah

BM: And so you know, and so I want to know why, and that's I guess some of the questions that I've been trying to, trying to ask, so

JV: I'm sure a lot of it has to do with the who's the dean

BM: Yup

JV: Who's the director, who's

BM: Yup

JV: this or that

BM: Yup

JV: um, and uh, (laughs)

BM: yeah

JV: that will always probably be there

BM: and it will always change

JV: and it will always change

BM: which is a problem too, because I remember we had first established that center in the college of business when David Milke was there who was a huge advocate of the writing center

JV: Uh huh

BM: but we were unsure when Michael Tidwell came in, if he was going to be in support of it, too, so you're like, "Well, we're here, but we might not be"

JV: Mm hmm

BM: and it could happen just that quickly, so, and, you know, if, if that change ha, depending on when that change happens, I think that now, if there were somebody, a new Dean coming in or in two years or whatever, I think that, you know, I think the writing center's a lot more established there

JV: Yes

BM: I think that it would be hard to pull them out

JV: Right, mm hmm

BM: or pull them apart

JV: Mm hmm

BM: Um, but when, when Michael Tidwell came in it could very easily been shut before it even started

JV: Mm hmm

BM: Yeah, that's interesting, timing. I mean, seriously, like the stars all have to align

JV: Yeah, and there's a way in which the writing center is a fabulous concept, a wonderful idea

BM: Right

JV: I mean, who could be against a writing center

BM: Right (laughs)

JV: (laughs)

BM: Right

JV: and yet, unless it's sort of has made its own settling in

BM: Right

JV: and established itself, it is easy to kind of push it aside

BM: Hm, I wonder if that's why it's still kind of, I mean, I've been really immersed in the literature

JV: Mm hmm

BM: in writing center theory and that kind of thing, um, for, for well a long time, really, specifically months, and you know, it's, it's just also so, you know, this tumultuous, this difficult relationship that it has within the university and the institution, but also it feels like to me that we're working from a deficit model

JV: Yes

BM: So, everybody always writes about writing center work, but it's always, "Well, we're on the margins," or

JV: right

BM: you know, devalues us, and I wonder if it's because it's, um, not really, um, really kind of connected in there, like a satellite center is really

JV: Uh huh

BM: They've settled in

JV: Uh huh, embedded into

BM: Right, we don't really have a place to be embedded

JV: Mm hmm

BM: and, so maybe that's part of the reason that we're having such a difficult time. I mean, I don't think everybody's having a difficult time

JV: Right

BM: but, certainly WAC programs are having a very difficult time

JV: Yes, yup, and, um, just the whole idea of, of associating the writing center with remedial

BM: exactly

JV: writing, as opposed to developing writers moving towards expert writers, um, it kind of has to hold all that, but it's much easier if you see a problem that maybe it could solve (laughs)

BM: Right

JV: rather than something that's a little, I don't know, less easy to measure

BM: Right. Well, and that's interesting, so the difference between, maybe I should turn the recorder off (laughs)

JV: Well, you don't have to write it down (laughs)

BM: Yeah, I guess you're right, strike this from the record, okay, Becky, I will. Um, the interesting part, is, you know, between talking with Jane, and then talking with Thomas, you know, Thomas is a writing center person and the way he talks about writing that's a social activity, versus the way Jane talks about it as, um, you know, she even said, "remedial"

JV: Oh, sure

BM: at one point, and I'm not contextualizing it

JV: Yeah

BM: very well, but it is interesting that that narrative is still parallel, there's not a lot of intersection there still, and so, and that's something that has been kind of tugging on me since I've been writing on it with my um with my lit review, and you know, it seems like with these kinds of situations with the satellite centers, faculty would be more bought in

JV: Yeah

BM: They would start to see the value

JV: Right

BM: but somehow, that's not really happening

JV: Mm hmm

BM: Um, I mean, it seems to be happening in nursing, um, but it doesn't seem to be happening in the college of business, so, that's something I'm interested in, too. Anyways, that was

JV: and who knows if it's as much as breaking the attitude

BM: Mm hmm

JV: as the, to see that there are changes and

BM: Right

JV: improvements, if you will rather than always coming with that assumption and then not seeing anything different

BM: Right, and how do you show that to people

JV: Mm hmm

BM: You know, that's the tricky part about writing center, and Thomas said this yesterday, it's a, writing is invisible, really

JV: You're right

BM: you know, the process, you can't see, you can't measure

JV: Mm hmm

BM: you can't show somebody, um, just because a student in the college of business went to the writing center and had their memo proofread

JV: Mm hmm

BM: doesn't mean that they're, you know

JV: Yeah

BM: You know? I don't know. Anyway, these

JV: Right. That's what makes it exciting and frustrating.

BM: It drives me crazy. I know, yesterday, I was like, "Oh know I have more questions than I came with" (laughs)

JV: (laughs)

BM: but, I guess that's good. Um, okay, so just one last question. What other kinds of institutional and administrative issues emerge when developing a writing center satellite. Anything else that you can think of

JV: Um, well maybe the staffing of it

BM: Mm hmm

JV: I think, you know, we talked about sort of the financial, the you know, kind of support, um, the location, but probably the staffing is also going to make a difference, because just because you have it there

BM: Right, just because just you build it doesn't necessarily meant that they'll come (laughs)

JV: (laughs) that's right, and so you and, and Jane, and uh, Susan, I think really

BM: Mm hmm

JV: got into it, if you will

BM: Mm hmm

JV: you know, it, it mattered, it counted. So, I think that's, that's important

BM: Mm hmm. I think it was helpful for me to have a faculty, you know, I, to have a faculty member, I felt especially since I was a student of that college of business

JV: Sure

BM: Um, you know, I'm like, "Hey guys, I'm back."

JV: (laughs)

BM: You know, and they're like, "Who cares?"

JV: (laughs)

BM: And, so it was nice to have a faculty member

JV: Uh huh

BM: to be you know, that, um, made us seem more credible, I think, at the time

JV: Yeah, yeah

BM: Yeah, okay, I'm not going to keep you any longer

JV: Okay

BM: because it's already 11

JV: Okay

BM: Um, so, anything else you want to add or

JV: I think it's really exciting, Becky

BM: Oh, thanks

JV: I look forward to see what you're going to uncover (laughs)

BM: Aw, thanks. Thank you very much for taking the time to do this

JV: You're welcome. Thank you

BM: I really enjoyed talking to you

JV: Asking was nice. It was great to see you and catch up with this

BM: Oh my gosh, of course. Okay, I'm going to stop. Thank you so much, I really appreciate it.

JV: So, you're looking at …

January 11, 2016

Me: So, here's your copy. And, here's a list of the, um, questions, they're not hard questions I mean, I kind of like to, well, I mean, I really don't mind if we deviate from these but these are my three questions – the three different sections.

Ann: Okay

Me: So, um, I'm interested to knowing the exigence of the writing support centers or the satellite centers.

Ann: Mm-hmm

Me: I want to know about how people are trained to tutor in those spaces and then, um, what kind of like institutional structures uh help or hinder the making of those, so … Um, okay, so, since you are the director, um, I can't ask you the specific, "What is the writing center satellite in your discipline created?" but can you speak a little bit to why like the college of business satellite was created and the CHHS and ….

Ann: Um

Me: … all of those

Ann: Okay, so, um, I think, and I'll answer honestly, that when I became director, because I've done WAC and because my own interests lie in writing in the disciplines that I saw a lot of value and also a need for um more discipline specific and targeting writing support. And, that pre-dated me in the sense that we had the collaboration with biology with Linda Adler-Kassner set up but that was the only real disciplinary, um, piece or aspect of what we were doing at the time. And, so, it just seemed natural to me that we kind of reach out to different disciplines and find out what their particular, and their needs differ, and then you know, we all know this, the genres differ, the conventions differ, um the student differ and so, um, that's kind of what spurred us on and we quickly discovered there was need and and you know, now we have something quite complex and nuanced and sophisticated, I think, in terms, about how we are going about meeting those needs but there's still a lot more to be done to …

Me: yeah, so can you speak a little bit to why it's important to have a discipline, well, discipline-specific satellite centers, [sic], um, about why it's important to have a writing center in a specific college so that you can tailor the tutoring practices potentially to the students there and their discipline and their genres

Ann: I think there's a couple things. One, is generic. It's not as maybe discipline-specific, but it has to do with going out to where the students are.

Me: Um

Ann: Instead of asking them always to come to us and, and you know, that can work fine, and certainly they do, but to go out, um, to them, I think, is, um, really valuable and worthwhile too because it, you know, not that we have to make everything easy for everybody, but it just, it's convenience. But, on the other level … and, we are taking, we … tell me your question again

Me: Um, the value we have of having a discipline-specific satellite center in terms of genre, I guess

Ann: So, you know, I use Nursing as an example. When we, in the early days, when I had just started to take on this role, we were seeing a lot of nursing students.

Me: Um hm

Ann: I was hearing things in consultants that, quite frankly, baffled me, you know, I couldn't figure out why APA was, you know, students were um terrified of it, they were missing the forest through the trees and they were more concerned about that than they were concerned about content and so you know the light bulb went on one day and I thought, "well there's more to this, and I need to be talking to the nursing faculty about why this is the case and what they're doing in their classes." And, that's when that whole process of collecting their syllabi and looking at their assignments and all the different things that we did with them really took off. And, I think that, um, the the piece about therefore having tutors who understand those things and having a couple of tutors, it's impossible to train every tutor in every …

Me: Right

Ann: discipline to that level, but to have at least, because we can all be generalists, and there's real value in that and there's a lot in the literature that speaks to that but I think there's also real value in having some specialization and having a core group or small number who can speak to the needs of the students of those particular disciplines. So, Beth, for example, has really cultivated an understanding of what the students over at the sciences are doing and so she can really address and meet their needs in very particular ways. In ways that can't always be met if they come over here.

Me: I'm interviewing her tomorrow, so it will be good to kind of …

Ann: yes

Me: Ask her about what she's learned and especially what she does different there than she does here in the like the "home" center

Ann: Right. Yeah.

Me: Yeah. Oaky, and then so how do you find, well, I guess I'm gonna skip a little bit … well, how would you say that you tutor those, or how you train those tutors to go into discipline-specific

Ann: You know, that's a good question. Um, partly it's a matter of who I've chosen [missing tape] cause I think I always work to, and you know this, select people that have an aptitude (?) already in those various [missing tape / unclear approx.. 5:00] So, you came and you had an undergraduate degree in business. Beth doesn't have a science degree, but she has a mind that works like that

Me: Right

Ann: She is, was, easy to sort of a quick study in terms of … so partly the training is of their own volition. They, some of them, like Beth, do their own training.

Me: Mm hm

Ann: They go and figure it out, but they're at a level where they can do that

Me: Right

Ann: Um, and similarly, people like Joy and Amy have figured out Nursing over the years as much as I have, um, so you know, it's more the … it's it's, I, I would say, for me, to them, it's a little less formal and structured and and it's, you know, kind of launching them and providing them with the resources and the connections to do it themselves. That sounds a little … I don't know if that sounds bad at all [can't understand] Like, I'm just throwing them to the wolves, but I don't think that's really what happens at all.

Me: Well, I think, I think that there's no way, just kind of in first-year writing, there's no way that we can possibly teach every student every genre that they're ever going to write and there's no way that you could know every single discipline in the college

Ann: Well, and there's a lot of immersion that goes on here. It's like learning a language, you get immersed …

Me: Yeah

Ann: … in the culture of the discipline. We collect artifacts, we talk to people, relationships are critical, you know this …

Me: Yeah

Ann: Um, interactions are critical. We, in certain cases, have lots, well really, overall, have a lot, we've had meetings with the sciences on a pretty regular basis. We've had both all together and individually, so we've met, you know, with Psychology by themselves, we've met with Biology by themselves, but then we've, you know, met with all the departments of all the sciences, so, you know, we're constantly sort of engaged in this process of learning the ropes and figuring out the disciplines and keeping up with it because it's constantly changing. So …

Me: And, how do you feel faculty in different disciplines feel about you

Ann: You know, positive, but that's the WAC connection, too. So, I think there, you know, I think this is what a lot of people … it's easy to miss this. Um, because there's a lot of pieces that have to work together

Me: Right

Ann: And, you don't always, from the outside, I'm sure, you can't imagine what all those pieces are but because I built and cultivate … Now, I'm always mindful of all the other things I need to do and all the other connections I need to make and while we are talking, I am sitting here stressing over some changes we're making CHHS and how to make sure those changes, you know, get implemented properly and successfully. So, it's never ending.

Me: Yeah.

Ann: And, it's stressful, but you work with your connections and the relationships you have

Me: And then you also to trust the people that are in those satellites …

Ann: Right

Me: Like Beth and …

Ann: And, we've had some that have not worked out, and we are aware of that and so when that happens, I have to make adjustments

Me: Right. So, it's really, it's not, I mean, there's just so many different layers, it's critical that you're reaching out making connections and you're able to do that through WAC …essentially

Ann: Mm hm

Me: but you're also doing that, not through WAC, um, and then the people that you put in there are critical because they have a background or you feel comfortable, kind of, you know, letting them immerse themselves and learning themselves. And those people then have to make connections, too. And, like, in the college of business, with Jane, that partnership for me was really critical as well because she was kind of my in to the faculty

Ann: Right

Me: Um, and that worked out quite well for …

Ann: Right, exactly

Me: Um, okay so I'm just going to go through some of these questions and you've answered them then, you know, um, so why would a writing center satellite or a writing support space be created for specific disciplines as opposed to, or an extension of, the home writing center? You kind of spoke a bit about that with physicality, I think, convenience. But, is there anything else you'd like to add?

Ann: Well, physicality and convenience and also that ability to specialize a little bit more and to give those students a place to go where they feel like the person or persons with whom they are interacting know something about their assignments in their discipline, perhaps, um, in sophisticated ways than they would get over here.

Me: So, how do you think, and this is actually off script, but because I have been working on my lit review, how do you think that the literature in writing center studies is lining up with that view?

Ann: You know, I wish I could say better because, you know, I, the lit I read is so broad based in so many different areas, so and I don't read the, I'm not focused as much on the writing center lit, so I'd be interested in what you find out

Me: Yeah, that is kind of my job

Ann: It's interesting with the candidate last night, out job candidate, and she said that they were trying to start a WAC where she's at, and the provost ultimately wouldn't fund it and she said she sent out this email, and I don't ... I don't subscribe to every listserv, I'm just too overwhelmed, and …

Me: Yeah

Ann: And, um, she said a lot of the people wrote her off-list that WAC is going away and I'm like, "Okay, that's kind of interesting," you know, I don't have that perception and then I see it's you know, real value, and oh my gosh, I would never want it to go away because I think it's such a critical professional development piece for faculty

Me: Yeah

Ann: You know, so …

Me: I think the literature that I've read about WAC and WID is that it's really hard to sustain. I mean, I think that EMU is a really unique …

Ann: yeah, I know. I think we get no credit for this. But, yes, we have done so well in this area …

Me: yeah

Ann: We have been brilliant in this area and in fact … your tape is on nevermind (laughs)

Me: Do you want me to pause it? (laughs) Well, so how long has WAC, your WAC …

Ann: Since 2000

Me: So, 15 years and it's going strong, and like, increasingly every year, you've had more and more …

Ann: Exactly, so …

Me: … people

Ann: .. the strength is increasing and not diminishing

Me: And, you're funded through … how, how are you funded through WAC, for WAC

Ann: Well, partly through the provost's office, but I go out and get, I, like I do with everything else, I find money under rocks

Me: You're a genie

Ann: Yeah, I rub two sticks together and poof, dollar bills

Me: Next time rent comes around, I mean, I'll come to you

Ann: What?

Me: Next time rent comes due, I'm going to come to you (laughs)

Ann: (laughs)

Me: Um, okay, so what might the writing satellite provide to students that the "home" center does not. I think you've kind of already answered that

Ann: Yeah

Me: Um, what might, so I'm gonna shift perspectives …

Ann: Wait, can I just go back to that for …

Me: Yeah

Ann: I think, for me, the best examples of that are probably business and science. So …

Me: Okay

Ann: You know, I don't always agree with what goes on in COB, but that's the nature of that beast. But, that said, they really are focused on that population and those particular [missing word] and they know them and they them well. Now, I still think they focus way too much on LOCs [missing words] and that's my perspective …

Me: Right

Ann: but it is what it is. They're still getting the business flavor of things, um, more so than I think they would get here. But, the big example for me is the sciences because I am very very convinced [missing word] it's the nature of the beast in terms of the intricacy of the kind of writing they're doing and that is of evidence in everything else and at the different layers and levels. Beth has been just instrumental in helping us do this and they come here and I think probably two-thirds if not more, three-quarters, of our consultants look at those papers and just have no clue where to begin

Me: Yeah

Ann: Not that they can't give some writing assistance, but they often don't understand the whole passive voice, active voice, all the different nuances of that type of writing

Me: Right

Ann: So …

Me: So, can we talk a little bit about the LOCs and um HOCs in the College of Business, cause that's something that I'm struggling with in my literature, is that often when I read um, "Oh, we need to integrate writing courses into business, engineering, um, whatever, science, you know, fill in the blank here, it's because they, they fully separate form and content, it's seems to me from the very small window I've been looking through. Um, so can you tell me the, you know, the kind of affordances and implications of what's, so what's happening in the college of business is that, really, they're focusing more on line editing, it seems. Um, than they are really content.

Ann: Right. And, that's a problem.

Me: And, that's something that I noticed when I was over there, so it could have changed in the last …

Ann: I doubt it

Me: … couple of years

Ann: No. In fact, the person over there now, who knows writing center work – I love him, he's so funny, he comes into my office and says, "It's interesting …"

Me: (laughs) Is that Thomas?

Ann: yeah

Me: Okay, Jane suggested that I interview him

Ann: yeah

Me: So, I'm going to try and get a hold of him this afternoon

Ann: Absolutely try to get a hold of him

Me: Yeah, I'm going to try and get a hold of him this afternoon

Ann: Yeah, and you know, and that's, there in the lies one challenge in this type of work, okay, because if you don't have total, I'm going to say this very bluntly. If you don't total control …

Me: Yeah

Ann: … and not, it's not about control for me, but you know what I mean, I think you know what I mean by that …

Me: Right

Ann: … so, they picked the wrong people and, technically, any of the disciplines could do that, but they defer to me, every other one, but business is its own beast. You know, and I, at the end of the day, am I happy? No. Uh, would I like it to be different? Absolutely. Am I gonna try to change it. Hm mm (no) because they're paying for it …

Me: Right

Ann: Which is what matters to me on a lot of levels for a lot of reasons and they are happy with it

Me: Are they paying for Thomas as well

Ann: Hm mm (yes)

Me: And Jane and Susan

Ann: Yes, so not a dime of it is coming out of my … so, I mean, that's a liability, too, so when …

Me: Yeah

Ann: Jim, Jim Carroll tried to dismantle us in December, he can look at that and say, "They can keep that going" …

Me: Right

Ann: You know, so that has all kinds of …

Me: Right

Ann: Ups and downs

Me: Um, so what would you change if you could

Ann: Um, about that?

Me: About the college of business and they way the tutoring happens

Ann: Have, um, a coordinator at that site who is one of us, who is trained like we are and who could exert [not understood] they don't participate, you know this, they don't participate in professional development

Me: Right

Ann: to a great extent. They're just not involved, so, and I hate that for [] too. If you're going to have this sort of operation, everybody has to be on the same page. They're not. I can't change that.

Me: Right. Yeah. That's interesting. Okay, so what can, then, the home center, provide that the writing center satellite can't? Maybe this is a good example to talk about students in the college of business …

Ann: Yeah

Me: What might they get here that they wouldn't get there

Ann: The content, and I still think, that, you know, we have a level of training and professional development, that any student, regardless of discipline, um, comes in, will have, hopefully, ideally, a good experience, so, I think that even though, you know, grad student can go to Beth or Joy now, or um, a CHHS student can go to um, Cindy, or Jill Darling, it's um, they can still come here and um, and get a good experience, so ….

Me: Yeah

Ann: You know, I always joke that we're like a McDonald's. I hate McDonald's …

Me: (laughs)

Ann: But, they are … or maybe I'll make it, like Starbucks.

Me: Okay

Ann: [can't understand name], his claim now is, he eats terrible things at Starbucks, and um, but his claim is, no matter, cause, he he travels internationally a lot, no matter where he goes to a Starbucks, he gets …

Me: the same snowman cookie

Ann: Exactly. The exact same snowman cookie. So, that snowman cookie because important in this kind of metaphor

Me: Hm mm

Ann: That we, you know, yes, it varies from consultant to consultant but generally, you're getting the same snowman cookie

Me: So, that's interesting. If we kind of use that sort of metaphor …

Ann: (laughs)

Me: … because they offer, you know, so we have the same snowman cookie in every cookie and every satellite, but we also sell, um, city specific mugs

Ann: Exactly. Perfect. Yes. Exactly.

Me: Yeah. That's also important because, you know, cause there's a slice of the city that you want to take home with you

Ann: Right. Exactly. Exactly. Yes. Yes.

Me: Yeah, that's interesting. Okay, um …

Ann: And, we've never studied it, you could, technically, what a nightmare study this would be …

Me: (laughs)

Ann: … you could you know, study and get feedback from students on their experiences in the different locations

Me: That… originally what I wanted to do was do a bunch of observations with students but, then, you know, I mean, I don't have 100 years to write this thing, so … trying to narrow it as much as I can. Okay so tutoring practices in writing center satellites. Uh, what are some of the typical genres of writing students need help with when they seek writing support at this location? Or…

Ann: Which one?

Me: Yeah … this is kind of different, so how about nursing?

Ann: Everything, I mean, the opinion papers, the position papers, the lit reviews, the um, um, [missing?] and that would be better off the people that work with them but um, oh my gosh, some sort of care plan. They do a lot of reflective writing, they rbing that in nursing. Um …

Me: Joy and Amy are working in Nursing now, right?

Ann: Mm hm (yes)

Me: I might try to get a hold of one of them, too. Um, so, do you find that the practice of tutoring changes based on discipline?

Ann: I, oh, absolutely think so … that ….

Me: How so?

Ann: That would be really good to ask the different satellite people, um, and then, I'm trying to think if there's anyone who's worked in multiple, well Beth, certainly has worked in multiple. Um, I'm trying to think, Cindy to some extent, um, yeah, you know, because I think, I see a lot of differences in how Beth approaches her work with the science students …

Me: Mm hm

Ann: You know, Amy, I think, too, there's an ethos and persona that goes with certain students …

Me: Hm mmm

Ann: you know, I will use Amy and the nursing students as an example because she works, for example, in Jackson, a lot and she works with the Rn BSN students out there and those are, for the most part, non-traditional, and I think there's this level of caring and attention and connection and relationship building that she performs in addition to the tutoring, so there's a real soft side …

Me: Yeah

Ann: … to what she does as a tutor

Me: yeah

Ann: I doubt that's as much prevalent as much with what Beth does with the Science students

---- striken from the record -----

Ann: I mean, I think there's a lot that's the same that I think there's some things that are probably different

Me: But, then also, I mean, if Susan and Jane were to be soft in a kind of like nurturing sense, maybe those students really wouldn't …

Ann: Want that or respond to that

Me: So, it's kind of the same thing

Ann: They bring that Business persona

Me: Right

Ann: to it

Me: And, you have to, to have that credibility.

Ann: yeah.

Me: Um, hm, well, what, what kinds of practices, do your tutors engage in that's different from the tutoring in the "home" writing center

Ann: Oh, that's a hard question. I mean, I think, I think overall, the approach is, you know, they're gonna sit down in just the same way that we sit down

Me: Mm hm

Ann: Um, so that's a difficult question to answer, I, I , again, I think that just may have to do with that it would be the case here, when you sit down with a student who comes and is just brainstorming or have a topic that doesn't have a, anything written yet, you take a certain approach. When a student comes in with a personal piece, you take a certain approach. When a non-native speaker comes in, is having a lot of language challenges, you take particular approach, so …

Me: Yeah

Ann: I think every tutor, regardless of where they're at has to be pretty flexible and fluid

Me: Mm hm

Ann: And, responding to whatever it is a student brings with them and I think that's, that crosses sites. Um, but, that said, you know, obviously, within the sites, they're seeing a prevalence of certain types of genres and certain types of writing and types of assignments so, they're you know, they may develop particular responses and approaches to consulting with those. Plus, presumably, they develop relationships with students so …

Me: right

Ann: … they're seeing maybe a student much more frequently and they get to know that student, get to know their approach and so they know how to respond and work and consult with that particular student, so it becomes a little bit more personalized, maybe

Me: right, yeah

Ann: [can't understand] (laughs)

Me: No, that's okay. I think, you know, a lot of these are too for, you know, like Beth, and you know, like people that are, you know, neck deep in 'em, too. Um, okay, so what are the advantages and implications to writing support located in a specific discipline?

Ann: I think we've talked about that just that it is more, the student can know that "Oh, this person has some familiarity with what I'm going through with what my class is like, with my assignment is," you know, if it's an OT assignment, the ones that Jane and Sharon Holt do, they've seen that assignment, they've seen other students responses to those, so they have a feel for what this is about, what the requirements are. Similarity with social work, since I work with a lot of social work students, I know those assignments pretty well …

Me: yeah.

Ann: … and, what, I know the professors, and I know the professor's expectations for the assignments …

Me: Right. And, how important is that to know the assignment well, and to know the professor's expectations

Ann: I mean, it's, it's, it's an advantage and a drawback, too. Sometimes, it's good not to, you know, when a consultant doesn't know, because they might raise some issues that, frankly, I'm, you know, blinded or another consultant is blinded to because they do know it so well.

Me: Yeah

Ann: And, um, um, you know that can also stifle students' creativity in that response to, if you're driven by, "Oh, I know," you know [professor], "wants this, this, and this," so, you know, I'm kind of guiding the student to provide this, this, and this,

Me: Right

Ann: But, who knows? Maybe left to their own devices, they would have done something a little different that would have been just as acceptable and successful

Me: Yeah

Ann: So … a little more authentic to them

Me: Right. Um, we are, I already asked you about how you train your tutors. Okay, so, institutional structures. Um, who funds the writing center satellites?

Ann: [cannot understand] uh, for the most part, the colleges.

Me: The specific colleges that the satellite's in

Ann: Right. And, you know, every university is structured differently, but for us, that works. So, yes, so CAS supports Pray-Harrold, not entirely, we provide some support over there, obviously, too. COB supports COB. CHHS supports CHHS. CAS also supports Science Success, grad school supports … So, that's the model I developed and it worked because the provost's office, although they claim it's all the same pile of money, they're different orgs, so I don't know how they claim that ..

Me: College of business's pot is not the same as CAS's pot (laughs)

Ann: (laughs) Yeah, exactly

Me: I don't care who says that. That is not the same pot. Their pot is much deeper than ours. Much. Um, how do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of writing center satellites?

Ann: How do institutional structures? I, I, I would say it's kind of critical because if there wasn't the sort of support and willingness on the parts of the colleges to support this, then they could easily, you know, I mean, that was my trepidation with these new deans coming in from outside was how do you kind of build that relationship …

Me: Right

Ann: … and it's very easy and what's-his-face, um, [can't understand] had done this on occasion. For them to say, "Why should I pay for this?" You know, "The university should pay for this." And, of course the university is not going to pay for this, so it's a kind of smoke and mirrors sometimes and it takes some negotiation, so when, well, it's till in the case, I don't know how much we talked about this, but when the whole thing with threat was threatened this December by Jim Carroll, I reached out to the Deans, of course, because that's who I have solid relationships with, who were horrified, who went whomever, I don't … I never even heard who they went to, I just heard they went somewhere, um, to you know, object to this, but then I met with Tom Venner, Dean of CAS who said, you know, "I am going to do everything I can, and we would be happy to have the writing center in the College of Arts and Sciences." Which has me know thinking, "Hmm … maybe that's something I want to do to get it out of there because that's just not a friendly place … it's kind of like being in Afghanistan … and maybe I want …

Me: (laughs) that's a really not friendly place

Ann: (laughs) … maybe I want to move somewhere else

Me: Like Switzerland

Ann: Somewhere where we won't get picked off by a sniper on the street (laughs)

Me: (laughs) Stay out of Russia … So, why do you think it is that there are, I mean, okay, so in my mind, I think that these are tensions because, um, writing center work isn't valued. Uh, in, in a certain respect

Ann: Yeah

Me: How do you, what's your kind of take on that?

Ann: Yeah. I think that you know, we're fortunate in that the Deans do value it, and they seem to understand the current batch, except these two that I don't know, um, that their students need these. So, Morrelli said to me not all that long again, "You know, I never say this enough to you, but I so appreciate everything you guys do for our students." They know that for their students and their success in the world that this is critical component and that we, we bring something to the table for that, and that we bring something that they can't themselves, necessarily offer or provide. So, I think that's critical. But, you know, you have … it's complicated, but you have a provost's office with two people in charge now who have never done WAC, who really don't see the value in it …

Me: Right

Ann: Who feel like you either can write or you can't. They don't believe necessarily there's no …

Me: In between

Ann: … teaching of writing, who believe, you know, who have a deficit model belief, view of students, that students can't, students can't, students are stupid, students are stupid, and you know, unfortunately, those people still exist in higher ed and then if they are running the show, then you've got a challenge. And, we have a challenge in that.

Me: Can you talk a little bit more, you, um, this is something I've also been encountering in the literature is the success in the world piece. How can you, how does the writing center help and, um, so, I think transitioning assumes something, so I don't necessarily want to say that, but how do you think that it potentially better prepares students than, um, than maybe their discipline would?

Ann: I think it, it enhances what their discipline provides because, you know, they're discipline faculty and we encounter this and know this from WAC are engaged in the task of, of um, of helping them learn the discipline become, you know, participators and then contributors to ideally, some of them feel that they are just imparting the wisdom and knowledge of the discipline, however, whatever, but I think that, you know, writing is such a ….

Me: Here you go, here's the silver platter (laughs)

Ann: (laughs) … writing is just a generative, you know, and creative process and, uh epistemic process, that um, it's, it's germaine to being able to think and act you know, well. And, it's funny because you know, so I have a donor right now, he gets this, big time. And, he's a business leader, and, and other things … he's extremely wealthy. Um, and, so he pulled a couple regents

he knew, because he sits on a million boards in this area and he said, "Let's go have lunch with the regents." And, I'm like, "Uh … okay …" (laughs) …

Me: … If I have to (laughs)

Ann: But, that's critical because they actually get that piece. They get that piece really well. They're like, "yeah," because for them, number one is sending graduates of EMU out into the world …

Me: Right

Ann: and making sure they are successful because that's what reflects back on them

Me: Right

Ann: And, I'm contributing to that. We're contributing to that

Me: Right

Ann: So, that is meaningful to them. So, they were pissed, and they went back to all these other people and said, "What the hell," you know? You're going to shut down the writing center? That's pretty stupid (laughs), you know?

Me: Right

Ann: That is illogical to them

Me: Right. Right. It doesn't make sense

Ann: Right

Me: Right. Um, okay, before, I do have another question, but I wanna, I wanna ask if you have any kind of archival, WAC, records from when you started in 2000?

Ann: (laughs)

Me: (laughs)

Ann: You're killing me

Me: Sorry

Ann: … Probably … like what?

Me: Um, I don't know, just like a, um, maybe even like the text you used, and how …

Ann: I've always used Bean

Me: Um, and then, I don't know, like do you have maybe PowerPoints of what you've …

Ann: probably

Me: And then, maybe like lists, or not lists of names, cause I don't really need the names, but maybe just numbers and from departments …

Ann: Yeah, we have that list

Me: … and how that's grown over

Ann: You know, the problem is we've lost some years. When I was in charge and nobody kept those records, but I have some things so we can talk about that and you can ask for them …

Me: Okay. Um, alright, and so what other kinds of institutional and administrative issues emerge, this is loaded (laughs), what other kinds of institutional and administrational issues emerge when developing a writing center satellite?

Ann: Yeah, well yeah. Just the degree to which it's appreciated, valued, you know, and like, here's another example. CHHS. I love them dearly, but you know, they, they can't give us a space. And, that's not entirely their fault, they don't have space to give. But now we're going to be over in Porter. Good luck with that. Really? How are getting those students, in the winter, across the street, from, you know, or across the way … I, I think this is going to be disastrous and I think we're going to have a consultant sitting there by themselves …

Me: Right

Ann: Um, you know, where COB, that location is ka-ching, ka-ching …

Me: (laughs) yeah, I don't know how … managed to pull that off

Ann: Similarly in Mark Jefferson, that's ka-ching, ka-ching. Similarly in Pray-Harrold, so, location, location, location. And, um, and that memo just didn't get read by the CHHS people and I don't have a, um, Chris Carson is fine, you know, we have a cordial relationship with her, we're not buds, you know, it helps to be friends with the people in charge

Me: Yeah

Ann: That has helped me tremendously

Me: And COT had an issue with location as well, right?

Ann: Yes

Me: I mean, it seems like they kind of got ping-ponged which was kind of, I think, one of the issues

Ann: And, I don't know what the answer to that whole, that was more than location, but it was location partially

Me: So, what makes something, what makes a satellite successful versus not?

Ann: Yeah … that's a good question. Um, in COT's case, I think that they just have issues beyond what we can manage

Me: The college

Ann: Yeah. There's, that's like the dysfunctional family that …

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Me: (laughs)

Ann: … um … no seriously. It's like, like um …

Me: Is COT like the drunk uncle?

Ann: (laughs) We're like providing the little round band-aid and they need like a tunicate … (laughs)

Me: (laughs) right …

Ann: That's bad. But, they're just, they've got other issues. They have other fish to fry, I'm convinced of that because, um, you know, they're faculty know me, they're receptive. I don't think most of them are assigning writing, frankly …

Me: ah ...

Ann: I think what's going on over there is not necessarily academically sound or terribly sound academically and so therefore, yeah … it's a mess

Me: So, their, their faculty isn't really being asked probably to, well, we, I can't really assume, or we can't really assume anything that's happening with their faculty, but …

Ann: No

Me: Um, are there any distinctive features that you can point that say, "Okay, well like, this is the difference between, you know Beth and the way that she has been working with um the sciences, and college of business versus the college of technology and how it kind of …"

Ann: [pause] Um, I mean, it's a little bit individual personality

Me: Yeah

Ann: You know, Beth cultivates relationships. Beth um, students that consult with her respect her and really admire her and like her and can connect with her. Um, so ethos, I don't know … it's hard to say. You know CAS, we've had ups and downs, um, now I have someone coordinating that who I think is really proactive who isn't afraid to go out and put things in mailboxes …

Me: Yeah

Ann: You know, and um do more than just sit there, and that's, I think, an essential component of that, too.

Me: Yeah, that's another thing, actually, the kind of like, marketing within the, within the satellites. Jane actually, I'm meeting with her at 1, and she's got, uh, a classroom visit. So, I remember doing so many of those at the beginning of the semester.

Ann: Right, you just, I'm trying to sell that better to faculty, you know, we just got a late start with this semester because of the bologna that went on in December, so I just kind of chalk that up …

Me: Well, it's really tough to do at the beginning of the semester because students' heads are like ugh in the beginning of the semester and they're not being assigned writing this week and if they are they're not gonna, you know …

Ann: They're not even thinking about it yet.

Me: Yeah, they're not connecting the writing center, I don't really think that they're connecting the classroom visits to anything else, so … okay, so I know that you have a talk. Um, is there anything else that you wanna say about writing center satellites and their work within the college, um, how they're successful, how they're not any kind of like, institutional um …

Ann: I do think it's very, um, and we have until a quarter til …

Me: Okay, okay

Ann: Um, I think it's very, I would guess, I haven't tried to do this elsewhere but, but I've gone other places and thought about this in those contexts, um, cause I've thought a lot about what I'd do if I was here, um, and I think it really is unique to, to individual institutional in terms of how it might play out or be set up or done. I think that you have to know the institutional context and you have to build relationships across that context.

Me: yeah

Ann: I think those are just two critical components of this. Um, and I think you know, we genuinely, I think you know this, we genuinely care about students. This isn't you know um yeah, I like this to look good and be impressive, but at the same time, at the end of the day, the most vitally important thing to me is making sure that the needs of the students are being met.

Me: Right

Ann: And, the needs of the faculty

Me: Right. Are you kind of the connection um between like, this is just kind of like, my own personal question. But you know, Tech has a very interesting institutional context and structure, um, and it feels very administrative and very lofty and then faculty …

Ann: Well, it's driven by science and technology

Me: A thousand percent

Ann: Which is a different …

Me: beast

Ann: Yeah. I think I've had this conversation, actually, with Jim Dubinsky. I know I've had it with others, it's a little different

Me: Yeah, it really is and and engineering is, you know, is leading that school by the nose and um the good thing is that engineering, I've been trying to work with engineering over there and there are a couple of people who um, I've been able to build relationships with and we've been

working with their graduate students to work on specific writing and so I've started to kind of cultivate that and there are people that see the value in that. But, getting faculty's buy in is like …

Ann: Yeah, right

Me: … the most difficult thing

Ann: Well, look at UofM. You know, how they set it up in the school of engineering with the tech comm department

Me: How did they set it up?

Ann: They have a tech comm department within the school of engineering.

Me: Oh, they do?

Ann: Yeah that does different things in different ways. So, Christian Casper is over there, Rhonda McCaffery is over there, Marian Lind is over there …

Me: Oh, Rhonda's over there

Ann: Mm hmm

Me: Okay

Ann: That, they might be interesting to talk to, one of them as well

Me: Okay

Ann: Honestly, because and that very much is designed to meet and and is very much driven by engineering and what they say their needs are. But, they, I know they've gone back and forth in terms of approaching it in different ways, and Rhonda's thought a lot about this very topically, plus she comes out of Iowa State which has it's own …

Me: Right

Ann: Right

Me: Yup. Quinn comes out of Iowa State, too. They're, they're good over there

Ann: Yeah

Me: Um, hmm. Okay, I think that's all the questions I have for you.

Ann: Oh.

Me: I think. I will probably follow up …

Ann: You can think of more if you want later and …

Me: Okay (laughs). I will probably follow up at some point and I do want to try to get some kind of WAC info from you if you don't mind. I do want to ask, okay, um, differences or similarities or why you stand as a WAC person and not as a WID person.

Ann: Oh, I am probably, no I'm probably equally both. I would identify as a WID person.

Me: I would too

Ann: Um …

Me: I would say so, too

Ann: The other things is, a couple just kind of ending points, um, I, I think having a WAC or WID program is essential

Me: Mm hmm

Ann: Frankly. I mean, I don't think it would be kind of would have been a case of "why bother." I don't think without the support of those people and faculty, um, that this would have made much sense to anybody on this campus if that hadn't already, that foundation hadn't already been there

Me: Okay

Ann: And then, I think the ability to read an institutional context, and this is where I think having a really professionalized director of a writing center is essential because …

Me: Right

Ann: How does an administrative, non-PhD academic-type do that?

Me: Right

Ann: You know? And, Kim, as smart as she is, she doesn't have the clout …

Me: Right

Ann: Clout is important. I can talk to anybody on this campus

Me: Right. Our, as we transition, um, our person that's going to be the director, it's going to be the same way, and she's got a very interesting personality, so she doesn't even, um, she really rubs people the wrong way, so, kind of like … (laugh) I'm gonna try to get out of there. So, that's really important, too. So, ethos is a really big piece of this

Ann: Oh, huge.

Me: Yeah. Okay. I have a lot more WAC questions, but I'm not going to ask them because that's not really …

Ann: Oh, okay. But, anytime. We can, you know, next time you're in town or Skype, or whatever

Me: Okay, yeah. Maybe Skype, that would be good. Cool. Okay. Thank you!

Ann: Yeah. That was fun!

Me: Yeah

Ann: Thank you for being flexible

Me: Oh my gosh, it's not, I'm gonna stop the … I always have this like …

January 11, 2016

Me (BM): I'm going to give you a copy of the questions to, though, I'll probably ask these, but I'll probably deviate a little bit as well. Um, so, okay, so, a little bit about my study I told you before is that I'm just really interested to know why these writing satellite centers, um, are developed, I mean, I know (laughs), I know kind of why we started this one but um, there's ones popping up in like law schools that are like not affiliated with writing centers, um, and in medical schools, and in engineering schools, and so I'm interested to see kind of what these spaces, the satellite centers, can give us insight into disciplinary writing and that kind of thing. I that they're really interesting spaces in terms of accommodating students with disciplinary needs. So, that's where my interests lie. Um, and, so I'm going to ask you kind of like three questions, or three sections of questions, I want to know why, um, … um, I kind of want to know why we developed this writing center, um, you know, how the tutoring practices are here versus how um you know, you've done some uh professional development at the, you know, writing center on main campus, so how you think those two things differ, um, and then just the institutional structures, um. So, first, can you tell me a little bit about uh, so you're role here, you're role at the college of business, um, and how long you've been doing this … I know how long you've been doing it, but (laughs) um, and that … just a little bit of demographic information.

Jane Stephenson (JS): Sure. So, my name is Jane Patricia Stephenson (laughs)

BM: (laughs). Let me get the spotlight on you.

JS: My official position is part-time lecturer. I've been here teaching since uh Winter 2005, 'cause I graduated in April 2004 with my Master of Science in Human Resource Organizational Development. MSHROD. And, so, um …

BM: MS …

JS: MSHROD.

BM: That is a … mouthful.

JS: (laughs) I always say, "First two things you have to learn is the anme of the degree, you know, degree and be able to say the abbreviation to it …"

BM: Right

JS: "… very quickly." So, um, I was gonna ask, should we pull up the history, cause I don't even remember how many years ago we opened this. It's like six or something …

BM: Yeah, I think we started it, so I think we started it my second semester in in my Master's which was … wait, okay, so it's in 2012 ..

JS: I can pull it up

BM: 12, 11, 10, it might have been in the Spring semester of 2010

JS: When you say "Spring," you mean "Winter."

BM: Yeah, Winter 2010, I think that was our first and so I might actually get those records from you.

JS: Yeah. Yeah. I definitely, you know, no reason not to.

BM: Because I'm also interested in our growth over the years as well.

JS: Right and you'll see that. You'll see that.

BM: That'd be great. Okay, um, and then so you're role as …

JS: Is, um, here they call me the "coordinator" …

BM: Okay

JS: … of the writing center, I think the official title is "consultant" of writing center, but everyone sees me as being the one in charge

BM: Yeah. The coordinator of …

JS: The coordinator of it.

BM: So, how do you think, and this is not even on this list, but, how do you think things have changed in the last five or six years, now, um, in the in the, life of this specific satellite? And, of course, I'm like, super invested in this one …

JS: Right

BM: For obvious reasons. But, how have you seen the life evolve in this satellite?

JS: Well, you remember when we first started, we were in a teeny-tiny office

BM: Right. Closet

JS: Yeah. Closet, and we were hoping…

BM: With a two-way mirror

JS: Oh, yes. Your favorite part – the two-way mirror (laughs)

BM: (laughs) I hated that thing

JS: And, we were just begging for anyone to come by because it was alos a little bit off the main drag, too. And, we were thrilled for anyone who walked in there, and I'm sure there were so many days that we didn't help anyone except for …

BM: Right

JS: … loaning our stapler

BM: Right (laughs)

JS: And, we, um, you know, back then we, the only tracking we did was what we had, you know, we would have people sign in that they were here and so I really don't remember helping a ton of people back then, but we were doing um, we started the classroom visits and then we also, if you remember, we started with a lot of workshops that never really took off. And …

BM: When did we do those?

JS: When or where?

BM: Where

JS: Um, in classrooms

BM: In classrooms, right

JS: In new classrooms. You remember we did chalk board writing, too, you and I'd go into the classrooms because remember you'd

BM: Oh, that's right

JS: the computer lab story and I would always be writing on my chalkboards and others, you know. The workshops that we had available, there would either be 0 or 1 or 2 people …

BM: That's right

JS: Which I didn't … I taught a lot of those and then only one time I had um 1 instructor who had taught 5 classes that invited all his students, and I had a full class

BM: Mmm

JS: For APA formatting

BM: Yeah

JS: And then since then the only other ones have really gone were tho, again, special ones when I've been asked. I, I have done about at least 6 times for Marketing where I go in and do case writing for them and it's like for an hour into a classroom. And, so those are the only workshops that have really worked even though, um, I had done a survey with, like, 150 students or so, asking what topics are they interested in …

BM: Right

JS: They, there was a broad level of interest. What hours / days are available they're available. Morning, noon, and night, and Saturday. Did you come in once for a Saturday even

BM: I don't I think so

JS: At least a Friday, you've definitely been here on a Friday which is almost like a Saturday here

BM: Yeah

JS: And thankfully, we were able to stop doing them again except for when they're specifically requested for a whole class

BM: From faculty

JS: From faculty

BM: Yeah

JS: Yeah. So that, when we first started, that was a real emphasis. I mean, that was, the day I like signed my contract almost, Ann's almost next words were, "We gotta, we gotta set up some workshops." And, I was like, "Workshops?" You know I thought I was supposed to help the students …

BM: Right

JS: And, um, she like, next week, kind of thing. Thankfully I had you, and you're like, "Well I can um teach these." And, I'm like, "I need to see one before I teach it."

BM: Yeah.

JS: So, that was such ...

BM: What was I thinking? (laughs)

JS: Well you had seen 'em (laughs). You had seen them.

BM: Well, that's true, yeah. We did do them in the writing center, too.

JS: Yeah. So, um, that was such a focus. It was almost a dual focus and now, obviously, it's just on, um, the you know, working with the students. Still we do close to 30 classroom visits. And, I wanna say 26, 27 the last two semesters, but again we can see that, we can find that …

BM: Mm hm

JS: And that's, it just keeps …

BM: Each semester

JS: Yeah, each semester, it just keeps filling the funnel. We go to all the intro., we go to the intro. Classes and, uh, um, what do we call em, the entry points which might be where students transfer and they, it's a requirement

BM: So that's COB 200

JS: COB 200 and Management 202 and then, I mean, I'll give you the list

BM: Okay

JS: There's about nine, and then also every department has a writing intensive course now

BM: Mm hm

JS: And we go to those, too, or we target them. So, I sent an, I sent out an e-mail to I think it was 9 instructors for my MW classes, and I received back a response from about 5 or 6 of them, to go into their classes that I already have. Like I said, I have 5 today and 4 or 5 tomorrow, or Wednesday, you know …

BM: Right

JS: So, it's, it's good, we…

BM: So

JS: That just keeps filling the funnel

BM: Yeah

JS: you know, new, cause we're really close to 50% of new students and reoccurring students, or at least, you know, reoccurring that they've been here at least once before. Every month, we look at it and it's almost 50% new people … maybe I would say 30% new people, first time visitors

BM: Mm hm

JS: And 30, 60% or so of people that have been here before

BM: Wow. That's pretty cool. Okay, so how do you think that faculty, so this is going to be a double-ended question. How do you think that faculty, this is like a triple question now that I'm thinking. It keeps stacking in my head. How do you think faculty to respond to a writing center in a college of business. Um, what do you think the importance is of you being a faculty member instead of just having somebody from the writing center be the coordinator? How do you think that impacts faculty's, um, you know notion and value of what we do here? And, I've lost the third one, so maybe …

JS: So, what was the first, the second one was reaction to me, and was the first one about …

BM: So faculty, how do you think faculty view the writing center and its importance in the college of business?

JS: Well, clearly, you know, there's, support has grown over the years without a doubt.

BM: Yeah

JS: I know that many were at frist concerned, and I probably was too, at first, as to, is this person just going to give my students all the answers kind of thing. And, then still, the level for us …

BM: Yeah

JS: … is how much do we help a student

BM: Right

JS: When, let's say, and my worst case scenario is when I ask students who are writing letters and thank you letters for employment, and I feel like when I correct their grammar, they're being misrepresenting themselves of who they really are

BM: Right

JS: SO, that is still a dilemma of, you know, how to do this, so um, I, you know, I knopw a lot of them really support us, like they just don't even want to deal with students with writing problems so they really us to work with them and fix them, you know, some people will draw a line and say, "I'm not going to grade this, you know, I've read this far, I'm not reading anymore."

BM: Right

JS: So, there's clearly a lot of support for it. Um …

BM: Because we fill a need for them and their teaching of writing?

JS: Yeah, and, and even for myself, being on both ends

BM: Right

JS: So you do this management 202, this business communication and have all these writing, and I was, you know, every semester, I go crazy with all the students who are, you know, just super basic stuff …

[striked from the record … chatter with other people]

BM: Um, okay, so faculty, I think we were …

JS: Yeah, right, so I'm sure that it's really improved over the years, their perspective, their perception of, their concern about what do we really do. I mean that's just one more thing that I think our little um classroom you know, advertisements you know, or visiting the classrooms gotta give em some peace, too. You know, they hear me explain …

BM: Right

JS: … what we're there for …

BM: Right

JS: Um, and sometimes that interaction, too, you know, I, we learn more about them, I might ask seomthing like, I almost always ask the instructor in front of the students, "So, are you like really pciking with APA formatting?"

BM: Yeah

JS: And, if they say, "Yes," I'll be like, you know …

BM: "we're really good with that."

JS: "We can really help you with that." Yeah

BM: Yeah

JS: And so then I, I'm learning more, I can you tell you know you know, that 50% them are, and 50% you know kind of like don't care or, which, you know, whatever format they want which means they don't usually care. And it's, and it's so often that PhD versus the non and, you know, it all makes sense, but I learn that from being in there, you know, from being in 2 minutes

BM: In the classrooms

JS: In the classrooms doing my little commercial, just even that. So, um, I, you know, because because of me being faculty, I mean, because I'm part-time lecturer, I don't go to all the means, but I've been invited to more of them, and I've tried to go to a lot of them

BM: Mm hm

JS: And, I speak at, um, our grad student orientation, I always do the commercial there, too. So, that's in front of a lot of faculty and, and we have, I think it was at least 10% of our students were grad students last semester, which I'm sure that has, you know, a big part of it, especially given that we're really not here nights. I mean …

BM: Right

JS: … we're trying to stay open later and later, um, and so …

BM: So, what do you attribute faculty's ….mmm, that, uh, increased sense of value for the writing center. Do you think it's classroom visits? Do you think it's because you are able to clearly articulate what we do do here?

JS: I mean, I think it's all, everything. It's, you know, classroom visits, so that again, they can here me, then, we can articulate it because they have students who come here and have gotten help and have gotten help and unfortunately, it might be because maybe we're getting worse and worse, um, skilled students coming in

BM: Mm hm

JS: That, you know, we see more and more, you know, cause what I was just saying to you was, you know, in my own class, going insane with basic subject-verb agreement

BM: Yeah

JS: Tenses, I mean, basic stuff and so, and so I would really working with Thomas because he's teaching first-year writing this semester, and I'm like, "You really need to think about what you can do to per … you know, solve this problem before they get here because they've all had these prereqs." And, I understand, just like some of my students, are getting passed out of that class

who are not what I would consider, "good writers" yet and the same thing happens in you know, the intro to writing

BM: Oh for sure. Right. Because we can't possibly teach them every single genre they'll ever write in and you know, and we have every kind of student. We have Engineers in there, we have college of business students, we have CHHS students, we have, right? The whole gammit of them, so it's difficult in 15 weeks to teach them, you know, all of the writing

JS: Right

BM: Yeah

JS: Yeah

BM: So, what do you tell, what do you say when you do your schpeal? What do you, what do we really do here?

JS: Well, I, I you know, tell, k well, you should have just followed me … (laughs)

BM: I know. I will come with the recorder to your next one.

JS: Which is at, I think, 5:00. Um, I, you know, I you know, tell 'em that, you know, we hope they know that we have a writing center here, and it's for their convenience and because business writing is different and so we can, you know, we're here to assist them with their business writing and we're here to help 'em get started or maybe clarify assignments, um, get organized, you know polish, finish and polish, and also, like the APA, you know, dealing with the references, so we're, whether they're at the beginning, middle, or end, we can assist them with, you know, with their writing. Sometimes I, haven't said this today, that we're not that just to improve the paper, we're here to try to improve as a writer.

BM: How true do you think you've found that? Because, and I ask that because, so you know, with all the research I've been doing and the literature I've been combing through and at the last, um, International Writing Center Association Conference, we've, we're kind of like, excuse my French, and I'm totally going to strike this, but we're kind of calling "bullshit" on that. You know, because, so do you think that those two that were in here earlier, or even her that you helped, any of them, do you really think that they're going to walk out of here being better writers, or do you know what I mean?

JS: Oh absolutely. So, I was happy to hear this first girl said, "I'm learning so much."

BM: Yeah, right

JS: So, like, I hope you're, I'm thinking, "I really hope you are."

BM: Right

JS: Now, Raina has been here for years and her writing is getting better and better, but is it also just because she's been in the United States, speaking and writing English that anyone would be getting better, um, you know, I don't know.

BM: Mm hm

JS: I really, I really do think, I know we help with the paper, and I try as often as I can to explain why, if you were listening at all, you might have heard me say once or twice as to, "I, I can't tell you why that's a better word," you know.

BM: Right

JS: Sometimes it's harder, and sometimes it's because I'm giving you over 50 suggestions, I will explain 45 of them

BM: Right (laughs)

JS: (laughs) And because if I could even English-ese of what is a past-participle kind of thing, you know, it wouldn't mean anything to them anyway. Um, I, Thomas taught me something that I just a little, it really bugs me. Cause you know when you know something is right, and you're not doing it, it can, um, and where he was from his previous school, they would use the online system

BM: Mm hm

JS: Every time they record a student in, there's a comment box, and so they would put in comments like, "Be sure to this," and "be sure to that." And then, it would be sent to the student …

BM: Oh

JS: … and we don't do that

BM: That's interesting, to kind of follow up

JS: And, like, this kind of a thing

BM: Ah, yeah

JS: Which we rarely do either

BM: The feedback

JS: The feedback, just to, to again, to say, "This is …"

BM: That was from Susan, right

JS: Was it? It might have been

BM: I think so

JS: But, I thought, yeah, this was from student's Susan, but I thought there was one from the writing center, too.

BM: Oh, there might have been

JS: There might have been

BM: I can't remember. Everything's just …

JS: I'm sure

BM: … clobbing together now

JS: To, you know, to say, "These are what the trends …"

BM: Mmm, right

JS: And, I guess, a, again, how much are we teaching versus correcting?

BM: Right

JS: That's, that's always going to be the challenge – teaching versus correcting, and then again, the students who, like, 50% will, I'm going to throw out these numbers and I think, you know, we'll double check to see if they're true. It, it, we're over 30, between 30 and 50 % English isn't their first language, and how much are they really learning?

BM: Right

JS: Um, you know, I, I think, I think they are learning some of that. I do think they are learning some of that. Celearly, when we, we teach APA format of a report and we show them a source, of course, going to the sources, showing them how to, um, you know, there are, there are, I think there are a lot of things we do teach when we show them how to use a library site better.

BM: Yeah, she had talked about Purdue OWL

JS: Right

BM: And, I'm sure she'd heard that somewhere around here (laughs)

JS: Right, right. So, yeah, whenever we show them that, I hope, you know, that that does teach them

BM: At least give them some resources to use

JS: Yeah, so maybe even next time they come in, we will just be tweaking their citations instead of like, "Okay, let's start with last name first."

BM: Right, right. Hm, that's really interesting.

JS: So, I, I feel like there's a huge opportunity for that.

BM: We're teaching?

JS: Or, for us to really be improving the person not just the paper, but I don't know how to do it, especially when you've got three people here

BM: Right

JS: Um

BM: Right

JS: And, when 95% of the people walk in and want us to proofread their papers, and no matter how many times we say we're not there to proofread their papers is still what we end up doing

BM: Right. And, you know, I mean, in some ways, is that kind of valuable in and of itself? You know, I think, so what, so what are you going to say to the person who walks in and said, "Well, I can't *really* wait because this paper's due at 2:30p." You know, and you're like, "Oh, it's 1:45p." Um, so do you say, "No, we're not going to help you?" I mean, that doesn't seem helpful. That doesn't seem kind of in line with what writing centers, uh, want to be about.

JS: Right

BM: Um, but so I w … I don't know. I've just, that's been something that has really been kind of in my mind lately.

JS: Mm hm

BM: And, has been brought up at the conference too, so

JS: Right. So, you know, of course, if we had twice the staffing or something like that, we could all do a better job of that. But, first, you know, that's not always realistic. And then second, there are times, hours when we might sit here without helping someone and have two people or three people sitting here. Again, it's just not really all that cost effective.

BM: Mm hmm. Right. Um, okay, so why, going back to question 1.

JS: Well, actually, I didn't answer question 1. And, what I did tell you the answer later was that I, you know, it's for the convenience. With us being off campus …

BM: Right

JS: … that's huge.

BM: Right, that is a very …

JS: And the second is the customization of business writing. It *is* different than some of the other, you know, genres.

BM: So, can you, that's something I'm really interesting. Can you talk more about that?

JS: Um, yeah. Business writing is more clear, is more concise. It's more …

BM: What are we comparing it to?

JS: Any other kind of writing (laughs)

BM: Okay. Everything else (laughs)

JS: With the epitome being creative writing.

BM: Okay

JS: That would be the opposite, you know, business writing with simplicity and creative writing with like more words, versus less words, so …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: … we're all about, you know, the clarity is highly valued. Clarity is the goal

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Um, and purpose, clarity of purpose, um, is, is the goal. Versus the enjoyment of writing / reading or the beauty of writing / reading

BM: Mm hmm

JS: It's all, you know, efficiency

BM: Mm hmm. And, so how do you, um, you know, I was never sure that I was really completely prepared to help people with genre-specific assignments in the College of Business even though, you know, my undergrad's in …

JS: Mm hmm

BM: … but I didn't remember that stuff. So, um, so what do you think that having a satellite center can do, or does do, to help disciplinary writing and genre-specific writing?

JS: Well, I, I mean, I think it's, and you know, we have like eight satellites now or something?

BM: Yeah

JS: It's insane. It's awesome. It's insanely awesome

BM: Yeah

JS: That everyone could begin that kind of customized help

BM: Right

JS: That is amazing. Um, it just, it just, for one thing, it helps all of us to be better at what we're doing that I don't know how they do it at the writing center, you know, at the library and try to help everyone. And, I, I think frequently about the students I'm helping right here, thinking if they were at the library, how well could they have helped them.

BM: Mm hmm

JS: That they couldn't have possibly helped them as well as we can here, because …

BM: Why?

JS: … because not only know, we know the business writing, but we know the instructors, and we, that assignment those first two come in with , I remember it from last semester. I do remember that exact assignment. And, so understanding the assignment, understanding, knowing

the professors, knowing the processors' expectations, um, that is, you know, you can't do that on such a macro level. This is medium macro, you know?

BM: Right

JS: That there's so many, um, you know, professors and classes and assignments, but still it's not compared to at Halle.

BM: Right

JS: At all

BM: So, talk about, then, how important those relationships are. We touched on it very briefly at the beginning when talking about, uh, classrooms visits and that kind of thing, but how important is it for you to develop relationships with faculty, not only to get their buy in, I think …

JS: Mm hmm

BM: … um, but also for them to feel comfortable to come to you and say, "Hey, you're steering my students wrong," or "Hey, here's an assignment because I know you're going to see a lot of my students." Or, "Hey, can you help me write this assignment so that I can better deliver it to my students."

JS: Well, you know, like, of course, the, the better relationship all the more that will happen. And, you know, we've never, like, were overly proactive or aggressive about it. But, I can just tell you that I have received, had all that happen more and more. I've had people give me their assignments to look at the assignment description

BM: Mm hmm

JS: I've looked at professor's resumes

BM: Mm hmm

JS: I've looked at their research papers and, you know, read 'em. I've, you know, I've had, um, this one I passed off to one of my professor's, her niece wrote a children's book. And, I had passed that one off because it's like, "Oh my gosh, this is a children's book, and this is not my brain."

BM: Yeah

JS: Um, and you know, choose, they were willing to pay something and I thought it would be a perfect opportunity for someone, you know …

BM: Yeah

JS: Like, where's, where's uh, Rachel when I need her?

BM: Exactly (laughs)

JS: (Laughs) I would have, if, if I didn't get a quick yes from the Halle, I would've tried to contact her. (laughs)

BM: Yeah

JS: So, it, it just, like I said, and so maybe if I was ever asked to, or encouraged to, to somehow push harder to make relations, build relationships, like one of things you and I had come up with an idea that we rarely did …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: … was just to walk through the hallways of the instructors and try to you know, but they're, some of them are only there for five minutes, you know?

BM: Right

JS: in between classes, and they don't want to talk to anyone. Um, the rest of them have their doors closed (laughs)

BM: Right (laughs), with signs that say, "Do not disturb!"

JS: Yeah, so, like, you know, that's never been who I am, you know, like, we were talking earlier about, I'm not into sales. I always rely on referrals for my own business and so, you know, if I was from marketing, maybe I'd be doing some different things …

BM: Right

JS: … and pushing harder. But, you know, so, so often we're so, you know, yeah, there's always gaps of no students, but then we get the three and you know, I, and the last semester we hardly had any growth from the previous year, and that's the first time. We were always like, 50%, 50% …

BM: Wow

JS: And, we're getting to the point where we can't help all more students …

BM: Right

JS: So, we are always turning away some students, but of course we have the dead times

BM: Right

JS: But it scares me, you know, to advertise too much more.

BM: Right

JS: Because yeah, I don't want …

BM: You want to be able to …

JS: I don't want that pizza party, you remember the pizza party? I think you were here when Susan, I had 24 of her students in here all during like 2 hours' time

BM: (laughs) I do remember sometimes like that when we were just kind of like, you know, sitting people around this table and just saying, "okay …" (laughs)

JS: So going back to, you know, what exactly business writing means. Something that I would, um, dif, if you were, you know, again, it's so long ago for you, but Susan had an assignment that she's adapted a lot, and then, changed a lot, and I, and I've taken and changed further. She still calls it a "grammar worksheet," but it's not. I call mine a business writing worksheet. It's the first thing I give my, my 202 students. And, like, once, and I can give you a copy, and I don't have one with me, but I could probably, I might be able to pull one offline. Um, the first one is like, there'll be these phrases like, four words, and like "replace it with one word."

BM: Oh, okay. Okay.

JS: So, that's lioke business writing…

BM: Right

JS: … and the next one are sentences, "Cross off as many words as you don't need."

BM: Okay

JS: And, you're bringing these sentences from there [hand motion wide] to there [to thinner/shorter]

BM: Mm hmm

JS: And then the third one is like rewriting a sentence for clarity

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Um, and again, half of it's crossed off words, some of it is replacing it with just more common words.

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Um, so, so that, those, I think symbolize business writing, so I think for you to look at those examples of what she's doing with hers, and what I'm doing with mine could help

BM: Yeah. That would be great

JS: Yeah

BM: Yeah, because I do remember that. I remember, you know, at the very beginning thinking, "You know, grammar worksheet, ugh …" (laughs)

JS: It wasn't. It was, hers, that was what I had the party for, too. And it was, it was three pages long, and it was all about rewriting it in more simplistic way with like cut out half the words

BM: So, then in terms of tutoring practice, then with those, when you get everybody in for that, there is a right or wrong answer when it comes to that

JS: Almost

BM: So, do you find that maybe, um, or can you imagine that maybe business writing, there's, this, this is a very sweeping generalization and so maybe I don't even want you to answer this, maybe this is more rhetorical question, but, do you find that maybe there are, there is a, a place that you can herd students towards that seems "correct" versus when you're working with students, like say on the main campus center, um, that you know, its seems a little bit more abstract. This seems almost more tangible business writing does, versus some of the things that we see in the "home" center is what I'm calling it, just to distinguish

JS: Mm hmm

BM: Um, does that make sense

JS: No, not completely. I mean, with that, with that assignment, and that was one of the ones that I was most uncomfortable with because it did seem like it was more like a right and wrong answer.

BM: Right

JS: And, I think we talked to her and said, "You know do you want your students really coming in here …"

BM: Right. Right.

JS: And, really, we should've only, we really should have a policy of like, we'll help, when she had 30 questions, we'll help with the first three and you've gotta figure it out from there. We really should have done that. Um, and so, but there's, that may be the only one …

BM: Yeah

JS: … (unclear) seen and we don't, I don't, I don't never seem to get her students in for that anymore

BM: Yeah, okay

JS: Paper, all day long

BM: Yeah

JS: And, everything else, but not, not that and if so, maybe like 1

BM: Okay

JS: So, but, but something that you've sort were you almost suggesting is, occasionally, I have, would I have had management, like, grad students, and I feel like I'm going beyond …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: … what I should, that I am, mmm, effecting content. And, that's where I think, you know, they can do that, like at the home base, it you know, as easily, where anyone when they do have a student in their area of specialty, you know, there is almost a line, you know, is that, how is that okay, or is that inappropriate to actually be effecting the content

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Because all day long, I'm helping Finance and Accounting students and I can say, you know, like, on one of them I said, "Is this the correct terminology." You know, it doesn't seem like it to me, but occasionally they say, "Yes." I'm like …

BM: Okay

JS: It's, it's off. To me it seems like, you know, it's not, or okay, so you told me what ROI is and you defined it, and you said that their ROI's are good, but you could you now say, 'therefore,' you know, what's the therefore on it. I can, you know, I can come up with that, I have the ans … I could put the ROI but not much else

BM: Right

JS: But I can't always give them that answer whereas occasionally with, with the management student, I do feel like …

BM: Yeah

JS: …. Which I mean is still good, like, you know, this one student, our currently frequent fliers. One of our …

BM: (laughs)

JS: (laughs) … current frequent flier, and I still see Michael …

BM: Oh, you do?

JS: Yes.

BM: Oh

JS: And, maybe he might have graduated or something

BM: Oh, I hope so

JS: Cause he went into grad student, not as much, after about two years, not as much. So, hopefully, again, he's learned

BM: Yeah

JS: So, some people, I think it's the confidence, too. We get a lot of those older students coming in wanting help for a year or so and I think it is half confidence …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: … or, half of just getting in the swing. Like, I had this, this other guy I was about to tell you about. Um, the professor he has is beyond explicitly clear, and he was just baffled, and I just felt like, you know, like him, and, this semester, or next semester, he's going to roll with that

BM: Right

JS: He's not going to need that 'cause he's just in the groove …

BM: Right

JS: … of being in school and in writing. So, you know, so, you know, we are launching some of these baby birds in that way, too.

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Um, but anyways, someone like him, he had one of these types of things that was like 30 th, he had to come up with 30 concepts, from the text, and define them, and then apply them. And, he, he could, you know, he found them, and he ap, and he, um, defined them, and he was struggling so hard to apply them.

BM: Yeah

JS: And, I kept telling him, "that's where all, if this was my assignment, that's where all the points would be."

BM: Yeah

JS: You get one for naming it, three for defining it, and fifteen for applying it. And, so, again, for me, as a manager person, and him in his management class, for me to help him with like the first, kind of like what I said we should do, help him more with that first one …

BM: Right

JS: … and then, you know, hoping he can take it from there. So that's, again, the, so that personal knowledge of the subject certainly can help me help the students so much more, but yeah, there may be a line to draw of, you know, how far we go with helping, or how long, in a sense, we go with helping …

BM: Right

JS: … and then when student …

BM: Right

JS: You know, for me to be able to say, "That's defined correctly," or "You're not using that correctly," cause of my knowledge, that's one thing, you know, again, if I can stop there

BM: Right. Mm okay. Um, so, I'm gonna, I'm gonna ask some of these, but if you feel like you've already answered them, just tell me. Um, so, why would a writing center satellite be created for specific disciplines as opposed, or as an extension of, the home center?

JS: Yeah

BM: I mean, you know, we did talk about location, for this

JS: Right. So, yeah, so, you know, that is, I think, key, that's, that's not true for everyone … for us …

BM: But, versus having like, okay so let's say you just worked at the home center. Um, let's say, okay, so let's say we have a college of business specialist, we have a CHHS specialist, what do you think is that is maybe the advantages and disadvantages

JS: Just, I mean, it's huge, because we're off campus, the convenience

BM: Mm hmm, right

JS: There are so many students who only are in this building, and they come, drive here, they commute here …

BM: Right, and then leave from here …

JS: … and leave from here

BM: I never went to main campus …

JS: Right

BM: … when I was an undergrad. Ever.

JS: Yeah. Yeah, so it would, we would not be helping them, very many of them over there. So, we are really, truly, available and there would be, you know, it's kind of almost like bad customer service not to come to them. So, especially between off-campus, and the fact that such a high percentage that the people here are commuters, too ..

BM: Mm hmm, right.

JS: Um, because if, you know, if you, like let's say, if they were living on campus, then, of course, if they took the bus here, then it wouldn't be a big deal to go to the writing center in Halle. So, so, I mean that is huge, so that would be number one. If you got any buildings any buildings or off-campus or far away, you need your own satellite. And then, two is the, is the customization

BM: Right

JS: … of the, um, and that goes along with the relationships and the, you know, knowing the expectations of the instructor. Knowing the, you know, seeing this case study ten times before

BM: Right (laughs)

JS: (laughs) and, you know, even the accounting ones and finance, I mean, those are accounting

BM: Right

JS: I don't know all about that

BM: Yeah, right. Um, I think you've answered, "What might the writing center satellite provide to students that the home center does not." Can you think of anything else that you want to add

JS: Um, I, I guess the only, and I've already said it, but I guess just really being part, you know, being part. So, again, if we brought someone over here as a consultant, or over here, like all of

you guys were, at first, you're awesome and helping with writing and as time goes on, you're also getting in the groove of business writing and getting to know the instructors, and getting to, you know, I've seen this assignment before …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: … or, you know, I, you know, I, I know, I know that she has it in her syllabus. Pull it up, let's find that. I know that.

BM: Right

JS: So, it just, I just think, you know, just really knowing, um, that you know, the instructor's expectations

BM: Yeah

JS: … just knowing, you know, you have a smaller batch of instructors to keep track of in a sense.

BM: Right

JS: Cause still, we've probably never helped over 50% of the instructors, um, here, so the ones ewe have will really know

BM: Right

JS: I mean, like seriously, I will be like, "Where's his syllabus? I know that's on there. I know it."

BM: Right, right. So then, the next question just kind of flips that on its head. What might the home center provide, um, to students potentially, like let's say College of Business students went over there, that the writing center satellite, that this satellite does not?

JS: Mm hmm

BM: Can you think of anything that they might offer?

JS: The, the one thing is, and because, Thomas is both, you know. He's business and he's, is it English, wants to be a PhD and all that

BM: Yeah

JS: Um, when we had a student walk in here last semester, and I think he was here, too, or you know, walked in five minutes later, I had a student who said, "I'm a senior, and I am still a terrible writer. Could you," you know, "really help me." And, of course, I'm, I'm intrigued as a consultant to everyone "yes" …

BM: Right (laughs)

JS: … and so I actually said to Thomas, "You know, if you, you know, when you're here, I'm not asking you to do it outside of here, but when you're here and you're not busy, can you kind

of create an outline or something. How would we best approach someone like that that just really needs a lot of overall remedial help?" And so, when it comes to writing in general, when someone is just a "bad" writer in general, they are at least as a equipped, and probably more equipped, especially with like me and probably Susan, that neither of us are English majors …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: … and all that, um, to have that real technical knowledge of not only this is right, but why it's right …

BM: Right

JS: … which I can't always articulate

BM: Right

JS: Um, and just, you know, maybe having more of a focus of language and you know, so when, that's something I would definitely say that, um, when it's really just writing in general, and starting from the scratch, someone who really needs real help, I feel like they would be more equipped.

BM: That's a great answer

JS: Good, thanks

BM: Um, okay, so tutoring practices and writing center satellites. Um, what are some of the typical genres of writing students need help with when they seek writing support at this location?

JS: I wish, we, you and I used to keep track of that …

BM: I know

JS: … and I'd like to, I'd really like to do that is to keep track of what is it, um, okay, and so do you mean, more like reports and resumes or more like grammar and formatting or something

BM: Um, well you can, you can, uh, answer both but I think I'm more interested in the specific genres. So, like, I remember working a lot with, um, uh applications to like grad school, or …

JS: Right. We still get a ton of that.

BM: Mm hmm

JS: We still get tons of resumes and you know, what do they, personal summaries …

BM: Personal statements

JS: personal statements still, I mean, so scholarship, that's what the one lady had

BM: Right

JS: … was, and that's what [student name] is going to come back with her scholarship

BM: Yeah

JS: So, we still get a lot of that. I mean, that was the first thing that came to my mind really …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: … and I was sitting here trying to think like, "what else besides that," so …

BM: Do you do case studies?

JS: So, yeah, a certain amount of cases, um, and then, you know, honestly because like at least 25% of the students we help are Susan's, so it's you know, it's that report, it's writing reports

BM: Mm hmm. Do you, so, do they typically ask to see Susan, or is it better for them to see you or Thomas

JS: Well, they will, most, most likely to get their instructor because of the day

BM: Ah

JS: She teaches Tuesday, Thursday, so …

BM: Right

JS: … you know, but a lot of those students are here four days

BM: Yeah

JS: So, you know, I've helped a lot of Susan's students. But, I'll have like three or four and then when I come back in, I'll see that Wednesday, she had like 10

BM: Right (laughs)

JS: But, nine of them were hers

BM: Right

JS: … on Tuesday, Thursday, so there's, there are so many, which is, you know, on one hand it's like, "Well, so, we all meant to take care of Susan's students," but who are there?

BM: Right

JS: They're business communication students, and boy if we can help these people improve now, it will help with every other class. So you know, it's, I don't have a problem, and I, and clearly I see of all of the classes that I teach, you know, of I see most of, you know, of all the students I see of my own, most of them are management 202 students also.

BM: Right

JS: Which, again, is because we are teaching them so much about writing, that …

BM: So, what do think this space adds to your relationship to your students who come in to see you

JS: Well, I, I think it's great that, you know, I dare anyone to say I'm not available

BM: Yeah, right (laughs)

JS: I'm here 10 hours a day

BM: Yeah

JS: Besides for the time in class

BM: Right

JS: I could be here one hour per class

BM: Mm hmm

JS: So, they, they come in more easily to ask me, to help them understand an assignment kind of thing

BM: Yeah

JS: And, so I always ask myself, "Could they have come in an asked someone else that if I wasn't here?" And, if so I put them down as a visitor. And, if it's really something only I would ask, you know, could answer, then I don't.

BM: Mm hmm

JS: That's my critieria is could they have asked that …

BM: Yeah

JS: … and someone else could read the assignment, and you know try to help them a little bit, you know on a lot of it, but not all of it

BM: So, transparency, um, and accessibility

JS: Accessibility, and I, I really hope that it makes them see me also that mcuh more approachable

BM: Mm hmm

JS: I, I had this one student, she asked me like ten times last semester, "So, like, could I bring this into you at the writing center?" I'm like, "You can bring anything to me at the writing center." But, first she would say, "Well, will you look at all your work before it's due?"

BM: (laughs)

JS: I'm like, "No, I cannot offer to look at every students' work before it's due, but if you come into the writing center, I will look at whatever you bring me …

BM: Yeah

JS: … and you could do that. You could bring in everything."

BM: Mm hmm

JS: But, in the, as a writing center consultant, I will look at everything you bring, but no, I'm not giving everyone permission to send everything to me in advance for me to give them feedback on. So, um, I'm sure that that's helped them more comfortable with me as an instructor, I mean …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: That's, that's kind of the thing that I would miss the most

BM: Yeah

JS: Is just that constant seeing so many of my students, current and past, and everyone stopping in here

BM: Mm hmm

JS: and just me still having relationships with them.

BM: Right. Yeah, relationships seem really key to this whole, you know, in the two interviews I've done today (laughs), or three whatever. Um, okay, so why would students come here for a resume versus the career center?

JS: Well, and we try, we try to send them there, too

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Because I always tell them that is their thing …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: And, they should go there. So, I, I try to direct them there for content and us for writing, especially if we're busy. I'm definitely sending them there. One of the reasons so many of them come here because so many, because essentially everyone taking management 202 and other classes, it's an assignment.

BM: Ah, I see, okay

JS: And, so, they still could go there

BM: Yeah

JS: But, that's where, especially when it's an assignment, I, I'm more likely to definitely take them in. But, again, any time we're busy, I will definitely say, you know, "We can see if, you could go there …"

BM: Mm, that's interesting

JS: And, so it's an assignment, but it's still real

BM: Right

JS: It's still, they just don't need it today …

BM: Right, right

JS: … is what makes it the difference of an assignment

BM: That's interesting though, that kind of nuanced layer because I heard you say to, um, what was her name …

JS: I forget

BM: Um, but I heard you say to her, "Well you write it like it's real. It's real. It's a real memo. That's how you write it."

JS: Yeah, right

BM: Like, it's real

JS: yeah

BM: And so, and um, I think that that's a really interesting thing about business writing, is that I, I mean, I have a lot of feelings about, you know, students being in a classroom, and so the classroom is a classroom, it's not a workplace, and you can do as much as you can to help them say, well, this is a real resume, this is a real memo, this is a real whatever, um, but it is, I think that this, that's a certain nuance, I think that's a certain, um, I think that's a special piece to business writing, and to other pieces of writing, too, but especially with business writing, that, that is interesting to me

JS: That's it's real. Well, one of the differences, too, with the resume being an assignment or not, is if it's an assignment that I know needs to look more like the ones in the textbook …

BM: Yes

JS: … versus if it's real, I'm going to push you, as, you know, I'm going to take whatever you've done and try to push you to the next level with things that aren't necessarily

BM: So, what does that mean? What does that look like?

JS: Um, well, especially cause some students who are doing it as an assignment might not have a resume

BM: Mm hmm

JS: And, so we're just trying to get them to ground one of, okay, this is a decent resume, and it's you know, what your instructor is asking for, so you should do well on it

BM: Right

JS: But if someone is graduating and you know, they have a resume, I want to try to help them think deeper

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Like, for just one example is, you know, you put your job and then you list all these things that you've done with all these past tense verbs. Like, "Ran cash register, balanced drawers, cleaned up." And, um, and so that may be oaky for the class, but then, you know, to take it up a notch just to say, "So what?"

BM: Right

JS: You know, what value did that have? What did you accomplish? You know? You know, what did that, you know, what did that, you know, what did that accomplish? Provided a clean atmosphere, you know, for over a thousand guests everyday

BM: Yeah, right. Kept them safe

JS: Yeah, so trying to push it to the next level, and just pushing them harder to add more because especially, again, they already have a resume then we can improve it, but if there's hardly anything, then I was trying to get them to square one

BM: Right. Okay. That's good. Um, so, I'm not sure that you … so you don't have to answer this one, but I'm just going to ask it anyway. What kinds of, this might be better for Thomas, but what kinds of practices do your, do you and your tutors engage in that's different than the tutoring that happens in the home center. Are there different practices that you find yourself doing that, um, that you either have heard of or know, or maybe, it's something different than Thomas usually does, um, is there a difference in practice?

JS: Mm hmm. Something keeps sliding in and out of my brain. And, this is even something I thought about yesterday or today or something, but right now it's kind of out again. Um, any, one thing is that I'm not over there enough to really for sure say that.

BM: Mm hmm

JS: But, what is it … I don't know.

BM: If you think of it …

JS: Yeah, I will definitely let you know if I think of it. Um, but again, you know, my first answer would be, I'm not there enough to know what the difference is. I mean, one thing is, we're frequently a one-person show

BM: Right

JS: So, that's, that would be just one thing, is we might be juggling three students, and I don't know how often they juggle three students

BM: One tutor, I mean, I don't really know how it's like now, but I doubt that one tutor is juggling any more than one student at a time in the home center

JS: And, then there are times, I have juggled five. Not to mention the 24, but on a regular basis, I might have five people in here that we're bouncing between

BM: Right

JS: So, that would be, that's definitely one thing. You know, I don't think that's, I don't think that's really the type of answer that you were really …

BM: Yeah

JS: I mean, it's kind of like the strengths and weaknesses of it is that, you know, being a one person operation …

BM: Well, that's actually my next question

JS: We do it, okay well, we do it all. You know, we, we do all the administration, too

BM: Mm hmm, right. So, then, what are the advantages and implications to writing, um, support located in a specific discipline\

JS: Yeah, I mean, again, number is customization and convenience. Um, you know, over there, it'd be having all the support for someone else who is entering things, and you know, there to help. You know how it is, there were times we couldn't go to the bathroom

BM: Yes

JS: Why don't we just say, I remember you specifically said, "Don't steal my purse, I have to go to the bathroom!" (laughs)

BM: (laughs)

JS: I have a gradebook up on the computer, I have personal things, my phone is sitting there, it's been ringing like crazy, and I have to go to the bathroom and I'm still starving, and I have to teach in another hour, and there's three more students sitting here

BM: Right (laughs)

JS: Um, and yet, I remember last semester, it was, I think it was one of my last days, I was really thinking about closing the door, because I had to teach, and I had three people walk in like fifteen minutes before I was done, and, and I feel, as much as humanly possible that I will help them, um …

BM: Right

JS: I don't, I don't turn away anyone. Someone might not choose to wait, but I, I will never turn them away

BM: Yeah, right. So, that's one of the dif, most difficult things, I think in this, in this location is that even when, even when, even when we call for help, nobody hears us (laughs). We're kind of like way too far away. That is really the difficult thing, and I think honestly, when I think about it, I think about another kind of, I, I wouldn't say it's a disadvantage, but I think we're so, and especially in this location, we're so front and center you know, we are almost literally in a fish bowl, I think that, um, you know, how do you think that, maybe, maybe that's a good thing. Maybe people, you know, being transparent, maybe people and the Dean, being able to see

exactly what it is we're doing, and exactly how many people we're seeing, maybe that's a really good thing

JS: Yeah

BM: But, I also think that there are disadvantages to that, too. You know, maybe, um, or, I don't know, what don't you answer that. Do you think …

JS: Well, you know, mostly it's always been an advantage because, like, we're right here, you know, you can't tell me …

BM: This is such a great location

JS: Yeah … so, um, this is so beyond amazing. And, again, to see everyone walking in and out, when I'm not busy, I'm waving to people, I , Wednesday we weren't open, but I was still here all afternoon cause I have a night class …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: And, like five of my previous students, and like five faculty stopped in, and I love it. I just love it. And, some nights I think, you know, oh I hope someone saw how busy we were today, and I'm like, "They probably did, and I just didn't see any of them walk by …" (laughs)

BM: Right. Exactly

JS: … because they're just walking by and seeing it. I feel a little bad when I'm not busy and people are walking by

BM: Right

JS: But, I, you know, they have to know that, you know, that's just part of it, and if anyone walks by everyday

BM: Right

JS: They see it all. They see it all

BM: Right. Do we, I would not, we …

JS: (laughs)

BM: Do you still have the same Dean that you did when I …

JS: Well, I know, we had, um, no, Michael Tidwell took over maybe three years ago. I thought we had Mike [this is supposed to be David] Milke

BM: I think, right, so he, it is right when I was on my way when that transition happened. And, I remember he was really supportive of the writing center when he came in. Well, because David Milke was so on board, I felt like. He seemed very, you know, like, anything we can do for the writing center

JS: Mm hmm

BM: Um, and so, how has, um, the the Dean kind of still supported you, and I think this is me moving in now to institutional structures, so, um, Ann had told me that the funding comes from the College of Business. And, how, how do you find that the Dean supports you

JS: Um, I you know, I, I'm not privy to what goes on behind closed doors at all

BM: Right

JS:L But as far as I can tell, he seriously supports us. He's, um, never questioned anything we send in our reports. We don't hear a lot back except for like, "Wow! Awesome, keep it up." You know? Um, he's, you know, friendly, he you know, says "hi" to me, and he used, he, he's one, he actually takes the stairs now, so he used to walk by every time, and you know, and I do too, I take the stairs, so I don't see him as often, but I used to see him twice every day, you know. When he came in and when he left

BM: Right

JS: Um, so the only, I mean, I only had this much of negative a while ago and that was before we had Thomas, and I think, um, um, Ann was striking out, you know, she thought three times she had someone for us and I said, you know, "Another option is to get another part-time faculty." And, and I don't remember if it was the three of us [to someone else: "you're welcome" …]

Faculty: You know, they have, uh, they can substitute a paper for a test, so there may be some folks coming to you for that. They've got a lot of activity reports to write, so …

JS: Good

Faculty: Who knows, maybe we'll draw up some work, I don't know if that's good or bad

JS: Well, that's what we're here for.

Faculty: Alright

JS: If I'm here, I just assume be helping someone

Faculty: Good, good

JS: Thanks so much again

Faculty: Oh, it's no problem, thank *you* for helping them out

JS: Okay, good

Faculty: Yeah

JS: 100 students, one stop – our only huge classroom, and that's the first time I ever spoke in one of his rooms

BM: I had him as an undergrad

JS: I had him as grad, and he's actually the one I was doing research with

BM: Oh, really?

JS: I really, really do like him

BM: What's his name?

JS: Hucsko

BM: That's right

JS: I mean, he goes by coach

BM: Yeah, coach

JS: I really, I really, really like him, um but he's just never responded to my e-mails before, and so, I got a "yes," and it was for his 100 student class!

BM: So, what do you think is the tipping point, there? Not to be, not to do a pun, because I think he talks a lot about the tipping point a lot in his class

JS: Oh yeah, yeah. He makes people read The Tipping Point

BM: Yeah, right!

JS: Um, you mean of why he said, "yes" or …

BM: Yeah, or why do you think it is that this time, or you know, this email, because this is not the first email you've sent him

JS: No. No. Honestly, um, I have my suspicions, which um, I, I would just, I would like to say the official … strike this, don't print this. The official answer might be "why not?" "Hey, she sent an email, why not, and what's it going to hurt?" Cause, he is one of those instructors that goes to the last minute and over

BM: Yes.

JS: So, I can totally see him not wanting to give any time

BM: Right

JS: But, if, uh, if I, you know, I keep saying, "It'll take two to three minutes," and, you know, I held to it. The unofficial to strike answer might be because …. [stricken from the record]

JS: Either way, 100 students, um, there were all, they are all, almost recent transfers, so …

BM: From?

JS: From, it's an entry level

BM: Washtenaw?

JS: It's an entry level point classroom, so it's a 300, so yeah, Washtenaw, and maybe somewhere else where a lot of them, even though 300 might not be, so I specifically address that in his class,

and "A lot of you are transfer students, and you know, if you are a business major or minor, we want you to know about everything." So, I would mention career services and advising, you know, and the writing center, too. They're all here for you here.

BM: Yeah. Good, okay. Um, okay, so, and you know, this is another, these last couple questions, if you don't feel comfortable answering is …

JS: So, did I ever finish that other one?

BM: Um

JS: So, yeah, I don't know, let me finish the one is that when I said, "Well, we can always get part-time faculty …"

BM: Oh, right, yes, yes.

JS: I can't remember who said it, and who was there. I kind of feel like Ann and I were there

BM: Mm hmm

JS: And, maybe we went to see Laverne or someone, and there was, you know, there was kind of a comment about how expense that would be.

BM: Okay

JS: That in, kind of like, "No, we, we couldn't, we wouldn't, we can't have three faculty here, for the money."

BM: Right

JS: And, I kind of felt like, at that point, I'd never met any push back, it was like, more hours? More hours? More hours? More people? You need it? That's great! You're growing? This is good

BM: mm

JS: And, that's where, you know, so Susan and I, you know, have kind of, "well, okay, if this is our staffing, that is fine, but we're just going to feel *horrible* when people leave because we are too busy."

BM: Right

JS: You know, we will document it

BM: right, right

JS: And, um, and it's just, it's just reality that this is, you know, it's like a restaurant, you're only going to do as much business as you have workers. At some point, you can't do more volume.

BM: Right

JS: And, if that, you know, if that's the choice, we'll, then that's, that's fine, you know, that's, I'm going to stop killing myself or …

BM: Yeah

JS: You know, I'm not going to, you know, I will just always do the best, even if it's helping five people at one time, but you know

BM: So there isn't, there is a real and you know, this is a "yes" question anyway, but also there's a real connection, there's a real um link between institutional structure administration, and the work that we're doing here. So, you've made a comment about how you're not going to kill yourself over, right, so now that there's a cap, now that we really know that the only thing that can be, the only, um, there's two part-time faculty and a grad student. And, that's what we can fund, and that is it.

JS: Mm hmm

BM: So, you're not, um, you know, if four people walk through the door right now, you can say, "Well, we can take two of you and if two of you are working on the same one, maybe we can help you," but I'm not going to feel bad for saying, you know …

JS: People wait, you know, people wait all the time

BM: Yeah

JS: And, that's the one, one of the third, or wasn't it (name of student), one of them asked, um, I think it was (student's name) that walked in third said, "Well, how many people are here in front of me." Um, cause, you know, that's the regular people know that too, they will come back a little bit later

BM: Yeah

JS: That that's alright too, that they'll do that. So, again, I don't really mean to say that I'm not gonna …

BM: No, no, no, no, no, I'm not

JS: … um, not worried or something, but I'm not going to beat myself up

BM: Right

JS: I'm used to, like I said, I'm going to help five students

BM: Right

JS: But, I'm not, I'm going to stop making it my only ambition to grow this to be busy, busy, busy, busy, busier

BM: Right

JS: If they've established a cap, then there is a limit

BM: Right

JS: And, you know, we'll do everything we can within

BM: within those resources

JS: those resources, yeah

BM: Yeah, shit, what I was going to say. Oh, do you take appointments, or is everything walk-in?

JS: Almost everything is walk-in

BM: Okay

JS: Yeah

BM: That's just a side note. Um …

JS: Because, what, what has happened. I don't remember if we ever had this, but some certain students will like try to book our whole day.

BM: Oh, yeah, that's right

JS: And, that's what makes it un …

BM: Yeah, I remember, I remember having that conversation

JS: Frequent fliers

BM: Um, how do insti, I think we spoke about this briefly. How do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of this writing center satellite?

JS: Did you say, "inform"?

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Just, um,

BM: I mean, I think that there was a real

JS: You and I seemed to do it. We just kept sending out email. I mean, you assume something came from the dean once, that said, "By the way, we have a writing center," But I don't even know

BM: I don't know that it did

JS: It seemed like you and I were just sending emails to Michael who would …

BM: Right

JS: Right? Who would disperse them

BM: And then, somehow we got this room. And, I think there was like some kind of perfect alignment in the stars with that. And, then, seeing value in us, to give us this room, I think that that was crucial. If they didn't find our, if they didn't see our value, I don't, we wouldn't have gotten this space. But, then that coupled with, you know, people, this is a perfect space

JS: Yeah

BM: And, that's just increased the business

JS: Absolutely.

BM: Yeah

JS: Absolutely. Yeah, it would never, if we were still at that little office, things would be just so different

BM: (snickers) yeah

JS: And, I don't know if you remember …

BM: I would have nightmares

JS: Yeah (laughs) they first offered us something almost as nice on the fifth floor

BM: That's right

JS: She said, "There's students all the time walking around looking for their instructors." I'm like, "Mmmm …" And then, but this was a bookstore

BM: That's right

JS: And, it was only like a few, two weeks

BM: Right

JS: Well, first it was open year-round, and nothing was happening here

BM: Right

JS: I would stop in and talk to the guy, and buy some scantrons from him

BM: (laughs)

JS: Just to, you know, I felt bad

BM: Yeah

JS: Talk about sitting around with nothing to do, and then they started only being open two weeks. And then they realized that I think, I think kind of semi-recently, someone else had an idea for this, and it was like, "No," you know

BM: Was it shot down pretty quickly?

JS: Yeah. It was like, you know, cause you know, everyone always, "Well, this is really nice." And, I think someone had leaked that they are looking for some, like, "Yeah, I know, I've probably got a nicer office than the dean."

BM: (laughs)

JS: But, you know, we need it!

BM: Yeah

JS: We needed it at the time

BM: Because we're, yeah, we do. Um, okay, so what other kinds of institutional and administrative issues emerge when developing a writing center satellite?

JS: Um, I guess, yeah, I mean, the only thing, you said other, so I don't know, I can't off-hand think of other, the only two things I can think of is just that communicating

BM: Mm hmm

JS: That we're here, what we're doing, and to gain the trust of the instructors, and that will just take some time

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Um, you know, and that communication, you know, like I said, you and I did, you know, to, we tried to walk through the hallway, put fliers out, for every instructor, we'd email like crazy, we did blackboards

BM: Right

JS: Um, you know, we did everything we could to try to get that awareness and now over time, you know, first people know us here, second the location, third the classroom visits

BM: Yeah

JS: You know, we just ke, you know, we don't, I don't, you know, Ann now and then will say, like, "We need to come up with some ideas," cause of the new locations and maybe they got the crummy location, you know, the crummy locations within another location (?)

BM: Right

JS: And, um, you know, I can share everything we do, or what we have done, but I don't feel a need to do anything different, especially when again, when we are, you know, we are in some ways, caps

BM: Right, you're at your limit

JS: Mm hmm

BM: Really. Um, oh, one other like just small thing. So, you've got that whole shelf over there of resources and books and I saw that you came to reference, you know, the text that they're using,

so how often do you use resources like that? And, there's a whole stack of reports. I'm guessing those are all examples …

JS: Those are all Susan's, yeah

BM: Are they examples, or?

JS: Yeah, so I mean, we don't need all those. Susan, I think had every single report anyone had ever turned in

BM: (laughs)

JS: And, so, I mean, really because we shared an office for a while

BM: Yeah, right

JS: And, there was a huge shelf and it was full of all her reports, and when she was told, um, she decided too, to move in here permanently, this is our only office

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Which is not only the best location for the writing center, but for the office./ I walk in, I drop off my stuff, and then I, uh, how wonderful it is, or come for class and pick up my stuff and walk out. I don't have to …

BM: Yeah

JS: … go to the fourth floor

BM: Right

JS: And then back down, just cause they keep giving me a room on the first floor

BM: Wow? They do? That's really nice

JS: Cause I don't, I don't really like, this one that's really a fishbowl, I love it.

BM: Yeah

JS: And, so, Michael Pickerell knows this about us, so I am always, almost always put in there. It's so convenient …

BM: That's nice

JS: … to go back and forth here

BM: Yup

JS: So, what was the question?

BM: Um, resources

JS: Oh, so, so she moved everything, I know she threw out a lot of reports, but she just, you know, still had a (cannot udnerstnd) 100, and so like I have three of mine, and I will pull out hers too …

BM: Mm hmm

JS: So, um, so, you know, we, we, use, so these are here because we use, these are two different intro to business books

BM: Mm hmm

JS: And, they're a little bit different. You know, of course, the *Everyday Writer*

BM: Right

JS: And, APA

BM: Oh, yup

JS: And then we've got, this is a sample APA paper

BM: Oh, okay

JS: So these are the things, you know, we most use right here, so it's, they are always here by the other computer

BM: Yeah

JS: And then, we have whatever else we want to pull up

BM: And those he, I think that those probably help with like, you know, genre specific assignments and that kind of thing and yeah

JS: That's, that's was my thought, it was, um, the one about what's sort of different

BM: Yeah

JS: Is, uh, it's, it's, it kind of touches on other questions slightly, is this whole APA thing

BM: Mm hmm

JS: IS that, like, one thing is, um, whenever they do the APA even workshops at Halle

BM: Mm hmm

JS: It's all about these scholarly journal articles

BM: Mm

JS: And, we're not about only scholarly journal articles

BM: Ah

JS: So much, again, writing is real

BM: Right

JS: And, so, like, for example, um, my one of my challenges was with teaching 202 class is the big report, it's a research report

BM: Mm hmm

JS: And I, and I feel like, my, my job is to my purpose of that class and this report is two things, one is to prepare for business writing and then prepare them for real business writing and then prepare them for all the other assignments in this building

BM: Right

JS: And, they're not exactly the same. They should be, in my mind, they should be the same

BM: Mm hmm

JS: But because we still have, you know, a lot of reports and things that are always APA perfect formatting and all this theory and all that, which, so when I, with my report now, I was trying to think of what topic can I give them that with seomthing they really might do in real life

BM: Right

JS: So, I switched mine to, um, I have this is, is a two topics and one Susan's which was like an issue in the, but my first topic is an industry comparison for them to take two similar companies and do a comparison of …

BM: Interesting

JS: … like management, marketing, financial, all this

BM: Mm hmm

JS: And I thought was realistic for them to do, that on the job, they might be like, "We need to study our competitors and compare them against ourselves."

BM: Yeah

JS: So, I did that, and so more than ever, all these references are used (cannot understand) article

BM: Right

JS: And, it was really hard to even find how to appropriately cite a corporate website

BM: Right, yeah

JS: And so, so that, that's a big difference of business writing and um, and other types of writing, again, is, is, it is all has to do with that "real" factor of trying to, you know, do it, mimic, you know, prepare them for real writing on the job

BM: Mm hmm

JS: And, so, like, for, on, for example, that report, I've, you know, force them to do APA of citations, but not of the report

BM: Mm hmm

JS: Because I'll say, "In work, you don't have to do APA format, you would in reports, but I think it's very important for you to know and probably cite…" and I will probably say, too, "In, if this is for work, you wouldn't have to have perfect APA formatting, you better give credit

BM: Right, where credit is due

JS: where credit is due. Always

BM: Right

JS: Always and so, and so I do that, the APA part of it, I do, is to prepare for other APA papers. I feel like, I, I think all the time, should I make them do it in APA format of the entire report, and I, for me, it's like, there's just, it would be just one too many things to force them to do, and that that's the easier part …

BM: Right

JS: … how to do, um, is this, is this subtitle capitalized …

BM: Right

JS: Or centered

BM: Right

JS: That's easier than all the APA … my students come out and they'll be like, "Well, you really taught us how to do APA, and I'm really going to be grateful for the rest of my classes." And, I'm like, "Then, they better require it because because I, we killed them."

BM: Right

JS: Thomas realized that between Susan and I that he knows, he knows, that my students, you know, same assignment, they better have every period and comma in the right place. And for Susan, that doesn't matter, but with Susan's, she's got her own things that you better make sure that they have and so, he's right in the middle then, and so that's fun. And, I always thin, too, when I'm helping students, I'm like, they'll be like, "Well, is this right?" And, I'll be like, (sighs) "sort of …"

BM: (laughs)

Thomas: (in background) For her, yes

JS: For her, yes. Exactly

BM: Well, that's the other thing with the memos that you were working with, they were, it's, it said one thing in the book, but the instructor wanted something different

JS: Mm hmm

BM: You know, it's, it's yeah, it's always really tricky, I think, with all the different instructors, but …

JS: Yeah, and so yeah, so the fewer we deal with them more likely, we can really meet their needs

BM: Thatss right

JS: And, that's what I, oh first, I thought I was, um, like, Kroll (cannot understand), well that's a newer person …

BM: Yeah

JS: (Cannot understand)

BM: Right

JS: Yeah. I should try to figure out who that is. I wonder if I'm teach, I wonder if I'm doing their class cause I should ask them that

BM: Yeah

JS: That would be good

BM: Yeah. Well, that is all the questions that I have

JS: Oh yay!

BM: I really appreciate … I'm going to stop …

JS: That's fine

February 19, 2016

IH: So today is February 19, 2016, my name is […], I am the Agriculture Life Science and Scholarly communication librarian here at Virginia Tech. And, um, I'm an adult human, and live on planet earth

BM: (laughs)

IH: for demographic information. Is there any other information identifying or otherwise that would be helpful to you

BM: Um, maybe some background about you know, how you've found yourself here

IH: Sure

BM: you know and maybe your interests

IH: Sure

BM: in terms of

IH: Um, so I grew up in the Midwest, so the home farm is in Minnesota and I actually ran uh 230, 230 acres and 120 milking cows and so there was grazing dairy that I ran. And in addition to the grazing dairy and 120 milking, um, I had a direct marketing meat business and so I also raised pigs, chicken, and then I sold meat as well directly to consumers and so I have a very large and robust agricultural background

BM: Mm hmm

IH: um, my uh one of one of the family members have traced back our family tree and I can go back 13 generations of farmers, so I've got an Ag background, um, so, uh my father is an extension agent and then my uncle is an extension agent as well in two different states back from the Midwest

BM: What does that mean?

IH: extension, I can absolutely get into, that's actually going to be part of what my job entails working with, um, so every state has a land-grant university, sometimes more than one, and the land grant mission entails that information and research that is created at the land-grant needs to be extended into the community, and so extension was created to be able to fill that function

BM: Okay

IH: and so the fact that Virginia Tech is a land-grant is something that is very important to me because I made sure that I got my Master's degree at a land-grant, which is the University of Tennessee Knoxville, so I have my Master's degree in information science and then during my master's program, I was part of the (unclear) scholarship, (unclear) scholars and we looked at scientific data curation and so my science is agriculture and so I'm looking at how to work in a very discipline-specific way that way, so my master's degree was a way that I was finally able to pull my interest in the library and information world and agriculture together, because I've always gone back and forth between the two of them

BM: Sure

IH: but I finally figured out a way to be able to pull them together,. And so within that aspect with me having a very deep agricultural background and expertise, and I also have the training and the professional skills within the library and information science world, when I pull them together, I'm kind of an extension agent for extension agents, and my specialty is the agriculture aspect of of data and information, and so when you're looking at doing discipline-specific work, yes, I work in a discipline-specific fashion, and I'm a liaison to the Agriculture and Life Sciences, but within that I have a very broad spectrum of people and disciplines that I support, and so even though I am the agriculture librarian, there are two other librarians here within the university libraries that directly support the college of agriculture and life sciences. There's also Ginny Pannabecker and Keri Dubose. Ginny Pannabecker works with more of the human aspects of things since she's the health sciences librarian, and so she works with biochemistry and public health, and so within the college of ag and life sciences, she's directly connected to human food

and HNFE, human nutrition food and exercise, um, and then of course, there's the biology aspect of things that are shared between colleges, and so she definitely supports the life sciences from the biology standpoint. Keri Dubose is the college librarian for the college of natural resources and the environment and animal sciences, and so Keri's got the critters, and so she works with the dairy sciences, the animal and poultry sciences, and she's got that under aspect of things, and we all work very closely together, but those are how things are officially divided because we need to put some demarcation in place just for responsibilities

BM: Mm hmm

IH: um, particularly when we're looking at collection development to know what we're doing that way to be able to have resources to support students and just as a, students and faculty across the board, just to be able to have some demarcation of lines of responsibility, and so for myself, I have, um, direct responsibility to work with agriculture and applied economy, and ALCE which Ag Leadership and Communication, I also work with the Ag-Tech program which is a two-year program here at Tech which can then roll into a four year program, but some folk just take the two year degree. Um, there is also food science technology, entomology, plantology and weed science, horticulture, um I'm missing another um but then in addition to that, I also am the liaison for the extension and the A-Recs, and the A-Recs are the ag research and education centers. And so those are the research farms that are stationed throughout um in 11 different places in Virginia, and then the local offices, county office for the extension agents, there's something in every single county in Virginia

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IH: and so I support those folk as well, so that's

BM: So, you're busy

IH: Yeah

BM: (laughs)

IH: I've got a few people that I work with, um, it's also very important to me because I do have that responsibility towards extension and the A-Recs to make sure that I work with them in the way that they need to um need to be interfaced with. They're not physically located on the Blacksburg campus, I cannot expect them to be so therefore, I need to work with them and go to them to be able to support them in what they're doing, and so that pretty much means to have laptop will travel, and I am definitely available online responding to emails and you know, working with Skype and Google Hangouts and different things in that regard. On the library side of things, that means that we have a e-preferred policy with our collection to be able to make sure that all of the resources we have are available in an electronic, online format for access off Blacksburg campus. That also has effects with those students because when they're not physically coming into the library, we lose a point of contact when they're trying to find the resources that are actually physically located here, however, having things be available and online 24-7 is much more important than, you know, losing that potential point of contact to be able to help them find a resource in the stacks.

[7:15]

IH: Um, so

BM: Why is that so

IH: Because if they're reaching out for a resource, if they find it immediately, then they can keep working with what they've got going on. There's very few times where somebody would come in for a specific resource where they already don't have a structure of what they want to do and what they're expecting to do, and many times, finding a resource in the stacks is a five-10 minute type of proposition, and sometimes you can parlay that into being able to help with other things, but many times, you can't. And, so, it's the person doing the seeking that is coming to you and so you have to interface with them in the way that gives them what they want to make sure that they have a positive interaction, and sometimes they don't want any further information. They don't want any further help, they don't understand the other aspects of things or they haven't planned the time for it

BM: Mm hmm

IH: and that's a lot of the reason that you know, finding one resource in the stacks is a time consuming process, and it's the "Oh, I have to get this paper done tonight"

BM: Right

IH: type of thing, and so the students aren't, and many times it's students, although it's not all the time

BM: Yeah (laughs)

IH: and sometimes it can be faculty, um but at that point in time, they don't have the capacity or desire to continue to interface with us and so then to be able to have the most positive interaction possible, to be able to have continued and ongoing contact, it's better just to let them roll with what they want, therefore, if by giving them the resources that they want online so they have that available, so they can roll with what they're going on, then we're providing that service. Yes, sometimes that means that library is invisible because the stuff that we do is behind the scenes, and they're like, "Oh, what do we need librarians for?" Who do you think makes google work

BM: (laughs)

[9:00]

IH: Who do you think makes that all go and all those connections happen? We do. But, on some levels, we're doing our jobs properly if you never have to see us. If everything's just available and we have everything online in a searchable format in a way it pulls up so you can find exactly what you need, whenever you need it, so it's not a um, it's not a challenge for you to be able to lay your hands on the resources that you want. Now, many times there's information overload at this point in time where we need to be able to direct students more specifically and actually help them filter, so at that point in time, I very much encourage them to do a one-on-one appointment with us, so we can work with them. And, so in that function, yes, I could see how we would be

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similar to a tutoring function, in that regard to be able to give that one-on-one consultation, um, a consult, a reference interview, both of those words are something that you'd hear in the library to be able to kind of represent that type of aspect of things. Sometimes it is a "okay, you're telling me that you need to be able to find an aerial photograph with millet and weeds and the fields to be able to then identify what kind of weeds they are." What you're actually looking for, is data on that, so you were going to use the pictures to be able to take a percentage of that field, but instead of being able to get you that picture, I can actually get you the data to be able to say that that work has been already done, so you can work strictly with the data to be able to move forward to be able to get done what you need to get done, but I wouldn't have known that if I had just gone with the initial, "Oh, this is what you need, here's what it is." So, um, to be able to have that consultation, that interviewing process, brings forth what the individuals need to be able to um truly get at what's going to assist them and help them move forward

[10:45]

IH: so, there's, there's aspect of things

BM: Okay, so I will probably ask you questions potentially about that

IH: Sure

BM: Your one-on-one

IH: Sure

BM: You know interactions with students because that does very much

IH: echo

BM: align with writing center work

IH: Yup

BM: But, also I'm, I'm also interested to know then in your kind of liaison work

IH: certainly

BM: with disciplines as well

IH: Sure

BM: So, with that being said

IH: mm hmm

BM: um, answer these questions

IH: Yup

BM: whichever way you want

IH: mm hmm

BM: So the first one is why, so I guess we could say why was the liaison space or why do you think the liaison spaces were created

IH: Um, I'm happy to answer that question, but I honestly don't think you need to get so far away from your questions

BM: Okay

IH: because we are looking at how we can support those students and that writing support is a huge part of that because we are finding that that's problematic for those students, and so um

BM: Can you tell me more about that

IH: Yes, I can absolutely tell you more about that. So, very briefly, the liaison aspect of librarianship has been around for a very long time, but sometimes we call it different things, and so that's one of the reasons that you're going to hear that we have different titles, so Keri's title is the college librarian for the college of CNRE, or yeah, I've doubled up the college there, but whatever, um, whereas I am the liaison to the college of agriculture and life sciences and so there is a difference therein. Um, and the nuances of the differences are not necessarily important to other people because the very um very basic aspect is that Keri supports CNRE and I support CALS, and Keri absolutely works with CALS as well, but it's we have a support and service functions towards those aspects, how we interface with that and how the back end library magic happens and recording lens and different things can be different, for the people within the colleges, I don't anticipate that they're going to see a heck of a lot of different aspect that way, so I wouldn't bother to talk about that. But, if we're talking about the writing aspect of things, that is absolutely something that we have seen that students aren't being trained in formal rhetoric

[13:05]

IH: and, they don't have the capacity to be able to build an appropriate argument to work with what they're doing in a scholarly context. So part of my job title is scholarly communications which is one of the reasons that I work with this, um, and I've had training in that and then of course, my bachelor's degree is in English, so I can work with this in that direction. I was approached by the librarian that held the college librarian position to the college agriculture and life sciences and so um she retired and then they hired me on and she was able to give me a hand off which was a wonderful thing, so she and somebody else in CALS had identified the need for some training for some students to be able to avoid plagiarism, and so that's the way that this got pulled together, in particularly when you're looking at when things are plagiarized or paraphrased appropriately coming at it from a discipline-specific stand point because there certain types of common knowledge, there are certain types of appropriate things within the field that absolutely need to be support in that direction

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IH: Um, so that's the reason that I got pulled in, um, the faculty member from CALS is on the honor court, and so she was seeing some problems that were coming through, and so she definitely wanted to approach things

BM: mm hmm

IH: in a pro-active manner to be able to allow a safe sandbox to experiment with different things, to learn things appropriately on the front end and then not be punitive

BM: Sure

IH: because the punitive stuff needs to happen to be able to address you know really outright aspects that are incredibly inappropriate, but there are some cultural aspects

BM: Sure

IH: particularly with international students

BM: right

IH: Where they have a different understanding of what um in an honoring aspect and what is you know flattery, um imitation is the best form of flattery type of thing

BM: Right

IH: Whereas that's inappropriate within this system, and so there's definitely a western headspace that needs to be able to be conveyed and so that in itself is almost discipline specific aspect of things, you know, there's a cultural aspect there, and then within the disciplines, there can be a different way of looking things as well. Um, in addition to the scholarly writing and the scholarly communication, um there's the data aspect of things, and data is more and more part of what's going on and not just the analysis and the report from that data to be able to show transparency and to have good science, and potentially reproducibility and so how you handle the data is very important as well and that also has a very discipline-specific tac um within the biological sciences that are looking at gene-sequencing, particularly in the plant. Everything is open, everybody, you find something, you publish it, you can't get published without including your data sets, that is absolutely something that is 100% that is the way that it is done, and if you try to not publish your data, you won't get published

BM: Mm

IH: and it is considered almost malpractice at this point in time and so uh that's something that is very important, but if you look at something like ag-economics, they are pulling their data from open sources to begin with and they have to run all of their regressions and analysis and whatever that way, and so they might say how they've done it, but they don't necessarily append their data because it's like, "Oh well that's publically available, you should be able to get to it." Um, and so there's a very different flavor to how they work with their data that way, but then particularly in the public health sciences, there's HIPPA, and there's different aspects that way

BM: Right

IH: and um, and things to be able to work with the data in that regard, and so the appropriateness in how you work with your data is absolutely a part of the scholarly communications conversations at this point in time and so that's another reason, where having discipline specific information is really really important

[17:10]

IH: So, along with that, so we're working with the cultural aspect of things, we're working with the discipline specific aspects of things, we're talking about something as specific as you know, genomics, or horticulture or ag-economics, but then we're also looking at things from the scholarly communication side of things where we have different portions of that and so within the library we break that out and so we've got a copy right librarian, and we have a data services department where we have consultants that are in there and we have one consultant right now who works with Engineering and we're hiring two more consultants, and the search is open right now, where we will have a consultant for the humanities and a consultant for the sciences to be able to work with those discipline specific aspects with data to be able to help and assist people pull things together to be able to put things appropriately together in all of that scope. So, we've got that aspect of things, not only do we have that aspect of things, but we're trying to assist people with their scholarly communication needs, so that is being part of the scholarly communication just by being able to have access to the information so they know what the scholarly communication, like what's happening in their discipline. There's an aspect there of, and then there is also the aspect of being able to add to that conversation, and so that's publishing, and so we have a couple of people whose main job is to be able to assist with publishing, and so we're looking at open access, and so we also have to talk about intellectual property, and we have to talk about copyright, patents, trademarks, all of those things are part of the scholarly communication, so yes we've got disincline specific aspects, but then we have that cross-cutting aspect on the library sciences type of things to be able to work with and then when you add that third dimension of cultural aspects, it can be really challenging

BM: mm hmm

IH: so, um why was the writing support space in my discipline created? We were looking at the scientific writing workshop to be able to give people a place to explore all of those aspects in a safe sandbox in a way that they could uh very uh safely look at those different types of things, to be able to be taught, what is an authoritative source, particularly within your discipline. Where can you go for accurate information? And so we're training those types of things, and so a lot of what we try to do is to train people how to do it themselves, and so then we also have layers of train the trainer, and that's absolutely something we do, and so we work with faculty, I work with my extension, um, we've got a first year experience class that I'm involved with where we did training for the peer leaders to make sure the peer leaders had good information so that when they were interfacing with their students, they were getting good information that way, and so that's what's happening with that. And then overall, again, just going back to the rhetoric aspect and being able to formulate a coherent argument, and we're trying to do a persuasive argument, sometimes throws people off, incredibly throws them off, it's like, "Well, we're not supposed to persuade, we're not supposed to do that type of writing in science, that's inappropriate." And it's

like, no no, no no no no no no, we have to persuade people that we know what we're doing and we want to take them through the argument that we have created and that we have walked through and that we have done the research for to be able to show them what's going on. And, by only presenting facts without having the ethos around it, it's actually inappropriate and it isn't as, the scholarship is not as robust. And, it seems pedantic and only you know, a recitation of facts where it could have been a bullet point list, so that's an aspect of good scholarship but then again, it can look very different depending on the disciplines. Um, there's different aspects of how engineering what to interface with things, versus the humanities, and of course within the communication, or the college of agriculture and life sciences, it is more of a science slant, and we do work in that direction, um, but yeah, within discipline, there's different aspects that way, and so with the scientific wiring workshop, I invited different faculty to be able to come in and so the way it's structured currently, is that the first day we have uh about two hours of just lecture style. Here's piece of information that you absolutely have to know, we talk about authoritative resources, we talk about intellectual property, we talk about what is paraphrasing, what is plagiarizing, how to recognize those things, how to do appropriate paraphrasing and then we set up an assignment where there are different disciplines, deepening on the faculty members that have signed up, so every faculty member chooses three articles in their discipline, and so then the students can choose whoever, whatever disciplines are there to be able to work with and so I've had things like mountain top coal removal and stream quality, and how it affects stream quality, and another concept was vitamins and how they affect obesity and another concept was how chocolate affect cardiovascular health, and so you know, those are three of my faculty and so they choose papers that focused on those aspects of their discipline, so then the students self-select who they want to work with within the range that I have that way, and then the papers, they're asked to read the three abstracts, because within the time frame that we have, it hasn't been, in particularly with international students, um, they don't really have the ability to be able to read all of the article, although that is a weakness within the assignment and we are working with that to be able to potentially do that differently in the future, but read the abstracts, and then appropriately cite them and appropriately paraphrase them and pull them together with other knowledge that the students already have to be able to present a one page like less than 500 word paper that is then turned back in to the faculty members that have that discipline specific um discipline specific knowledge and then it's critiqued

[23:51]

IH: and so they are given written feedback for their specific writing sample and then we come back the next day at 1:00 and sit in small groups that, at that point in time, you are in the small group as the same topic that you have chosen, and then you walk through what that feedback has been to be able to then learn from your peers, interface with them, see different things that way, then you're able to ask of the faculty member, any question that you have in that regard, to be able to ask very discipline specific questions, then so, after that, we pull the panel together to be able to ask questions overall, and then the faculty members that have given feedback are on the panel, and they have also brought a couple of other people in and so I've had Nancy Dudek who is the grants coordinator for the college of ag and life sciences and she approaches scientific writing and persuasive arguments in a very different fashion for having to writing grants but that

is something that is absolutely something that is part of the scholarly communication, of the scholarly landscape at this point in time, you have to know how grants work within this environment and so I really appreciate her perspective on things, and so that's been an aspect where that's been, yeah it's college level specific, um and she can speak to other things as well but there's there's aspects that Nancy brings to the table that I really appreciate and then we talk through and we ask the faculty members any questions that have come up within the workshop and then I generally like to ask them some other specific things about you know, what do you think scholarly writing in your discipline looks like, you know, how do you formulate your research question, how do you know what an authoritative source is, some of those different things, and have everybody answer them to be able to look at what it might be different, and how it is similar across those disciplines and I generally have had seven different faculty members, and so I've got a panel of 8 or 9 people which has been incredible to be able to, I mean, yes, it takes a little bit of time to get through the answers and sometimes it's the "yeah, what she said," type of thing, but it's the "yes, and" that has gotten really really interesting or, "no, but" and to be able to differentiate what's going on that way, so that's been really fantastic. Um, Dean DePauw from the graduate college has actually opened up the scientific writing workshop and she talks about the ethics of scholarly communications, and um of scientific writing, and so that's something that we also end on, it's the "Okay, we've walked through all of this because it's an ethical aspect of what we are doing" how to make sure we are doing things properly, and appropriately, so we don't do things in an unethical fashion so we can have strong science and sound science to be able to advance sciences as a whole and the communication and the scholarship around what we're doing

BM: yeah

IH: so

BM: yeah, great, great answer

IH: (laughs)

BM: um, okay, so they why a would a writing support space be created for specific disciplines as opposed to or as an extension of the writing center

[27:06]

IH: because when you get to the graduate level, the higher level of writing, um there are some aspects that can't be, you need to understand what's going on to understand what's common knowledge and how to be able to work with phrases, um, there's an aspect that way that I'm like, "Yeah." Discipline specific, you've got a general background knowledge to be able to wade through things and not get stuck on reconstituted bovine sematropin, you know

BM: I have no idea what you just said

IH: right

BM: exactly

IH: RBST, uh it's what they write on milk carton, "Milk from cows not treated with RBST, no significant statistical differences have been shown from cows treated with RBST versus not." Uh, so there's that aspect, however, there are basic principles of good writing that apply no matter what discipline you're in, and I think the students don't understand that, which is super frustrating to me, so in some ways, I say that there shouldn't be discipline specific aspects of things and it should just be here are fundamental principles of what you need to do and I can say this because there are fundamental principles of what needs to happen for folk to be able to access information that is across the board, so yes, I am going to talk with my faculty first to be able to support them and go in a do our one-shot, which is, one-shot is short for one shot instruction, so we generally have a class, one class time to talk within a course, a semester long course, or however long a course is, so we call them one-shots, so yeah, I'm going to go in and teach the one-shots for my faculty first, but if I'm out of town, or if I'm not available, I'm going to call one of the other librarians and they're going to be able to step in and make it happen, and yeah, I'm going to go to my sci-tech team, the science liaisons first to be able to have them cover for me, but I would not even blink about having the humanities librarians step in to be able to do that because they have the chops and they have that skill to be able to make that happen, and I see it across the board with the writing as well

[29:12]

IH: There are basic fundamental principles that people, and I keep going back to the rhetoric aspect of things and the argument you know, you need to be able to form a coherent argument, you need to be able to write persuasively to be able to walk people through what you're thinking, and everybody needs to know how to do that to be able to truly communicate, and that's what it comes down to. If we're looking to communicate, then we need to follow the rules to be able to communicate, and there are some rules that are stop at the stop sign because that's what we have decided as a society and there are some rules, like you have to um I don't know, like by definition that's the way that it works, um you are a driver of a car because you are driving a car, you are pedestrian because you are walking and so there are some things that way to be able to communicate, you have to be using forms that we recognize as communication

[30:10]

IH: Yes, interpretive dance is great, that is fantastic, is that a way that is a recognized form to be able to communicate research results about RBST? Not currently

BM: (laughs)

IH: However, within the scholarly communications realm, we are working with dancers, and we are working with artists to be able to affix in a way that other people would be able to access and recognize to be able to work with that style of communication, to be able to making things happen, and so we're working in a not paper based aspect of things again, and so we're looking at an e-portfolio would look like, we're looking at what an electronic these and dissertation would looking, we're looking at what needs to happen to be able to work with the technologies we have right now to be able to affix them in a way that we can archive them to be able to affix them in a way to be able to put a stamp on it to say you know, this is done and so it's finished in

this point in time for people to be able to graduate and move on and we have to have a copy of that for their thesis or dissertation but we're also looking for this to be functional, this must be an interactional aspect of things, and so there's communication needs that happen with an interactive component of things that may have a writing component but it also may have, "here is a video clip to be able to show this particular flip of a hand" to indicate something within a Hindi dance that gives the entire aspect of the dance a different flavor so therefore, when you use that hand flip in a salsa dance, then it's actually, and there's scholarship to be had there, but there's different ways to be able to work with that and so within the library context, we've got that going on, but then there's also discipline-specific aspects of what's happening there so we can support that answers, and then we can support the folk that are showing a grafting technique with apple trees, how do we work with that to be able to affix it in a permanent format (laughs) whatever that looks like, and uh still be fair to um the person that has done the work to be able to give them credit but to be able to make it accessible in other, you know, to be able to make it accessible, particularly within agricultural with the extension and with our land-grant mission, we need to be able to make sure scholarship is available and that those techniques can get out to the people where it can make a difference for types of things, so. I feel like I have gone very far afield, sorry (laughs)

BM: (laughs) no, no that's fine, can you um, I do want to follow up

IH: yes, please

BM: Just with one, you mentioned a couple of times

IH: mm hmm

BM: the basic fundamental principles for writing

IH: Mm hmm

BM: so, as a liaison into you know the sciences, can you talk a lot about forming a coherent argument, can you um give an example of other basic, you know, kind of fundamental writing principles that you see as important

[33:14]

IH: So, what a scientific article, um is a format, is in some factions, in some ways, um a formatting issue, you need to have your results section, you need have your conclusion section, you need to have your methods sections, you need to have a literature review section, you need to have your opening, you need to have your abstract, you need to have your title, um all of those things need to be in place for it to be a scientific article

BM: Mm hmm

IH: and so within those, they have different appropriate fundamental underlying principles of how you work with it, so within the literature review, it is absolutely appropriate to say, "Smith said 'apples are awesome'" and then you know, you cite things and then the very next sentences um "Barenstein says that apples are terrible" correct citation, and you just keep rolling through,

and it's just line after line after sentence after sentence of citations of other people's work to be able to frame your scholarship. Doing that type of writing in your methods section, less appropriate, but you still need to make sure that you cite the methods that you're working with and if you found them other places, yes you need to put them in there. If you have the "Smith said," "Barenstein said," "Haugen said," in your results section and in your conclusion, it's absolutely inappropriate because those are the places where you need to be talking and your voice needs to be foremost or that the panel of people that are working needs to be foremost and so there's different aspects within the scholarly paper of what we expect to see and where we expect to see it and how we expect to be able to work with it

BM: Mm hmm

IH: and, so that's a function of writing to be able to appropriately reference the facts and figures and tables that you have. It's a function of writing to be able to work with the citations and different things that way. But, it's also a factor of library and information science to be able to interface with the information in a way that is coherent and accepted within the culture and the discipline within which you are working, so um, there's an aspect of writing and scholarship and librarianship that are so intertwined that it is really difficult to tease them out and so when you said, you kind of shifted the way your questions were worded a little bit for me, on some levels, I'm like, "don't bother"

BM: Yeah

[35:43]

IH: because it's just a different word, you know, you talk about tutoring, we talk about a reference interview

BM: right

IH: and so it's walking people through where they're at, how they want to interface with you and then you know, giving them what they're asking for, while also making sure that you understand where they're truly at and then how to be able to get them from where they're at to where they need to be, perspective wise, to be able for them to understand what they did "wrong" um so they don't do it again per say, so, yeah

BM: Good, okay. Um, what might the writing support space provide to students that the writing center does not? And then just to throw in number 4 as well, I'm going to ask the kind of opposite of that, what does the writing center provide that the writing support space does not?

IH: I kind of envision the writing support space as more of the hands-on, doing your writing, and then you can put your head up and say, "How did this work again?" And, then the writing center is an aspect you have something that is written, affixed in whatever media you're working with, and you come in to have it critiqued overall to be able to have like almost a bang, bang, bang, bang list of here's challenges thereof and then you walk away to be able to work with that. And, so you could, like, walk away from the writing center to be able to go into your writing support space to address those as you can, and then you're like "Oh, I don't quite get this. I don't

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remember how this actually needs to work" to be able to ask for support to be able to work through that. And then, in a writing support space, I can see that discipline-specific aspect being more important um particularly to be able to play with the nuances and the specifics of common knowledge and um different types of language language thereof, in particular, I'm thinking of the phrase, "persons with disabilities." That is the appropriate phrase to work with and so you know, there might be other appropriate phrases that way that uh need to need to happen like that

[37:53]

BM: So, then what are the kind of advantages and implications of having separate spaces for those, for both of those things

IH: time, energy, being able to have space to be able to make that happen

BM: Sure

IH: People that could staff them, be available, uh, that have the knowledge and skills to be able to give good information and good feedback within those spaces, and not just have an echo chamber that reinforces, um, poor poor writing. That can be really challenging, you know yeah you might be most comfortable with somebody sitting next to you that speaks your native tongue um to be able to ask questions, but they have been taught the same type of idioms that end of being inappropriate for different reasons

BM: Right

IH: Um, and we were talking earlier you know about the cultural aspects things that way, if you're comfortable with them, because of that shared culture, you may have a perspective that is inappropriate than when you're working in a second culture, or a third culture, so, and you know, just physical space to make it happen and what hours are available, and when do people come in and do you make appointments, or do you have walk-in support, and challenges that way. As a liaison, my motto kind of is, "Have laptop, will travel." I'll meet people wherever they're at, but they have to make an appointment with me

BM: Right

IH: You know, how often am I sitting in my office where I can accommodate people that walk in. I try to do so whenever I can, but that happens infrequently

BM: Mm hmm

IH: You know, and yes we have a staffed reference desk, and so we have a front line where the library is open 24-5, and the reference desk is open at 9am and is staffed until 11p, 5 days a week

BM: Wow

IH: and then we have staffing for 10 or 12 hours on Saturday and Sunday, and so, but that takes a lot of resources you know

BM: yeah

IH: That takes a lot of resources and we think it's appropriate for a couple of different reasons, but we're reevaluating that, you know?

BM: Mm hmm

[39:54]

IH: So, and that's another reason that I said, you know, "If we can have things available for students, faculty, staff online, so when they're searching for it, they get it immediately," it's a resource aspect of things. It's our person hours, it's making things happen that way. The more that we have available and the more that people are comfortable just finding things for themselves, and in the google age with the single search box, there's a lot of things we can build in that way to be able to allow people to interface with information by themselves

BM: Mm hmm

IH: Be that good, be that bad, it's a reality, we have to work with it, so

BM: Yeah, okay, great, so, is it okay if we move on to tutoring practices, um we don't have too much time left

IH: Yeah

BM: We're running out, and so, um, I definitely want to get to institutional structures

IH: Sure

BM: So, do you mind we if skip to that and then if we have time, we'll go back

IH: Yup

BM: Um, so who funds your writing support space

IH: Well, for the scientific writing workshop, we were um able to get funding from CALS to be able to supply some um refreshments and so that was really fantastic but then for the people involved, um, it was the library and CALS that pays the salaries of the people and because I work at the library, um, then I have the right to be able to schedule space, and so I scheduled time in our meeting space here in the library, but anybody associated with Virginia Tech has the right to be able to book those spaces

[41:29]

IH: and so whose funding that space, it's the university as a whole, honestly, because the salaries come from the college of agriculture and life sciences and the salaries come from the university libraries, and then it is our function to be able to interface with students in this way. And so then I was just asking for help and people volunteered their time to be able to put it together, and so that's where that's coming from

BM: Yeah, great. Um, how do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of the writing support space

[41:56]

IH: We also had the support of Dean DePauw to be able to come in to look at the ethical aspect of things, to be able to truly try to be practice about things, and so the institutional structures, that was a huge, huge push from the grad school that way important to them and so therefore, other things are happening from that and so um the institutional structures are just the ways that things work, you know, it's kind of like our municipalities, you know

BM: Right

[42:28]

IH: You talk to the major to be able to make something happen at different levels and on some levels you know, you call your utility company and they send out a specific person to be able to make it happen, you just have to go through the channels

BM: Right

IH: Um, so how do they inform the creation and development, somebody says "Hey this is important" and then is willing to put time, I mean, Dean DePauw is there to be able to open things up and say how important it is to her

BM: Yeah

IH: Or, money, you know. CALS was willing to put refreshments behind it, and we had 50 people, 55 people and we did um breakfast and coffee for two days

BM: Wow, that's nice

IH: Yeah, um, and the last year when we actually had a full day session, they actually did lunch as well, and so, I mean, they put some significant resources behind that

BM: Yeah

IH: and it's not an insignificant portion of my time to pull this all together as well

BM: Right

IH: and my leadership is very happy to make that happen, and so then not only did I have 7 or 8 faculty members coming in for at least a couple hours, um and then some of those faculty members put more like you know, 10 or 12 hours into what they were doing, um, to be able to you know offer that, then I also had library personal that came in to be able to be roving support to be able to keep things rolling and be available and so there were hundreds of person hours that were put into this that was you know, supported and so how do the institutional structures work with this, you know, we say "Can we?" and they say, "Oh yeah, that's important," and then we roll with it and make it part of our jobs

BM: Yeah, um what other kinds of institutional and administrative issues emerge when developing a writing support space

IH: Some of the things I talked about earlier, you know, how are you going to staff it, how are you going to keep it open, how are you going to make sure that it's marketed, how are you going to make sure that um you are able to be able to have a consistent sustainable practice, uh, port is one of the aspects that I kind of thing of when I think of a writing support space because port is supposed to be a space that is available for uh different types of software and so like how does port work with those issues because they have times where people are set to be able to be available

BM: MM hmm

IH: you know, but if you happen to have a class at the time where our engineering consultant, you know, he's got hours at port from 1 -3 on Tuesdays, and that works for him and his schedule and I respect that, I'm not trying to slam our consultant, but if somebody's got a class during those times

BM: Right

IH: and they can't you know, you don't want them to skip class to be able to make the consultant, so then how does that work, and so those same types of issues, um, are concerning for the writing support space. And so then I also look at the person hours involved

BM: right

[45:18]

IH: How can you have that support available where people are at and sometimes the where people are at isn't a physical location anymore, so how can you make sure that you're available in electronic format, how can you make sure you're available that way for people that are not physically on this campus. And, modules online things

BM: Right

IH: being available and so people can submit things and you can get back to them at a different time frame, and so there's some work that way that can be done, interactive aspects of things, the provost is really really engaged in looking at being able to have things that are online in module fashion to be able to allow for exactly that and so we're looking at what that looks like to be able to work in that direction

BM: Okay, good, okay, so just because we only have about 5 minutes, I'm going to ahead and read through them all

IH: Mm hmm

BM: and then you um you know, just answer however you so choose

IH: Sure

BM: So, what are the some of the typical genres of writing students need help with when they seek writing support

IH: Definitely scientific writing at this point in time

BM: Is that mostly journal articles?

IH: Uh, journal articles, yes, they're definitely looking at that to be able to decipher them and to understand how they're put together to be able to write them their selves, but it's also their thesis and dissertation

BM: So, how would you, could you, this kind of a rhetorical question, but how would you be able to define scientific writing differently from uh writing coming out of the English department, and

IH: Scientific writing has to involve results of research

BM: mm hmm

IH: to be able to communicate what the research has been going on

BM: Okay, do you find that the practice of tutoring changes based on discipline

IH: The practice of tutoring, no. Tutoring and interfacing one-on-one, you have to use the basic skills of being open

BM: Mm hmm

IH: Being available, meeting people where they're at, um, giving them both what they need and what they want, which sometimes are not the same types of things

BM: Right

IM: and being able to navigate that in a way that allows them to retain autonomy and their own sense of worth and um honor is what's coming from my word choice right now, but that's not the word that I want there, but they need to feel like they

BM: They have agency

IM: thank you, yes

BM: Yeah, excellent

[47:44]

BM: Um, what kinds of practices do your tutors engage in that's different than the tutoring that happens in the writing center

IH: With the liaisons and everything else that way, we're definitely focused on the information access aspect of things as opposed to writing themselves, but what we're talking about isn't directly informing, so that's that braiding together, and so it's just a different um facet of the same jewel

BM: Yeah, right. Um, what are the advantages, disadvantages, and implications to writing support. I already asked you that

IH: Yup

BM: How do you train your tutors to work in the writing support space

IH: We do training the trainers, um, and we continue to do professional development for ourselves, and um we actually have the learning services division that works on that specifically to be able to help us in that way, um, and uh (laughs) we have people um within our um within our library that will actually come in and will give you critique and feedback on how you've been working with people to be able to um be better with what you're doing and uh the writing aspect of things is a little challenging and we're kind of struggling with how we can do that and so the partnership with the writing center seems like it could be a really phenomenal fit. Right now our default is our "We can't do that, we're sorry, go to the writing center."

BM: Right

IH: So, it's a phenomenal resource and I'm glad that we've got it

BM: Yeah, well thank you

IH: You're welcome

BM: I don't want to take any more of your time

IH: I do have to roll

BM: Yeah, I really really appreciate

IH: You're welcome

BM: your time, I know that you're super busy so thank you very much

IH: your welcome

BM: and this was fantastic

IH: good

BM: thank you

IH: and if you need to do any follow up, please feel free

BM: Thank you very much, I'm not going to take this room for very much, I'm just going to

IH: I was just going to say, there's somebody in here at noon

BM: Sure

IH: and so when you leave, you're welcome to actually just walk out this door

BM: Okay

IH: and then to the right are the elevators

BM: Okay, thank you, perfect. I'm just going to save this and then I'll be off

IH: And the lights will go off, so you don't have to worry about it

BM: Okay, great. Thank you so much

IH: You're welcome. Have a lovely day and a good weekend

BM: Thank you, you too, enjoy your weekend

IH: Thanks

February 23, 2016

BM: Alright, okay great, so um I guess, I'm not really sure how to ask for consent verbally, but do you consent to be a participant in this study

AD: Yes

BM: Okay and do you um, do you want to us your real identity and affiliated institution, would you like to have a pseudonym, or would you like for your real identity and institution to remain completely anonymous

AD: I'd say pseudonym just because I don't know how [my school] feels about me speaking on their behalf

BM: yeah sure, yeah absolutely, I think that is totally fine. So, thank you so much for taking the time today to talk to me, um, do you want me to tell you a little bit about what I'm working on and where this is heading? [Do this from 0:50 – 2:00]

BM: so could you tell me just a little bit about you and you're kind of position there and your role in the writing support space?

AD: Yeah, so um, I'm in my second year of law school and my role, it's kind of interesting, so the way it works is that every law student has to take this first year of writing course, legal analysis research writing, and it's basically an introduction to the entire style of legal writing because it's very different, especially for me, it's very different than any other kind of writing I've ever done

BM: sure

AD: and sure each section, so they are very small section to other law school sections, they have like 20 21 students in each one, um and each section has a legal writing fellow assigned to it, um, so it's basically sort of somewhere between, we're not teaching assists, but we are in class with them, we are heling in small group activities in class, so it's like somewhere between a tutor and a TA

BM: Okay

AD: Um, and in addition to kind of in class, there's also the legal writing center, which is just essentially a place for students to come to receive one-on-one support, um, it's a physical

location, but also you know, they can access us via email, you know, however they want to virtual, if that's better or easier for them, um, so each of the legal fellows works in the legal writing center. Um, and in my role, I sort have this dual role where I do have a section I'm assigned to, but I'm also in charge of the administrative aspects of the legal writing center, um, and that's I mean things as basic as just like setting up schedule for office hours and making sure we have copies and citation guides and textbooks in there

BM: Sure

AD: Um, but we also do some additional outside of class trainings, um, that I facilitate and help plan, um, along with the other people who are on my team. So, that's basically it, I essentially, it's (inaudible) just to answer student questions and I do, in terms of like reviewing students work, I do a decent amount of that but it's sort of one of the things that we're not allow to just straight up review something that's being turned in for a grade

BM: Yeah

AD: Um, so when a, I'll help students a lot more when it comes to like using something they've always turned in that they've already turned in as a writing sample for job applications and like reviewing that and helping them improve that, um, but my capacity to sort of assist with their work is much more limited, um, when it's a graded assignment, so we're kind of able to only look at little chunks of it, and say, "Okay, are you actually approaching this," and it's more about the analysis component, "are you approaching this the right way," and you know, "are you making similar mistakes over and over again, what can you do to improve that"

[5:09]

BM: Yeah

AD: as opposed to like, we don't line edit or anything like that

BM: Yeah, yeah, so it sounds a lot like writing center work, in that respect. Are you, um, do you have any experience with writing center work previous to this?

AD: Yeah, um, I don't, I mean, I remember we had a writing center in my undergrad that I went to for help a couple times, um I worked professionally in a writing capacity before I came to law school

BM: Okay

AD: I was on the editorial team at a publications team at a management consulting firm before I came here

BM: Okay

AD: and I did some writing coaching in that capacity, like internally, so um, so that's sort of my background, but I haven't really been in this kind of position before

BM: Okay, good, so that will help, so you're like the perfect person to talk to in terms of understanding you know kind of tutoring practices in the support space versus um, you know, we

won't be able to compare it to other writing center tutoring practices, but I think that your experience before law school would be perfect to kind of compare, um, so okay, so I'm going to dig right into the questions, why, and don't, if you don't feel like you can or want to answer any of these questions, please don't feel like you need to

AD: Okay

BM: So why was the writing support space in your discipline created?

AD: Yeah, I don't know, I have never had a conversation with the faculty to say, "Oh, this is when it started and this is explicitly why," but my understanding is just that people tend to really struggle with legal writing and especially if they had background experience in writing, so it's like kind of like the great equalizer

BM: right

AD: um, because it's just this totally new thing, and so, it's also, in terms of first year law classes, it's sort of the one practical skills class, and it's the one that matters the most for when you're going to be practicing, um and

[7:05]

AD: so I think the combination of recognizing just the importance of the class and then also how much people are struggling with it, um, they realize that like the faculty, you know, three hours of class time a week is really not enough, you know, the faculty member even just adding on office hours on top of that isn't really enough to help people really succeed in the discipline, so, that's my understanding

BM: okay

AD: um, it provides a support to the faculty, but also just help the students get into it more

BM: Okay, um, is, do you have a writing center on your campus currently

AD: Um, like, on the whole campus, or just on (the school) Law

BM: yeah, yeah

AD: I think so

BM: okay

AD: I'm fairly certain there is one, I just haven't interacted with them at all

BM: Okay, um so one of my questions, well a couple of my questions will probably ask about you know, the law, the legal writing specific versus you know like a whole campus writing center, um so why would a support space be created for specific disciplines as opposed to or as an extension of a writing center

AD: Yeah, I mean, I think my gut take on that is just because it's such a different style of writing than anything else

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BM: Yeah

AD: Um, and I don't know that, if law students went to an all campus writing center, it just wouldn't be helpful because, a lot of the things you're being told to do in legal writing really contradict things you would do if you were just writing a paper for undergrad or something like that, um so, I think from that aspect, it doesn't really make sense, and there's also just the aspect of like having something that's localized in the law school

BM: right

[8:59]

AD: I mean, nobody, like law students are so busy, nobody is going to walk down to like the main part of campus to go get help, like, that's just not going to happen, um so I think those are probably the two

BM: yeah, so that's how it was with the college of business, when I did my master's, it was like two miles off of campus

AD: Yeah

BM: so nobody was going to main campus, ever, for anything, um, so how far, would you say that the law school is off away from main campus

AD: I mean, and here's the thing, it's like technically on main campus

BM: mm hmm

AD: Um, you know, it's probably like a ten minute walk down to like, where I think the undergrad, or the general campus writing center is

BM: Mm hmm

AD: um, so it's not like it's a huge distance

BM: Right

AD: but even that is honestly too much for people. Most people I know like, they come to the law school, they're here from 8 – 6 and they go home

BM: Yeah

AD: Like, there's not, they don't leave the building (laughs)

BM: Right (laughs)

AD: Yeah, that's bad, but that's how it is

BM: right, um, so what might your writing support space provide to students that the writing center does not. You kind of touched on this just a little bit before, oh did I freeze

AD: You broke up for a second there

BM: Um, okay, so, what might the writing support space provide students that the writing center does not, and you kind of spoke to this a little bit, um, and could you maybe talk a little bit more about you know the kind of differences you see between legal writing and you know writing that say somebody in first year writing would kind of do. Are there kind of like specific conventions that just don't really match up

AD: Yeah, so the way legal writing generally works is, there's a pattern, um, they call it IRAC, so it's like you, Introduction, Rule, Analysis, Conclusion

[10:48]

BM: okay

AD: Um, so anytime you're like analyzing a problem, and so you say, so for example, most of the things we write are like memos that we would have to do if we were in practice. Say the partner at the law firm has this client who comes in and they say, "Okay, figure out if we have a case here, like what the issues are" and so um you essentially are then looking at past case precedent, you're looking at statutes and you're saying, "Okay, well, um, you know, in our jurisdiction, so we're in (a state), um, you know, the supreme court said in this case that in this past case, okay, um, the rule here, like, if this person does this, then they're you know in violation of law" or whatever, so basically, you're taking rules out of um, what's called the common law, like out of these cases, um, and then using them to apply to new situations and kind of identify the ambiguities and um how a court would probably rule on the case at hand

BM: Mm hmm

AD: Um, and so it's very repetitive which is interesting to me because I'm sort of, I've always been kind of trained in this like, "Okay you don't need to say the same thing like 4 times," that's like dumb, that wastes time

BM: Right

AD: but like here it's kind of like, if, at every level of the memo, like, if okay, if the partner just read the first paragraph, you'd want him to know what the answer was and then you go more in depth, and you're kind of repeating everything you've already said, so it's of like, okay, here's the issue

BM: mm hmm

AD: and then here's what they said

BM: mm hmm

AD: and then here's what this means, and here's how this is parallel to the original case and um so it's a very different structure I would say than what you would normally do in other styles of writing, um, and they also just don't like any kind of like fluff or like artistry, it's like, very straight forward, get to the point, nobody cares, like, what you think, um, and it's, and everything you give has to have like substantial support from existing case law or a statute or legislative

history, and it's just like you're like the lowly lawyer, nobody cares, like you have to have somebody else, so it's like, not a lot of originality to it, I guess is what I'm trying to say

BM: Okay

AD: Um, so those would just be some big stylistic differences, um, and I think that's, that's not something you could get out of just a general writing center

[13:31]

BM: Yeah, so you're support space then is able to, well, okay, so yeah, so then I'm not going to put words in your mouth, so what might the writing support space provide to students that the writing center doesn't, in terms of one-on-one tutoring

AD: Yeah, so, that would just be one-on-one tutoring, um specifically with regard to legal writing, structure and style, um, and we also do a bit, I didn't really talk about this, because most of what we do is helping people write, but there's also the aspect of like this whole course they're in is analysis, research, and writing

BM: mm

AD: so, sometimes, we also doing things like oh okay, you're not sure you found this one case on legal, you know, legal research database, like where do you go from there, how do you find out how other courts have applied that to different situations, so you know, working with them to make sure they can find the information they need and they're researching really the problem before they start writing, um and then okay, you know, you're looking at this case, you know, are you properly identifying what the holding is, are you, or are you trying to rely on something that's not actually, it might be persuasive, but it actually isn't binding, like the analysis component

BM: mm

[14:53]

AD: um, so there's, it's, most of what we do is writing help, but there's also um that element of it too

BM: But, discipline specific knowledge is just like, I mean, critical is not even the right word, it's

AD: yeah

BM: critical to helping students understand how to write and how to

AD: exactly

BM: communicate and craft a document, yeah, okay

AD: yeah

BM: So, then I don't know if this is applicable, but then what might the writing center provide that the writing support space does not. Is there any kind of you know

AD: I mean, the only thing I will say, and this is something that has come up a little bit this year, um, is that we have had some students who were coming in who were either English language learners, or

BM: ah, yeah

AD: because we do have a number of international students, um, or people who, you know, most people, if you've gotten into law school, you have a base level of writing ability, but there has, I think that there are, everybody's trying to diversify the student base, and like bringing in people from diverse backgrounds, and I think along with that has come some of them are not quite as prepared for the intensity, you know, like the writing ability standpoint, and so I think, um, that's something we're kind of exploring now, is are there resources on the main campus that we can utilize to help those students um because that's something that like you know, the legal writing fellow team, like most of us have some kind of writing or teaching background, um, but like I have one member of my team, she'll basically say like, "I'm not a grammar nazi, like I'm not, if I'm trying to teach someone the fundamentals of how to write, I'm not sure I'm properly equipped on how to do that." And so I think, um, for some of the more basic level stuff, um, the main campus writing center would be more useful

[17:00]

BM: okay, I'm just going to make a couple notes, sorry

AD: Yeah, no worries

BM: Okay, perfect, um, so then I'm going to move, and by the way, these three sections, I think I said that already, were that my three research questions, um so I'm really interested in how these spaces were created, and then the tutoring practices, and then kind of like the institutional structures and how they kind of hinder or create these spaces, so moving into tutoring practices then, what are some of the typical genres of writing students need help with when they seek writing support at your location

AD: I mean, in terms of genres, it, I mean, it's all legal writing, so I don't know really how that subdivides, um

BM: You had mentioned about memos

AD: yeah, the kind of I guess, so yeah, so we'll do things like what's called a predictive memo so that's sort of saying, "Okay, we have this client, how is existing law going to apply to their case, and what's the outcome going to be" and so that's like kind of predicting what the court will do. Um, there are things we do that is more persuasive, so like in a pellet brief, so like you know, the trial court has ruled on this case, and now we want to convince um, we want to convince the court of appeals that they should either uphold that ruling or they should reverse it, so that's a very different style. So, predictive memo is very um is fairly like neutral I guess you would say

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BM: mm hmm

AD: and then um, when you're writing a brief, you have to be persuasive, like that's your goal, um, so there's definitely different elements that go into that in terms of how you structure it, what kind of information you provide, how, the way in which you write. Um, you still have to come across as like rational and reasonable, otherwise, the court's just going to be like "whatever," but you can't say anything too outrageous

BM: Right

[19:03]

AD: you know, I've read some that do, um, but you have a little more creative liberty there, um and then the other one that we do less with is what's called a bench memo, so that's the idea that like, if you were a law clerk to a judge, and you know, the judge gets these two you know, these filings, or these briefs or whatever, has all this information, and you look through it, and you're basically analyzing everything and saying like, it's still pretty neutral, but you're saying like, "Here's who I think should win this"

BM: mm hmm

AD: essentially, and the judge kind of, and it's your basically preparing the judge for all the arguments they're going to hear, um, and what strengths and weaknesses those arguments are, so it's like you're reading what the parties have submitted to you, but you're also researching on your own

BM: Okay

AD: so sort of somewhere in between the two. So, that is what I would say the big pieces that we deal with in terms of the first year students. When you get in billable classes, it gets a little more diverse in terms of the writings, a number of students more do more academic research, like scholarly writing

BM: yeah

AD: um, but that's not something we really handle, or really help people with in the writing center

BM: so, you are just solely support the first year students

AD: technically anyone can come see us, but um, those, that's the group we're really prepared to help, and that's the group that takes the majority of the support

BM: Okay

AD: yeah

BM: Okay, so, and this is going to be a tricky one, but do you find that the practice of tutoring changes based on discipline and how, so like maybe comparing to your previous life

AD: yeah

BM: before you went to law school

AD: yeah, I think it does, um, and I think there's a lot more, well I don't know, I mean there's some of this in what I did previous too, but, I think particularly first year law students are so stressed out and so psyched out by everything that there's a strong element of like counselling in it as well, which I guess is true in most tutor positions, but being able to really identify like, "Okay, here's where you're struggling, but you got this part going pretty well, and you know, everybody is struggling with this, you're not alone." Um, (laughs) "it's not easy, don't freak out." So I think that, well I guess that's pretty consistent across disciplines, I would say. Um, yeah I think just being able to go into the meat of the analysis part of it and really, um, because it's not so much "okay, here are the words I'm putting on paper," it's also just like how are you thinking about this

BM: Yeah

AD: and are you thinking about this the way you need to be, so if that makes sense

BM: yeah, yeah, yeah. Um, okay, so this might be one that you do not have to answer, what kinds of practices do your tutors engage in that is different from the tutoring that happens in the writing center

AD: I have no idea

BM: yeah, um, so what are the advantages, disadvantages, and implications of writing support located in a specific discipline. That one's pretty loaded.

AD: Yeah, okay, wait, advantages, disadvantages, what was the third thing?

BM: implications

AD: implications, okay. Um, I guess advantages, I mean, are just what I kind of mentioned earlier, where you like have specific knowledge because you're, everyone whose tutoring has been through this before

BM: mm hmm

[22:52]

AD: Um, you know has taken the class like has done this in a professional environment, presumably, um, because after you're first year, pretty much everybody has some kind of internship where they do legal writing, um, and then also just the logistically end of it being on campus

BM: yeah

AD: or, being on, in the law school I should say, um, so those would be the advantages, and also just having access um, yeah, just to the institutional knowledge and the faculty, um, I think

disadvantages, I'm not sure that there are any in our case, honestly, um. You know, I think, I don't know that you would gain anything by being outside of the law school in our case

BM: yeah

AD: um, and the implications are, I mean, it's a good question, what are the implications, um, you know I think there is an expectation, the only thing I will say that is kind of a challenging implication, is that there is sort of an expectation that we're going to like fix everything for them, um

BM: Right

AD: which is not, you know, and that's the thing, and if people come see us, you know, we're here to help and I really do believe that we improve things, but um, I think sometimes there's a sense of like, "Well, I still don't have enough support," or like just

BM: sure

AD: yeah, so that is what it is

BM: so, you are, and maybe one potential implication is that you are really preparing people to go be lawyers, which, obviously

AD: right, yeah

BM: and so if they choose, you know, a different career path, then maybe they're less prepared in terms of writing, potentially

AD: Mm hmm

BM: Although, I don't why, yeah, I don't know

AD: yeah, the other thing that we don't really, that's worth kind of mentioning, in terms of the field of law, there's really two camps that you fall into

BM: Okay

[25:08]

AD: there's like the litigation side, okay, you're on trial, you're doing appeals, you know, it's all this resolution element, and the other side which is transactional which is more the business side, like okay, you're drafting contracts or a lease, or reviewing that kind of thing and like, it's more sort of like the front end, trying to prevent things in advance, um, and the one thing I will say, is that first year legal writing is pretty much exclusively focused on the litigation side

BM: Mm hmm

AD: and there's really no attention given to um business documents, and that sort of transactional side of things

BM: mm hmm

AD: and I mean, I think that's by design because the litigation side is already so much to teach people in their first year, um but I think that like people who are going into transactional work, that are going to be doing that at least in their first year summer aren't necessarily prepared for that in the same way they would be if they were like being a judicial extern or going to a firm or something, or litigating that sort of thing

BM: yeah, yeah, okay, great, how do you train your tutors to work in your writing support space

AD: this is a great question because as of right now, there's like basically no training

BM: yeah, just immersion, just do it

AD: Yeah, it's like in theory like your legal writing class your first year was your training

BM: right

AD: (laughs) and you know like the people they select are all people that did well in the class

BM: Sure

AD: so, it's not like you're not going to be a legal writing fellow if you did horribly in first year writing

BM: right

AD: um, and we basically, like, all of us went to lunch with the faculty

BM: Yeah

AD: and like talked about like, "Oh what are you supposed to do, what are you not supposed to do," you know, like, in terms of like the lines of how much we can help and where we can't help and whatnot, um but that was about it

BM: Okay

AD: and I think that, um, this is something that has kind of been a topic of conversation because of what I was mentioning earlier about students who don't have the same base level of writing skills, like not having access, you know, and so I think that there's been an interesting conversation around, "Okay, if someone comes to you and like doesn't know how to use a comma properly, like how are you responding to that"

BM: yeah

AD: like it's sort of been some concerns around that and um, so it's kind of led to this question to like okay next year I think that I really am advocating for having more training

BM: mm hmm

AD: um, particularly, maybe for like, we have a center for teaching and learning on the main campus, and so trying to like do some workshops around how you effectively tutor and um you

know, respond to you know, those kinds of concerns and what not, um, so that's a growth area for us I would say

[28:00]

BM: Yeah, cool, good, um, okay, so moving on to institutional structures, I'm not sure how much you know about this, but um who funds your writing support space

AD: I mean, it's the law school

BM: Yeah

AD: as far as I know, so

BM: those questions get a little bit more complicated when we're talking about writing center satellites and that kind of thing because um, you know, because part of it's, depending on where the writing center sits, sometimes it's in the English department

AD: yeah

BM: so, those things kind of um cross-pollinate quite frequently, um, how do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of the writing support space

AD: Um, I don't know how I would answer that, I mean, um, you know, it's something that obviously there was, the administration saw a need many years ago and created it

BM: mm hmm

AD: I don't know, I guess what do you mean by institutional structures is sort of my question

BM: well, people have mentioned funding, obviously, um, but also staffing, um also kind of like space, physical space, kind of abstract space, um sometimes, like I said, these you know before interviewing you, I was thinking, "Oh, man, I almost wish I had two sets of questions, one for the writing center satellite, and then one for people that are not connecting to the writing center" because in terms of these questions, writing centers are often kind of um, a lot of times, they don't have really firm footing, so it really depends on really the satellites, it really depends on the institution about how it's funding, where there's space

AD: mm hmm

BM: if they can get those up and running, and so it doesn't really sound like you have those kinds of issues

AD: yeah, I mean, the biggest thing, we're funded by the law school, and we exist in just a study room in the library

BM: Mm hmm

AD: is designated the legal writing center, and when it's, when the fellows aren't having office hours, then it just functions as a study room, so it's like, so that's kind of the space element, like I said, it's funded by the law school, and I think supported by the legal writing faculty, um, and

that's kind of like, there's like four teachers that teach, there's four professors that teach legal writing, and then there's another professor with us that acts as the director of the legal writing program and so she's the one I kind of work with, um, and when there's conversations around like training, or you know, specific student needs

BM: mm hmm

AD: um, she's the one that those conversations happen with, you know, sometimes things will sort of come down from the Dean of the law school, and kind of be like, "I heard this, what's happening." She either is aware of it or she hasn't been aware of it, you know

BM: yeah

AD: and we have to address that, so it's sort of a structural thing that kind of happens that's always interesting

BM: Yeah

AD: but, yeah

BM: so, in terms of kind of professors and that kind of thing, are there, is there a presence of faculty in the center, and how do other students feel about, you know, going to other students, law students

AD: yeah, there's not faculty in the center, the center is entirely student staffed, but you know, faculty have office hours as well, so they can kind of go, they can go to either, I think people generally prefer to go to faculty because of the fact that they're the ones grading things

BM: right

AD: we don't do any grading, obviously like I work for the professor that I had last year, so I experience his grading, I know what he look for, I can offer advice from that perspective, um, but I think we are probably easier to get like access, or an appointment, with than faculty, just because schedules and some of the faculty you know teach multiple classes, and I think for the most part, people feel fine about going to another student. Um, just because the perspective is a little more like on their level

BM: Sure

[32:19]

AD: Um, and um, but it's, I feel like we offer different things, then going to a faculty member would

BM: like what

AD: like, for me, I can like, I can tell you how I approached it, I can tell you what I struggled with and where I looked, and a lot of the problems they deal with are very similar to the ones we did last year, um, whereas, if you go to the professor, you know, they can tell you what they are looking for when they grade it, um, they can give you more in terms of what they've seen from

other students that have come in, like, they have a better sense of what people are struggling with, and I get some of that too, um, because if I have like four people come in in one day, that are like all having issue with the same thing then I can like email the professor and be like, "Hey, I think you maybe need to clarify this in class because clearly some people aren't really getting" um, and I think that, I think that the students are more the legal writing fellows are more willing to make time to review the application documents like job applications

BM: yeah

AD: um, where the faculty aren't necessarily able to give them that attention

BM: Yeah

AD: so

BM: can you talk a little bit more, so you talked about you feel comfortable as a writing fellow going to a particular faculty member and saying you know, people seem to be struggling with this particular thing, um, how, could you talk about the importance of the relationship between the writing fellows and faculty

AD: Yeah, I think it's very important, and that's supposed to be just like a very open line of communication, and I think, I don't; know anybody that's really had any issues with their professor in terms of like, "oh, I went to them and I said 'this' and they got upset because I told them …"

BM: right

AD: … that they"

BM: right

AD: I was just going to say, they're generally like very reasonable people and like, it's not like, and it's one of these things, when I'm talking to them, it's not like, "Oh, you're doing a terrible job," it's like I get to say like "listen, I've had these students asking this question, and also, here's the answer I'm giving then, make sure that's in line with what you think it should be, and if it's not then please make sure you clarify that." Um, and people are very open to that, and I think the faculty want to know how you know, I mean, they want the students to succeed, they want them to be learning, and um, I think they're a little weary of like, I don't know if I'll call it political repercussions, but like, first year writing tends to have a lot of these little what you would call like brush fires where like people get angsty and it blows up into this thing even though it's not, it wasn't even that big to begin with, so I think the writing faculty are all very weary of addressing those immediately on the ground, like, you know, taking care of them, um, so I think that they're pretty open to doing that, um, and I've actually found, the professor that I work with, and then I know at least one other have been fairly open with their writing fellows with who in the class is struggling

BM: mm

[35:40]

AD: um, so that we can, because we can't force people to come to our office hours, but we can be more attentive to them in class, and like you know, keep an eye out for what's going on

BM: Yeah

AD: so, yeah

BM: Yeah, um, so then how are, this is kind of a double-edged question, but how are writing fellows chosen and then uh, I'm going to let you answer that first, and then I'm going to go on to my other one

AD: um, so it's a pretty straight forward process, and I, I don't know, I feel like they maybe should do a little bit more, um, I think so the way it works is that the summer after your first year, um, you know, they basically put out the call for applications, and you write a cover letter and a statement of why you want to do it, and you submit your resume and your legal writing grades, and then they decide, they don't really, they don't do interviews, um, and they do like ask, they'll definitely ask the legal writing faculty for like recommendations, so if like I apply, they would go to my first writing professor and say like, "okay, what of you think of her," like, um, you know, do you feel like she would do a good job. So, it's a lot of those kinds of conversations, but there isn't like a direct interview or anything like that

BM: So, then, there's a kind of level of trust then built in because they've almost hand-picked the writing fellows

AD: Yeah

BM: So, in terms of relationships with writing fellows and faculty, that relation has kind of already started, it's kind of like, when you're a writing fellow, you're already at some point along the continuum of that relationship

AD: yeah, and there is a little bit of a spectrum because they do, they like, particularly this year, they hired two new writing professors, and so, those people like had no relationships with any of the writing fellows, that essentially you had their, the fellows' previous professors saying like, "hey, this person would be really good with a new person," or you know, "They'll be good regardless of who you put them with." So, when those, in those situations I think the trust level isn't necessarily there immediate

BM: mm hmm

[38:03]

AD: Um, but I don't know that there's been a lot of, there really hasn't been the issue I don't think that got paired with new professors. Um, because then there's as much of a kind of mutual training going on as well, because the generally when people become, like the writing professors, they're coming right out of practice, they have taught anything, any law school classes before unless they maybe did one as an adjunct

BM: mm hmm

AD: um, but so there's like kind of a mutual learning curve, I would say

BM: yeah, okay, so, how many writing fellows are there

AD: there are seven of us

BM: seven, and is that pretty consistent throughout, yeah, and so then, are there seven instructors, or how does that work

AD: there are not because not everybody teaches, I think there are five currently. There are a couple that teach two sections

BM: okay

AD: and then, you know, only teach one

BM: and so you get your own section of students

AD: mm hmm

BM: and do you see other sections, or other people's students as well?

AD: yeah, um, I mean, they can, students can come to whoever's office hours they want to

BM: okay

AD: and I've seen, so I've seen students from other sections, um, and then we also do some like lunch time training workshops

BM: Oh

AD: and so then you know anybody will come to them, um, and, but I will say the professors sometimes will say, "you can see any of the legal writing fellows, but bear in mind that the ones that work for me know more about what I want" because there's definitely some differences between professors. I mean, generally, they all use the same like final problem, but the way they get to that final problem is, varies somewhat so

BM: yeah, it's kind of like, everybody in writing has their own kind of, whether they're going to grade strictly on APA or you know

AD: right

BM: and so it's probably helpful to know the professor um in those kinds of ways. There was one other, nope, okay, so what other kinds of institutional and administrative emerge when developing a writing support space

AD: I don't know that there's, and again like the one that I'm in has been very, like it's been around for a while

BM: yeah

AD: so I don't really know (inaudible) currently

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BM: yeah, how long has it been around, do you know

AD: I actually don't know, I could probably find out for you, but I have no idea

BM: Okay

AD: um, I think other administrative issues, yeah, I think just the question of like what, the sort of still open ended question, like what is the scope of our role because you sort of brought it up earlier when you asked, "are you just there for the first year class," and it's like, "Well, sort of maybe," but then occasionally, we'll get like LLM students come in

[41:08]

AD: so, these are like people who are already lawyers you know, that they came from, a lot of times, it's foreign lawyers who are coming to get a US LLM so they can practice here, um, they have very different questions, different issues, and there's just not much we can offer, so there's like that aspect and then, you know, on the other side of the scope what I was talking about with like basic writing skills, um so that's sort of a conversation of like, "well how are, do we exist to address those, and how should we be addressing those," and there's definitely a variety of opinions of that, I think at the faculty level, most people like, "Okay, you're there for the first-years and that's it"

BM: yeah

AD: but I think from the student body, there is a little more and sometimes that works is way up and then it comes down, you know

BM: right

AD: it's just one of those things

BM: that's interesting

AD: yeah, so the scope issue, I would say, and then otherwise, you know, I think it's just, it's the challenge of you know, you want students to come ask you for help and see you but you can't make anybody

BM: right

AD: and so you get in this position where these like, a lot of times, law students sound terrible, but sometimes they are

BM: (laughs)

AD: where they'll be like you know, "Ugh, I'm not getting the help I need, I don't get legal writing, I don't have a good writing sample," and then it's like, "have you gone to see your fellow" and then it's like, "I shouldn't have to go see the .." like, there's this attitude where it's like, "You know what, guys, get a grip"

BM: yeah

AD: um, so you know, how do you address that, you know and make sure we're being accessibly and all that, but also that people who need to be there feel like encouraged to come and not you know, I don't know

BM: So, in terms of like hours, how often are you open, do you have like regular hours in addition to office hours

AD: Yeah, so we're just, so our office hours, are when the writing center is open

BM: Okay

[43:14]

AD: so, you know, we're in class with the students, like twice a week, and then each writing fellow does two hours in the legal writing center a week, um so that adds up to like 14 hours a week the center is open, um, and that's, we only do office hours outside of the (inaudible) class schedule, so um, so like I am in charge of like scheduling everyone, so I look at like, "Okay, I'm blocking off these times when like they're going to be in contracts, and they aren't going to be accessing the center,"

BM: right

AD: so it's not really helpful, um, and then those hours are posted online and on you know, physically and people can make an appointment online or they can just drop in, which is what most people do, so

BM: There was something else I was going to ask you and then I lost it. I hate it when that happens. Okay, well that's all the questions that I have an I know that you're super busy, so I don't want to keep you for any longer than I have to, um, and if I think of that question, I will just email you if you don't mind

AD: Yeah

BM: I really appreciate you talking with me today

AD: Sure

BM: It's been really nice, so thank you very much

AD: Yeah, you're very welcome, good luck with the rest of your research

BM: Thanks, it's going to be a long road. Thank you very much

AD: Alright, have a good one

BM: You too, bye

AD: bye

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BM: okay, I'm going to kick this way up, I'm just going to put it right there

SS: Okay

BM: So, do you feel comfortable answering any of the development of writing center questions? We can read through them and then if you want to contribute anything or answer any of them

SS: Yeah, I, let's look at number two

BM: Yeah, why would a writing center satellite be created for specific disciplines as opposed to or as an extension of the home writing center. So, I'm calling the Halle location the "home" center

SS: The home center, well, in the College of Business, writing takes on a completely different style in a lot of cases. It's counter intuitive to how most students were taught to write

BM: In like a first-year writing class

SS: In any writing class, in high school, in first-year writing, um, business writing is not creative writing, it's not expansive writing, it's fact-based writing, it's very specific writing, and that's a whole new thought process for many students

BM: So, you said that it's kind of like, shoot now I can't remember the word that you said, it's not opposite, counter-intuitive, can you talk a little bit more about that

SS: Well, I think that students naturally gravitate to adding as much as possible, um, because it's sometimes, I hate for this to end up in the report

BM: I can strike this part from the record

SS: it sometimes makes them sound more impressive

BM: Right

SS: or like they know more, or they have a better understanding of something, um, when in fact, a lot of times, in business, less is more

BM: Mm hmm

SS: And, in business, time is money

BM: Mm hmm

SS: so if you can tell me in five minutes instead of 30

BM: Right

SS: you're saving me thousands and thousands of dollars`

BM: Right and that's a huge difference, from say, creative writing, which is kind of what you compared it to

SS: yes

BM: Because in creative writing, maybe the um, extra

SS: words

BM: words, sure (laughs) is you know, is maybe necessary to get to your point

SS: yeah, um, one of the things I talk to my students about when I introduce writing projects in my class is that, you know, as an incoming college student, they had to write essays about why they would be a great fit for the university

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and they had to be 500 words

BM: Mm hmm

SS: or they had to be 250 words, or they had to be 1,000 words, you say what you need to say, and it's only 300 words, and now you have to come up with another 200, you don't know what to write about, so you start adding all this fluff

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and, business we just don't do that. I don't want the fluff, I want you to give me fact, and then I can decide what the fluff can be

BM: Right, righty, so actually, that kind of speaks to these other two questions, so what might the writing satellite, so the college of business, provide to students that the home center does not

SS: I think two things. Number one, I think real, genre specific writing

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and number two, I think a better understanding of what professors' assignments are. Um, because we tend to get students um who are working with the same professor, and I might see three or four or five students, who are all working on a project for the same professor, I suddenly get a real good feel for what this professor wants, or if I don't really know what they want, I'll shoot them an email

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and ask them for a copy of the assignment, or what are you really looking for here, and then I can better help the student

BM: Mm hmm

SS: do whatever it is that that professor is looking for. And a main campus writing center, I might be supporting students from 30 different fields

BM: Right

SS: and I don't have that ability to form a relationship with the professors

BM: Right, does it help you that you're faculty

SS: I don't think so

BM: No?

SS: I don't think so. It, um, perhaps only in the sense that I'm not afraid to go to these people and say

BM: Mm hmm

SS: tell me what you're looking for

BM: right, right, um, okay, so on the other side of that coin, what might the home center that the writing center satellite does not

SS: A more narrow focus, a better understanding

BM: of

SS: of what the professor need, of what the student needs to be successful

BM: no, so what does the *home* center provide?

SS: Ah, I'm sorry, um, well, maybe um, a more academic approach to writing

BM: Mm hmm

SS: maybe um an opportunity to work on basic conventions like grammar or punctuation or, um, maybe uh an opportunity to work on idea organization

BM: Mm hmm

[5:30]

SS: but in a broader, more general sense

BM: Okay, I'm going to come back to that. So, what do you think the difference is between academic writing and business writing

SS: I think the process for both of them are the same, or very similar, still requires idea organization, it requires good grammar, um, I think that business writing requires much more focus of ideas

BM: Mm hmm

SS: they're tight, they're focused, um, and if they don't add something to that piece of writing, that shouldn't be there

BM: Mm hmm

SS: the idea shouldn't be there

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BM: right, okay, so you mentioned, I knew I was going to lose it, you mentioned idea organization in terms of what the home center, tutors at the home center might be able to provide, so I kind of want to contextualize that in genre specific writing, because what I think what I'm trying to get at, what I'm partly trying to get at is that, to me there's a significant difference, in the genres that we're helping students with at the college of business, and the genres we're helping students with in the home center, or another satellite

SS: right

BM: but, what I *think* happens, not to skew you in any way, but I think that you probably believe this, too, is that because of the difference in genres, our tutoring has to be slightly different

SS: Oh absolutely

BM: so, idea organization in the home center might um look different than what we would help students with in the college of business, while it might be the same kind of concept, it being embedded and contextualized within a specific genre, like a memo or a case study

SS: right

BM: looks different

SS: right

BM: Right, so how does that look different, do you think

SS: um

BM: (laughs)

SS: (laughs) I don't know, it just does, it just does, um, I, I don't know, let me

BM: okay

SS: let me mull that one over

BM: yeah, that's really not an easy question, it's something that I've been trying to figure out for

SS: yeah, I think that one of the differences is there is already an approved format, you know, somebody asks you for a memo, this is what a memo looks like

BM: right, in the first, you know, line, small paragraph does something very specific

SS: right

BM: You don't have a lot of room for um, your own, individual spin on organization

SS: No, correctly

BM: So, an organization in the home center might look more personal in a sense

SS: Much more personal

BM: and in a business capacity, it's going to look much more prescribed in a sense

SS: well, and it's, and I think personal is a good word. I don't want any personal in my business writing

BM: right

SS: I don't care what you think, I want you to prove it to me

BM: right, so maybe that's the difference between academic and business writing or maybe that's one of the pieces

SS: One of the pieces

[8:56]

BM: yeah

SS: um, there is already predetermined formula, you know what this looks like

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and even the textbooks have, "here's what a memo looks like, here's what an indirect letter looks like, here's a direct letter, here's what a research paper should look like"

BM: Mm hmm

SS: um, it already tells it what your end product should look like

BM: Mm hmm

SS: I think the difference is, yeah, I don't really care what you think about this topic, your job is to research it and prove it to me

BM: Right, right and be able to analyze it in a way that, yeah

SS: yeah, and I think in a home center, writing that analysis piece

BM: yeah

SS: it's freewriting

BM: yeah, yeah, hmm, yeah, um okay, so maybe we already kind of touched on some of these, but maybe we can get to them in a different kind of way, so tutoring practices, oh and by the way, these are my three questions, my three research questions, so what are some of the typical genres of writing students need help with when they seek writing support at the college of business

SS: um, resumes

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and cover letters

BM: Mm hmm

SS: we do a lot, accounting writing

BM: really, what does that look like

SS: kind of a nightmare (laughs)

BM: (laughs) yeah

SS: um, ethics a lot of ethics papers, and that kind of is the accounting, um lately we have been getting a lot of accounting papers that lay out a scenario where there's an unethical situation going on in an organization and you have to alert your boss to this, potentially unethical behavior, without assigning blame

BM: interesting

[10:48]

SS: so it's going right back to that analysis

BM: Mm hmm, right and objectivity

SS: yeah, I don't care that you think it's unethical

BM: right

SS: give me the facts that would make this an ethical activity

BM: right, and then let me decide for myself

SS: yeah, and what to do about it, and we've been seeing a lot of those, and accounting papers

BM: mm, interesting

SS: it is

BM: I wonder why, I wonder why the trend, I don't remember writing any of those kind of papers in accounting

SS: we get a lot of them

BM: wow, oaky

SS: yup

BM: So, why resumes and cover letters, when we have a like a, oh what's that called

SS: career services, because we're better

BM: how so

SS: because we're better, because, we've worked in industry, we understand the purpose of a resume and a cover letter

BM: Mm hmm

SS: um, I have gone to career services and talked to them

BM: oh yeah

SS: and they do a lot of great things like, they'll embed your LinkedIn link to your resume and things like that

BM: oh

SS: I think, though, that at least some of us in the college of business writing center have a better understanding of what employers are really looking for in a resume because we've done that

BM: right

SS: we've got really strong, practical application there

BM: Mm hmm, and so, yeah, we've been talking a lot about ethos in the past few, um, interviews, like with Ann, I talked about that, Joy talked about that, um, and how important is it that you have a persona or an ethos of a business and I mean, I think with you as well, a lot of us are coming from the writing center

SS: right

BM: you're unique in that you came from the college of business

SS: right

BM: so, tell me how you think that influences maybe student perception or your tutoring or both

SS: um, I think it helps student perception, they feel like we know what we're talking about, whether we do or not

BM: yeah

SS: um, they like that we're faculty

BM: yeah

SS: because we think we know something that maybe we do or don't and our writing center is kind of unique because we have two business people in there and then we have a writing professional in there and um we do, I've never worked with Jane, so I can't comment on that, but Thomas and I attack a piece of literature very differently

BM: Mm hmm right, how so, what are the main differences, do you think

SS: I look, at a piece of writing from an employer's perspective, or from a manager's perspective

BM: Mm hmm

SS: so if you're missing words or you have bad grammar or bad punctuation, this is a reflection on you as an employee

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and I'm making judgements about you as an employee

BM: Mm hmm

SS: this is all I know about you is this piece of writing

BM: yeah

SS: whereas Thomas, our consultant, who has a strong writing background, is looking at it as a piece of writing, as a piece of art, as a piece of creation

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and he looks maybe sometimes for things that maybe I don't

BM: yeah, interesting. It's interesting to have that perspective of like, um, writing, it's like the age-old question, what is writing? Coming from the college of business, I think it's much different

SS: writing is a tool to express a thought, and I don't think it is different, it's to express a thought, it's to express a communication, it's to reach your audience wherever your audience is

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and I think that's one of the differences between the college of business writing and um the home writing center, is home writing center is a more creative process, where you are is about where you as a writer is

BM: Mm hmm

SS: in the college of business, it's where your audience is

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and what does your audience need to know

BM: yeah, that's interesting. Mm, so it's kind of like, it's not so much, so maybe in the home center, it's more of a writerly authority, in the college of business, it's more about

SS: audience

BM: Yeah, mm

SS: yeah, like this accounting memo, you know, the goal is to um get your audience, your manager to understand that there's this ethical dilemma without placing blame or without coming across real um heavy handed

BM: yeah, right, mm, that's good

SS: instead of, "well, here's why we should be following this ethical dilemma, and here's you know, esoteric thoughts about ethics"

BM: right

SS: you know, that type of thing

BM: right, okay, so this next question, I'm not sure if you feel comfortable answering, although there are different disciplines in the college of business, so maybe you can take it from that approach, how do you find the practice of tutoring changes based on discipline

SS: I'm not sure that it does or should. I think that as a tutor, I'm there to serve and to help

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and um, whether it's to help you to look from your boss's point of view, or to help you get accepted to grad school, because of course, we do a lot of that type of tutoring as well

BM: application letters

SS: application letters and that type of thing, um, so it's whatever your goal in this piece is

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and I don't think that should change, I think that should be true for any writing consultant, what changes is the goal of the piece

[17:04]

SS: and what you do with that, um, I also have found that um, we get a couple of students that are not COB students, that are working on pieces that are not business pieces, and sometimes they just want to come in to write, and I've even had a kid said, "I don't want you to do anything, I just want you to listen to me"

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and that's okay

BM: Mm hmm

SS: if that's how I can serve that student

BM: Mm hmm

SS: okay

BM: Mm hmm, yeah, it creates like a safe space for

SS: it's a very safe space

BM: yeah, yeah

SS: yeah

BM: um, okay, so, and maybe this is just a kind of, well, what kinds of practices do your tutors engage in, do you and the tutors that you potentially work with, tutors, consultants, that is

different from the tutoring that happens in the home center. So, you do professional development, you go to the meetings, um

SS: yeah

BM: do you see any kind of like, and I'm not saying that they have to be like stark differences, but

SS: I don't know that I can tell you what those differences are

BM: Mm hmm

SS: because I've never actually spent time in that, in the home center, the writing center

BM: right

SS: so, I'm not sure how it would be different

BM: Mm hmm

SS: um, some of the things that we do that I assume are different

BM: Mm hmm

SS: I'll practice interviewing even with the student

BM: oh, that's cool

SS: mm hmm, so we're here to talk about the resume, um, lets' talk about the purpose of the resume, first, alright now let's take your resume and let me interview you based on the resume, and is this interview going where you want it to go, because this is all I know about you

BM: right

SS: are you telling me the things you really want me to know

BM: Mm hmm

SS: um, so again, more of that practical application

BM: yeah

SS: here's really what we need to do here, so I, we've worked on business cards

BM: Cool

SS: well, and you know, do you want a picture of your puppy on your business card

BM: I do

SS: or do you want, well you do, I know, but you're not in the COB

BM: yeah, I know

SS: but, you know, even something as basic as that

BM: right

SS: what do you want it to say, what kind of impression do you want to develop

BM: right

SS: so, again that practical application. I don't know if home center writing does that, because I'm simply not there

BM: right, right, yeah, good, um okay, what are the advantages and implications, or disadvantages to writing support located in a specific discipline

SS: I just think that the practical application, um, a better understanding of here's why you do what you do, or why you need to do your writing in this specific format

BM: Mm hmm

SS: um, here's why if you're writing in the Mark Jefferson, we use this specific format, here's how scientists use that, here's how nurses use that, here's how accounts use this

BM: yeah

[20:21]

SS: here's how marketers use this, let's talk about branding

BM: Mm hmm

SS: you know, just a better insight to the use and the purpose of writing

BM: yeah, and it's useful because, if well, it's different because the college of business is two miles off campus

SS: right

BM: so, probably those students, I mean, I never went to main campus when I was a student at the college of business

SS: no

BM: ever

SS: no

BM: so that's different in the college of business than it is for other satellites, but even still, those same people that are in the satellites are still working in the home center, so people, you know

SS: yeah

BM: students from Mark Jefferson can come and find Beth in the home center

SS: yeah, and students in the college of business can go to the library because we have limited hours

BM: yeah, right

SS: so, they're still going to the library to get help and then they'll come back and will tell me, "It's better here"

BM: how so do you think

SS: I think because we get it

BM: yeah

SS: I think because we understand, I could be wrong, but I believe, it's because we understand what they're trying to accomplish

BM: yeah, you have a better sense of that because you've done it

SS: well, we've done it, because we know what the assignment is

BM: yeah

SS: because we understand, while I don't do accounting, I understand the purpose of it, I understand the parameters of it, I understand the goal of it

BM: right

SS: I understand the usefulness of it

BM: right

SS: or marketing or any of them

BM: Mm hmm

SS: I think just, it's a field of specialization, it's like alright, you can go to your general practitioner, but I don't want that person doing surgery, I want the brain surgeon

[22:08]

SS: to do the brain surgery, not the heart surgery

BM: That's a good analogy

SS: right, so they all have the same medical background, they all of the same level of understanding of how the body works, and how to do surgery, but if I'm going to do brain surgery, I want the specialist in brain surgery, not the heart surgeon

BM: right, right

SS: equally capable and competent

BM: Mm hmm

SS: it's just a specialty

BM: yeah

SS: it's a better understanding

[22:39]

BM: um, okay, how do you train, or how were you trained as tutors to work in the college of business

SS: poorly

BM: yeah

SS: poorly

BM: Ann has even said that

SS: I think my first day I was in there all by myself

BM: yeah (laughs)

SS: (laughs) and I had a couple e-mails that said, "Here's how you enter people and log people"

BM: Mm hmm

SS: poorly

BM: You were really just expected

SS: to know

BM: to be there and just do it

SS: yes, I really had no training

BM: yeah

SS: um, I don't

BM: do you feel like you wish you would have

SS: no, I don't feel that the um Friday meetings are of much benefit

BM: Mm hmm

SS: um, the couple I've gone to, I've really gotten nothing out of

BM: Mm hmm

SS: they had one, a woman from English as a second language

BM: Mm hmm

[stricken from the record 23:32 – 23:44]

SS: um

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BM: so, she didn't say like, "when you're working with students who have English as a second language, you know, help them with articles"

SS: "try this or try that"

BM: yeah

SS: nope, nothing, um, that's a whole new conversation

BM: okay

[stricken from the record 23:57 – 23:59]

SS: um, but now I know why they all come to us

BM: right

SS: seriously, 25 – 30% of our students

BM: are ESL

SS: ah huh (yes)

BM: mm interesting

SS: yeah, because we can help them write in their genre

BM: yeah

SS: yeah, um so I really had very little, no training. I think that um, for somebody that maybe doesn't have the same background with what that satellite specializes in

BM: Mm hmm

SS: I think it's much more helpful to work with people. I happen to not have training

BM: yeah

SS: for example, um, Thomas will listen to what I say to people when I'm talking about resumes

BM: Mm hmm

SS: technically, he can find the errors, he can look at organization, he can help you figure spacing, he doesn't understand the real purpose of the resume

BM: Mm hmm

SS: so, he'll just sit back and listen to that

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and pick it up

BM: like water cooler talk

SS: yeah

BM: I've found is really important in sharing secrets of the trade

SS: yeah, um, so, yeah, not so much training there, sorry

BM: okay (laughs), no that's okay, okay, so I know who funds the writing center

SS: yes

BM: the college of business funds all of you

SS: yes

BM: Um, how do you think that institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of writing center satellites and specifically the college of business

SS: well, I think that it's the same thought process, I think that the dean of the college of business gets the need for better writing

BM: Mm hmm

SS: I think that he, I could be kidding myself, but I think that he sees value in the service that we can offer students

BM: I think so, too

SS: I think that on main campus

BM: Mm hmm

SS: they don't

BM: Mm hmm

SS: I think that the university as an institution doesn't see value, they just see us as an expense

BM: yeah

SS: students are expected to come to college knowing how to write

[26:39]

BM: right

SS: the truth is, they don't

BM: right

SS: Um, and so I think that in these satellite centers there's a little bit more support because they're seeing actual value, they're reaping real benefits, um, I think satellites have an advantage there

BM: Beth and I talked a little bit about that yesterday, too, actually, because, or maybe it was, anyway, they're all running together now, but you know I think it's interesting in the home center is kind of amorphous in that way, it doesn't really have a home

SS: did Ann tell you about funding

BM: In December, a little bit, we didn't have much time to talk about it, but, because

SS: because the provost doesn't see a value in it, students should know how to write

BM: right

SS: they're in college

BM: and so much, and it feels to me, and this is a total assumption, but it feels to me like when you have all of the students, and you say, it's so much easier to kind of write that off, in the college of business, as a dean in the college of business, you have much more stake in *your* students

SS: yup

BM: not being able to write, so there's more accountability there

SS: it's an absolute reflection on you, if you're students can't get a job because they can't write a resume or a cover letter

BM: right

SS: even to the point that, so now that me and Court Bovee are good buddies

BM: (laughs) you text him

SS: I told him you know, that I'm working in the writing center and students routinely come in with no understand of how to do a cover letter and you need to work on that in your book

BM: good, I hope he pulls it off because then I'll use it

SS: I told him

BM: there are other, okay, anyway

SS: you know the problem is they're working on the edition that I'm going to use 10 years from now is the thing, right

BM: right

SS: um, but again, it's that practical application and that much better understand, this is what students need and this is what they need to be successful. And, I think that, at least our Dean absolutely sees that value, he absolutely gets it

BM: I agree

[29:04]

BM: Um, what other kinds of institutional and administration issues emerge when developing a writing center satellite? [stricken from the record 29:23 – 29:36] When I was writing it, I was kind of thinking, um

SS: space

BM: space

SS: computer

BM: Funding

SS: funding, obviously

BM: political stuff

SS: welcoming environment

BM: yeah

SS: um

BM: so, tell me, and location has come up often

SS: location

BM: so, talk to me about how critical that location is in the college of business

SS: well, as you know, we're right next to the door

BM: right

SS: you can't get in or out without walking past me

BM: Do you have a Sheppard's hook?

SS: Some days we really don't need it, some days I actually like only open my door an inch or two

BM: yeah, right (laughs) close all the blinds

SS: because it's that bad

[30:21]

SS: um, but I think this is an indication of a value of that particular writing center, um I was telling Thomas yesterday, I had 4 or 5 students, just drop in to say "hi," they weren't working on anything

BM: yeah

SS: didn't need anything, just wanted to say hi

BM: MM hmm

SS: and they're walking right by me, so they have decided it's on their way, they don't have to go out of their way to do anything

BM: Mm hmm

SS: it's a safe place

BM: yup

SS: they're comfortable in there

BM: right

SS: um, it's spacious, it does not look like an afterthought

BM: right, that's true

SS: it's you know

BM: that's important

SS: it is important, it is

BM: because some of the other satellites that haven't been so successful, their locations have moved from place to place, and most of the time, it's in some

SS: a closet

BM: right, random

SS: well, like you were in a closet under the stairwell

BM: Two way mirror, man

[31:19]

BM: I hated that two way mirror

SS: ah huh, but my office, our office is really beautiful

BM: Mm hmm

SS: it's nicer than the Dean's office

BM: it is really nice

SS: yeah, and it's clearly not an afterthought, it's clearly an investment in that building, and too, when um, guest speakers come in, when um, employers come in, when job fairs are being held, they're walking right by that office, and they want to know what it is

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and so it's another selling point for, "here's great things we're doing at the COB"

BM: right, so really, the Dean in the college of business has a big stake in you, in the writing center

SS: yup, I believe they do

BM: I think you're right, yeah

SS: I believe they do

BM: especially because, I mean, that location is just

SS: it's awesome

BM: so great

SS: it is, they've even cranked up the heat

BM: I know, I noticed that when I was in there, my feet were still pretty cold, but

SS: uh huh, well it was an exceptionally cold day

BM: it has been pretty cold, yeah

SS: yeah, um, but even yesterday, I get down there and the janitor is hanging out there, the roaming cop, that hangs around the building is hanging out there, chat, visit, whatever

BM: You know, so as you're talking about it, one of the things, and I mentioned this a little bit earlier, but one of the things that came up is how important, the formal training isn't as, it doesn't stick as much as water cooler talk does

SS: yeah

BM: essentially, like in theory the college of business writing center is kind of like a water cooler

SS: yeah, it is

BM: people can come and hang out and talk about stuff and they get a lot from that experience

SS: right, and there are some students, Jane calls them, Jane says, "they should get frequent flyer points because they're in there so much"

BM: yeah

SS: um, and, they just are very comfortable there

BM: yeah

SS: sometimes too bad, too comfortable

BM: yeah

SS: sometimes, go away now, but they all walk by and say hi, wave, and we get a lot of repeat students

BM: yeah

SS: which is an indication that they're finding value

BM: mm hmm, absolutely

SS: yeah

BM: Okay, well I have lots of other questions, but they don't go within the scope of

SS: it's okay, ask away

BM: okay, well, one thing is so I had an experience, a personal kind of experience, um, in the writing center, um, my very first semester in the writing center at Virginia tech, you know I was new there, it was a new place to live, it was a brand new school, I was starting a PhD program, all of the things that make you terrified of life

SS: okay

BM: and so one of my first couple of weeks, um, a client came in, and we were sitting next to each other, and she told me she was from Michigan, and of course, instantly like, she had just started at Tech, she was living in grand rapids, she was starting her master's program, so immediately, we just hit it off of course

SS: right

BM: but what ended up happening, so she started coming to see me every single week, which is great, until it's not

SS: yeah

BM: and it really became not great, because at some point, she was getting to writing her thesis and I couldn't help her anymore, she was not a very good writer, and she was getting so caught up in everything else that she wouldn't do things us writing, or in between us meeting, so she wouldn't write and come back and we would read through new work, she would talk about

SS: she's wanting you to write it

BM: right, um, and what ended up happening was that she got so comfortable with me that I think she started to get frustrating with me when that wasn't happening, which I wasn't ever going to do that

SS: right

BM: so, we tried to put her with other people, and she got very vocal with our um, with our office assistant and yelled at her and told her, "I've been working with Becky since whatever" um now this is an extreme case, right

SS: right

BM: and there was definitely a point where I couldn't help her anymore

SS: right

BM: I hit a wall, and we did something, I brought it up later, I thought it was something I did, you know, anyway, there are implications in having frequent fliers

SS: yes

BM: um, so, talk to me a little bit about, right, Stephen North is saying, "you don't just help the piece of writing you help the writer"

SS: right

BM: part of that, I went to IWCA and people are calling bullshit on that, like we are helping the writing, too

SS: oh, yeah

BM: Or, sometimes, we're only helping the writing, and that's okay

SS: and that's okay too

BM: right, so I guess, so as a frequent flyer, we think "oh these people are becoming better writers," or are they becoming more dependent. So, like talk about some of the implications with frequent fliers

SS: okay, I think that, they, I'm thinking one student in particular, and he was in the writing center, every single day, it didn't matter who was there

BM: Mm hmm

SS: he wasn't dependent on one of us the other, and I think what the writing center did for him was allowed him to start learning how to at least look for errors or issues in his writing, I think it made him more confident, um, maybe not as a writer, but as a person who can solve an issue

BM: Mm hmm

SS: um, it made him more confident in his ability to ask for help, whether it's in writing or anything else

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and he just stopped by yesterday to give me a hi and so it does help the whole person, maybe not as a writer sometimes

BM: Mm hmm

SS: um, but, it has to help them with their writing

BM: Mm hmm

SS: if it gives you the courage to go and ask the questions

BM: right

SS: that by nature of asking the question, is going to make a difference in your writing

BM: right

[37:52]

SS: so I think it's helping both

BM: yeah, and it's okay to have value in something other than having you know, it feels kind of like we're putting all of our eggs in one basket here

SS: well

BM: and so I think that a satellite center sometimes gives us the okay to say, "You know, we're adding value in some ways that maybe we can't see or we can't measure"

SS: well, and I know that's true because I have had students come back and tell me outcomes

BM: Mm hmm

SS: who I've practiced interviewing with a student came back to tell me he got a job

BM: Mm hmm

SS: you know, alright, that's not writing

BM: right

SS: but that's communication, it was an international student. I had one woman who wanted to go back to college, her husband was very much against it, and she came and we worked through her entrance exams, and she was accepted, and she very specifically came in and told me and thanked me, um, so if I can make you more confident, you're going to be more confident in lots of things, including your writing

BM: right

SS: I think it's all tied

BM: yeah I agree, I agree, um, so the college of business is unique in that the college of business completely funds that site

SS: yeah

BM: no other college, I don't think completely funds a person

SS: okay

BM: or, and especially I guess completely funds their own people to staff the center

SS: okay

BM: so, um

SS: who's funding Thomas, I wonder, is it all COB

BM: it's the college of business

SS: okay

BM: yeah, so they're paying for you and for him, so usually the satellites do fund, buy usually it's people from the writing center

SS: yeah

BM: so, tell me like you talked a little bit about relationships with other faculty a little but earlier, um, talk a little bit about why it's

SS: well I'll tell you why they're funding faculty, because nobody from main campus wants to come out and work because we're not on main campus

BM: well some people, I mean, yeah I would, I'll work there

SS: oh I would too, it's a much better place to work

BM: I know

SS: but, sorry what was your question

BM: Oh, no, I was just thinking about institutional; structures in terms of staffing and then um, in terms a little bit of authority maybe is the word I'm looking for, um, so how does it help the Dean of the college to fund faculty members to work in the satellite center

SS: I think it's kind of street cred., I think when he, particularly a business school, that, and I think areas of specialization like a nursing school or a science program or a business school, work with institutions in that same area. General writing, not so much

BM: Mm hmm

SS: right, so I think that this writing center allows the dean to go to the (inaudible) and say, "what can we do to make things better for you, what can we do to," that relationship building

BM: interesting

SS: and that's just one more tool, in addition to GPAs, in addition to study abroad

BM: right

SS; it's one more thing that we do for our students that, um, you know, that big, well-funded school down the street doesn't do as well

BM: right, right

SS: because we are kind of like the little evil stepsister

BM: yeah, the red headed stepchild

SS: yeah

BM: yeah

SS: yeah

BM: yeah, yeah I think that's interesting, now I kind of want to interview him, but

SS: oh you should, he totally would

BM: he would?

SS: oh yeah, um, maybe do it, well, it doesn't work as good

BM: or skype

SS: Skype it, you know, another thing he's done is he now does these, what does he call them, alumni business conferences where he has alumni who manage local companies, or you know, successful in their field, they come out and do presentations all day

BM: oh, that's cool

SS: Mm hmm, so you know, again, it's that relationship building

BM: yeah

SS: and then there are alumni, so then he starts working on them to hire students

BM: yeah, right, mm

SS: he's a smart guy, I mean, he's

BM: Mm hmm

SS: he's doing some really cool things

BM: that's great

SS: you can tell him I said so

BM: (laughs)

SS: dear Dean Tidwell, specifically me

BM: well that's all the questions I have

SS: okay

BM: um, for now

SS: I hope that helped

BM: you are at risk of receiving another contact from me asking about follow up questions

SS: anything you want, you know that

BM: thank you very much

SS: you're welcome, anytime, bye

BM: bye

[The taped was stopped, and we continued to talk and turned the recording back on]

BM: okay

SS: okay so we're talking about the differences between Jane and I, and that I tend to focus on content, one example yesterday, um, I had a student who was writing a paper on, an HR paper for a HR class on Mitsubishi, and he's using a lot of sentences like, um, "They did this to help them" type of thing

BM: Mm hmm

SS: and I'm like, "well, who's 'they' and who's 'them' and what is this?"

BM: Mm hmm

SS: um, those types of content issues, again, trying to get him to be very specific in what he wants to tell me

BM: Mm hmm

SS: instead of well, you should have maybe put a comma here

BM: right

SS: in business you know what, are not very important

BM: right

SS: knowing who "they" is

BM: right

SS: is very important

BM: is critical

SS: right

BM: sometimes

SS: I can guess, but I may guess wrong,

BM: right, I do, when students start their start their sentences with "this"

SS: is it what?

BM: that's exactly, this what? Which are you talking about, I'm not really sure

SS: yeah

BM: I play dumb a lot

SS: or who are they? I do too, I do too, okay, so that's interesting, so how else do we do different

BM: um, I wish I had, I don't have my actual notebook that I had with me

SS: that's okay

BM: but she I think that also um, I think that I just, I think the biggest difference is the way you both view writing

SS: okay

BM: it seems, I think that you have a much more, and I can't really articulate this, but you seem to be much more

SS: practical

BM: writing center minded actually

SS: that's so surprising

BM: in terms of like you said process, the process is similar, the process is important, the end product is what's different, but process is really, it's really important

SS: it is

BM: I'm not sure that she would have said the same thing

SS: okay

BM: you know, process wasn't really talked about at all

SS: interesting, well, and you know, so you know I have that 30 page paper

BM: right

SS: and I broke it down into lots of little assignments, and we absolutely talk about that as a process

BM: yeah, oh yeah

SS: and I ask my students, "How many of you want to write a 30 page paper"

BM: nobody

SS: nobody, "how many of you want to write 6 – 8" no not even, "how about 1, can we do 1"

BM: right

SS: okay, let's talk about how to go from one to eight to thirty

BM: yeah

SS: it's a process

BM: right

SS: it absolutely is

BM: right, um, also

SS: but, I will tell you that I am one of the few people that scaffold assignments though

BM: well, right, and that has a lot to do with WAC

SS: it absolutely came from WAC, absolutely

BM: so what do you think then, see you're a product of WAC too, and I forgot about that

SS: but Jane is too

BM: she is?

SS: I believe she is

BM: she did WAC

SS: I think she did, I'm pretty darn sure she did

BM: really

SS: I know she did, because I've done it twice, and she was in with me once, I know she did

BM: well that surprises me

SS: she's very narrow focused

BM: yeah

SS: now, she could do citations with her eyes closed, and I am like whatever, look it up, because you know what, your account, manager is never going to care about the citation, unfortunately that's the truth

BM: yeah

SS: I know we have to do them and they serve a purpose, but Jane wants to comma here and the period there, and I'm like, "here's how you figure it out."

BM: right

SS: and that's another thing I think I do different than Jane, is "here's how you figure it out, because we're not always open."

BM: right

SS: so when you're working on this at home

BM: Mm hmm

SS: go to this website

BM: Mm hmm, how does a typical consultation go with you when they sit down

SS: they're not typical. None of them are typical, so give me a project

BM: Um, okay, so I've come in with a set of questions and I want to talk to you about how you know, viable they are for a research project

SS: okay

BM: so

SS: okay, so let's look at this first question, what's your goal here, what kind of responses are you looking for here, what would you expect somebody to tell me, alright, when I read this question, here's what I'm reading

BM: totally different

SS: what would Jane do

BM: she would say, "Okay, well you might need like a"

SS: a space there or a comma or something

BM: Mm hmm

SS: okay

BM: so I think she's much more focused on Lower Order Concerns

SS: okay

BM: and I think in fact, and even she said this, I think she shyes away from higher order concerns

SS: okay, because I shy away from lower order concerns, because you know what, I'm still figuring out where those stupid commas go

BM: so this is really interesting, because one of the things I thought would be really different about the college of business would be the focus on the lower order concerns

SS: Okay

BM: but that's not what you're saying, and that's not what Thomas is saying

SS: Well, I'm saying that's not what I focus on

BM: right

SS: should that be the focus, I don't know, I'm telling you that's not what I focus on

BM: right, but you don't focus on it because you're putting it, you're contextualizing it in saying likely, if you have two spaces after this period and before the next sentence, or if there is a comma missing here or there

SS: you're managers not going to get

BM: right, they're going to care a lot more about

SS: content

BM: and clarity

SS: Yup

BM: and being concise

SS: yup

BM: right

SS: now, I will also tell you that there's, one of the accounting assignments is they have to do a resume, and there are three pages of instruction on how to set that resume up, and here's how many spaces you indent when you're doing this part, and this is where your margin ends when you're doing that part, and this is the heading you put in bold, so this accounting resume, and Thomas and I were talking about this yesterday, I don't know if that's what accounting firms are really looking for, I don't know if that's what the accounting books suggest, and so these professors just say, well this must be right?

BM: Mm hmm

[6:43]

SS: um, super cute skirt, um

BM: yes it is

SS: um, so, there's like an absolute formula the accounting professors don't care what they have in your resume, as long as you've indented the right number of spaces

BM: Mm hmm

SS: I'm not sure that's going to help the student get a job

BM: so, that's exactly, I think that's why I align you with the writing center, because you are saying, you know, whether you implicitly or explicitly talk about process, that's process, it's also process in talking about, you know, you talked a lot about practical application, you also talked a lot about we're not going to be here every day, every minute, so here's a way to go find it yourself

SS: yeah, now see I would have thought the writing center would say, you need a comma here, or you need, that's what I thought

BM: mm mmm (no)

SS: yeah

BM: yeah

SS: told you I've never used them, so you don't know

BM: I mean, I'm sure that some people do that

SS: Well, sure

BM: but, the people

SS: and I do too

BM: especially the people that are in satellite centers, it's like a more kind of advanced rhetorical savvy look at writing and that's where you are, and that's where you know, that's where Beth is

SS: that's really interesting

BM: and that's where you know, Joy is, when we talk about nursing, those are the kinds of things, Joy, I mean, almost word-for-word, sat here, not *here*, there and talked about how important it is for nurses, especially since they're non-traditional students, who are probably are working, who have probably been out of school for a really long time

SS: right

BM: what they're being taught, and how they're being taught to write, is how they can directly use it in the field

SS: right, and that's what I do too

BM: exactly

SS: however, again, I would tell you that I'm probably the exception. I am the only person that scaffolds out assignments

BM: yeah

SS; I can tell you that right now

BM: yeah, so you're, I think you're a writing teacher, too, there's a writing teacher in there

SS: well, I do a lot of writing in class

BM: right

SS: yeah

BM: and so I think that also makes a different

SS: that is so interesting isn't it?

BM: Mm hmm

SS: because the first time Laverne approached me about it, I'm like "no, I don't know anything about writing, I'm not going there."

BM: Mm hmm, yeah

SS: that's so interesting

BM: Mm hmm, yeah, and there's definitely a theme I see emerging across people that are working in the satellite centers, and you are you know right in line with that

February 23, 2016

MP: So, VTECC's not really, it is not just a writing support center, I should say that

BM: Sure, yeah

MP: Um, so it's, it's a research and outreach center

BM: Okay

MP: So, that make it kind of a weirder space, and it has been, when did we start it, 2005, so it's actually a chartered university center

BM: Okay

MP: So, we have a charter on file with Virginia Tech, we're chartered at the college level

BM: Okay

MP: so, Virginia Tech lets you charter research centers at departmental college and university levels, so we're charted at the college center, um so that means, you know, we keep a budget, we have to do center reports and all this kind of stuff. But, it's been mostly a research center for the last probably 10 years

BM: Okay

MP: because, partly because Lisa and I are faculty and we were started when we were Assistant Professors so mostly what we did was research

BM: Yeah, right

MP: That's the way that works, um, and so we've got a strategic plan for the center, and we're trying to do more outreach. She was on sabbatical last year, I'm on sabbatical this year, so it hasn't really

BM: Yeah

MP: done as much workshop outreach as we want. Um, so, so there's that in terms of structurally, right, so the center houses um our grad students, it houses research meetings, it houses data collection, like it's a place where people can go and do interviews

BM: Oh great

MP: Like we do observational research in there, all that kind of stuff, um, and then as a support center, or, I guess it's more as an outreach center, what we've done a little bit of, and not a whole lot of is trying to do more writing workshops, um, and we were supposed to do one a month this year, and it just kind of completely fell apart. Partly because I'm not there

BM: Yeah

MP: and Lisa was just coming back from sabbatical, so, the place that it's emerged most directly is in these writing days, and that really, I mean like we said in our article, I mean, that emerge out of sort of graduate students, we had one faculty member Holly who was really interested in creating time for grad students for themselves to write

BM: Yeah

MP: so, it started and then it sort of moved into the center and now it's kind of this protected space, and it's really self-sustained, that's one reason, though, and this is what we didn't do this year that we were supposed to do. We wanted to do weekly, monthly sort of mini-writing workshops in the morning

BM: Yeah

MP: Like a 9 – 9:30 at the start of the day

BM: Oh cool

MP: Um, every, we wanted to try to do them every two weeks, um, but obviously that hasn't happened, because we're trying to figure out how to move research into practice, um, and so that's the challenge of that space um is we do a lot of research, we publish articles, we do workshops, and we would do workshops at conferences, and, I've got to finish the VTECC website, um, we're really trying to figure out how at Virginia Tech, do we create a space that takes all this research that we do on disciplinary communication and figure out how to put it in the hands of faculty and in the hands of students

BM: Yeah

MP: The student thing is a bigger challenge because, um, we don't really have a staff

BM: Okay

MP: I mean, the budgets we get are just research budgets

BM: Okay

MP: so we get overhead money from research

BM: Yeah

MP: sometimes we get a little bit of foundation money and small private grants to do some things, but we don't have like a writing center staff

BM: Right

MP: So, trying to figure out how to serve 10,000 students in the college of Engineering, I guess there's 7,500 now, it's supposed to go to 10,000 I think, or I don't know, it's gone up a lot

BM: That's a lot

MP: We went up by a couple hundred last year, so um, so trying to figure out how to provide that kind of service is not really on the agenda, we're thinking more in smaller ways

BM: Mm hmm

MP: We're thinking about possibly we might be able to offer at the graduate and undergraduate levels um and in fact, I want to try to propose a couple, but, it's not going to be, and especially because there's a writing center on campus

BM: Right

MP: it's not a kind of thing we need to, like we don't need to create another writing center

BM: Sure

MP: um and we don't need to create a discipline specific writing center and I've talked, Lisa and I have talked to Diana and um

BM: Jenny

MP: yeah, Jenny, wow I could see her face

BM: (laughs) I know

MP: and hear her voice and could not get that name, Jenny Lawrence, um, last year sometime about ways to do collaboration, but it comes back to funding

[4:59]

BM: Right

MP: and now we're about to get a new Dean, so we've got to figure that out, so yeah, um I think one of the things that's true, and this comes out of sort of research as well, um, and since I do, I mean most of the work I do is in communication and in disciplines, I do research in a lot of things, I should be careful about that (laughs)

BM: (laughs)

MP: it's all connected to me, and it all sort of grows out of communication in the discipline, but that's just my head, um, is that sort of the lines between writing formal writing, speaking, teamwork, and everything else, are pretty blurry, right

BM: Right

MP: So, it's not easy to, it's interesting, we did a study a couple of years ago that we're still working on the data on where we interviewed faculty and students at five different universities, and for students especially, when you say "communication," that means everything from like

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papers are writing, so if you say, "writing," it means the papers, but if you say "communication," it means everything, interpersonal communication, oral presentations

BM: Yeah

MP: sort of that whole spectrum, um, and because writing even itself doesn't happen in a vacuum

BM: Right

MP: it's sort of always embedded in all those other kinds of contextual spaces, so thinking about that

BM: Yeah, so that's why, you in particular, because you have an English background

MP: I do, I have degrees in English and Engineering

BM: and Engineering and so you're this kind of like perfect hybrid, you know somebody that I think has a lot of insight into disciplinary writing, and from you know the perspective of an English person

MP: mm hmm

BM: So, that's really why I wanted to interview you anyway, and then Diana's like, "you have to e-mail her"

MP: She's so sweet

[6:43]

(talk about unrelated material – 7:15]

MP: Okay, so what else can I tell you

BM: so I do have a list of questions

MP: great

BM: that we can work from and I guess from the way that you've explained your support space, you know, I guess just kind of fashion these questions in whatever way works best for you

MP: Okay

BM: Um, these three sections are my three research questions, so I'm particularly in one in the exigence in writing support spaces, the tutoring practices, and then of course the institutional structures. Um, so why was the support, the communications support space in your discipline created

MP: Um, partly because it's an ongoing, so communication's a primary outcome for engineering

BM: Mm hmm

MP: um, right

BM: And that's the ATEC

MP: it's ABET

BM: Yeah, ABET

MP: Whatever it is, I should know

BM: I just read your article with Diana and Kelly

MP: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

BM: so that was, the outcomes were in there too

MP: So, it is a required sort of graduation outcome that students be able to communicate effectively, um, and I think, there is a sense, so it's interesting, so I run VTECC, and you may not know this, but before that for 9 years, I directed the writing in the disciplines program for material science and engineering science and mechanics

BM: Oh cool

MP: So, I don't know if you know Christine Bourgois

BM: I know her through our other GAs

MP: Okay

BM: because Kayla and Rachel and several of our GAs

MP: work with her

BM: Right and Mandy

MP: Yeah, so we started that. Mandy actually comes to my research group

BM: Oh cool

MP: So, I think there's a sense that content and language are not really neatly separable

BM: Yeah

MP: and so when you do work within the disciplines, um, you get a better sense of meeting students where they live, of thinking about, I mean theoretically, it's all about situated learning.

[9:06]

MP: and situativity, so if you adopt sort of a social constructivist, situated learning perspective, you know, it's all laden langer (not sure this is what she said) and communities of practice, right so you, you put writing embedded in those kinds of places and you think about what it means in the context in which it's happening, rather than in some kind of abstract thing, which is right, sort of on the train from just rhetorical audience purpose, activity theory

BM: Yeah

MP: embedding things in activity, rhetorical genre theory

BM: right

MP: exigence, all of that sort of stuff

BM: Right

MP: and, and so I guess philosophically, I think there's got to be bounds, I think there's room for sort of focused instruction on writing

BM: Mm hmm

MP: In writing classes

BM: mm hmm

MP: um, and I think students move across fields and across disciplines, so I think, but then we do a lot of work on interdisciplinarity, but I think when you put them within the disciplines, it gives people a.) more of a sense of connection, right

BM: Yeah

MP: so if I was to talk theoretically, too, it's um, from like a, I know people who do work in motivation, so call it utility value, right

BM: okay

MP: it's more useful because it's connected to the kind of writing and communication they're expected to do on their job

BM: yeah

MP: um, in terms of things like how writing days happen, that was sort of spontaneously in terms of students write at the graduate level

BM: mmm

MP: there's a real need for people to have time and focus to write

[10:41]

BM: Yeah

MP: Um, and to think, and to write with people who are doing the same kind of writing

BM: Mm hmm

MP: so, that you can share questions, ideas, frameworks

BM: Mm hmm

MP: sort of ways of thinking about that thing, so it's kind of a long-ish answer

BM: That's okay, I like long-ish answers, um, you talked about interdisciplinarity, too, and I'm going to try to come back to that at some point hopefully

MP: Okay

BM: Um, why would a writing support space be created for specific disciplines as opposed to or as an extension of a writing center

MP: so, that's an interesting question, and that goes more towards, um, the writing in the disciplines program I ran

BM: Mm hmm

MP: which was sort of teaching but also support, and I think my answer to that is I don't know that I think those are necessarily opposed, but I think the advantage of it within a specific discipline is access

BM: Mm hmm

MP: so, it can be done in ways in which you have um you know, a satellite center that's staffed often, but the thing about the MSE program, and mining has a program, and civil has a program, is you build a different kind of relationship with students. So, when we did sort of writing in the disciplines, in MSE in particular, right, my office, our support office was right next to the student lounge

BM: Mm hmm

MP: so anytime we were in our offices, you know, you're there, you can pop your head in and get to know the students. We taught them sophomore, junior, and senior year

BM: Mm hmm

MP: so it was this really embedded program, so you build a different kind of relationship and writing really becomes, and communication becomes sort of more connected and embedded to their normal practice because it sort of lives right there with them

[12:41]

BM: yeah

MP: as opposed to a think you go somewhere else to do

BM: Right

MP: I mean, even my grad students, right, the phrase that I will never allow people to use is "Oh, I'm just going to write it up now."

BM: (laughs)

MP: Like some people like did the work and now I'm just going to take it out of my brain

BM: right

MP: right, Brian, you're not allowed to say "write it up," are you?

Brian: absolutely not

BM: (laughs)

MP: that's one of our PhD students, whose committee I'm on, it's not a phrase that goes well, um, with me, and people say, and they give me their dissertation timelines, and then they're going to "write it up" right, um, but I think that's the, that's sort of a framework that people operate in, that somehow you do engineering work and then you "write it up"

BM: Right

MP: Or you do research and then you "write it up"

BM: Right

MP: right, when in fact, if you do writing theory, it's like writing is part of the thinking

BM: right

MP: and that's where analysis happens, so um when you embed it as a sort of permeant space in a department, you mirror that centrality, you mirror that kind of permeability

BM: Mm hmm

MP: and then you build up sort of staff and people who are familiar with, and willing to engage with, the disciplinary knowledge

BM: Right

MP: So, one of the things, you know, when I was directing the program that we would always ask GTAs, you know, is "how do you feel about learning Engineering?"

BM: Mm hmm, right

MP: because you can't do the, you can't sort of separate, um, and we talked about it a little bit about it in that article, and I wrote an article, a theory piece, for across the disciplines a few years ago, 2013, looking at sort of interdisciplinarity and the need for writing faculty and disciplinary faculty to exchange knowledge, right

BM: Mm hmm

[14:25]

MP: so, if you're not willing to sort of start to understand the language of the discipline, you're not going to have students' respect, and you're not going to be able to engage in the same way

BM: ethos

MP: right, yeah, there's an ethos, and there's a willingness to sort of listen, "Oh, that's the engineering part, I don't know that."

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BM: Right

MP: because they're too connected, I mean, you know I was a chemical engineer, so even material science for me was a different kind of space, but you begin to build the language, you begin to sort of know what's going on

B M: Sure

MP: You begin to sort of understand that, and I think it's important in terms of the access to disciplinary literacy, so

BM: right

MP: and so that's that what does a writing support space provide students

BM: yeah, that the writing center

MP: doesn't, and it is that, it's sort of that constant visibility, and access, so it's a, I mean, like our space is to write for graduate students

BM: yeah

MP: as much as, more so than a space to get help on writing

BM: right

MP: right, so we don't do a lot of tutoring

BM: Mm hmm

MP: we create a space in which people can come and write

BM: because that's what they need

MP: right

BM: that's what that they express they need

MP: Right, and you know, in my dream world, would we always have sort of a staff person there to answer questions there, sure

BM: Yeah

MP: if I had all the money in the world

BM: right

MP: staff it

BM: yeah

MP: you know, and we would do, I would like to do more mini-lessons, mini-sort of tutorials around different writing tasks, but it's more about, it's like if you look at Neal Lerner's, have you ever read *The Idea of a Writing Lab*

BM: Oh yeah, mm hmm

MP: So, it's more of that

BM: Sure

MP: kind of a thing

BM: yeah

MP: that's kind of how I think about it

BM: So, would you, you would staff them with Engineering people?

MP: I would staff it with people who could, with people, it's hard for me to think, sort of depends on the person

BM: mm hmm

MP: because it's not, you need somebody who is fluent in both writing and engineering

BM: right

MP: at some level

BM: right

MP: um and how has the language to talk about both

BM: Yeah

MP: as a writing specialist, I would tend to say, it's easier to teach, if people are willing, it's easier to teach writing experts, and not the engineering, to get them embedded. Engineers would not agree, necessarily not agree with that

BM: yeah

MP: but that's also partly< I mean, I've spent half my career as a technical writer, right

BM: yeah

MP: so that's what you do when you're a technical writer

BM: right

MP: walk into an industry and go, "Huh, I know nothing about this. Now I am about to learn."

BM: Mm hmm

MP: um, so but there is a sort of big willingness factor, because I've found with different TA's I've hired over the years, some people are more willing than others

BM: Yeah

MP: to engage with the sort of technical dimensions and not be afraid of the graph, and not be afraid of asking students questions and really sort of pushing to understand in a lab report, or in a proposal what's there, and you need that kind of willingness to move outside your disciplinary knowledge

BM: yeah, kind of the embeddedness or the immersion of it

MP: right, right

BM: Yeah

MP: so, I would probably rather have writing experts

BM: Okay

MP: who were willing, because I think, I think that's the tacit knowledge that's hard to get Engineers to learn, right, there's a lot about people learn to write, how we write, what writing is, genre, structure, audience, all that sort of stuff that is what students need to learn

BM: Mm hmm

MP: where as engineering is the context in which they need to learn in, um, but it has to be the right writing instructor

BM: Sure

MP: or writing staff

BM: So, what might then a writing center provide that the writing support space does not

MP: direct tutoring

BM: yeah, the one-on-one

MP: that's the thing we don't do is the direct, you know, student, we don't provide, we don't intervene in student writing

[18:27]

BM: yeah, right

MP: Now, when we do writing in the disciplines, sure, then yeah there was a lot of intervening because it was teaching, grading

BM: Yeah

MP: conferencing, that whole kind of thing, so um, but in terms of what VTECC offers, we don't do really direct intervention, I mean, we may start to offer some classes

BM: Yeah

MP: um, but

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BM: What would those classes look like

MP: Um, the two, I'm thinking about offering a writing for research class at both the graduate and undergraduate levels

BM: Cool

MP: so, that's something Lisa and I have talked about for a while

BM: yeah, cool

MP: but even that, you're only serving a teeny fraction of the population

BM: Right

MP: right, because if you're going to do a writing class, you can't do more than 20 students

BM: right

MP: and even 20 is a lot

BM: Right, yes, I teach 22 in my business writing and that's a lot

MP: and there's

BM: even 2 you know

MP: 7500 undergrads

BM: right, how could you even

MP: and the how many thousand grad students

BM: staff that

MP: yeah

BM: so, and because I know that you have to go, I don't want to keep you too long

MP: Oh, yeah, no we're good, we've got about 20 minutes

BM: Okay, I want to jump to institutional; structures if that's okay

MP: mm hmm

BM: Especially because you don't have staff

MP: right, we don't train tutors

BM: Um, so who and you don't have to answer any of these that you don't want to

MP: No, no, no, no I'm fine

BM: who funds the writing support space

MP: So, we are funded through grants and foundation donation

BM: So, not through the institution

MP: Mm mmm (no)

BM: Okay

MP: So, well, it's institutional in that um we get some level of overhead from grants that we write

BM: Okay

MP: Well, I think we have to re-negotiate the overhead agreement, so when a faculty member gets a granny

BM: Mm hmm

MP: that grant comes with the money to do the project and the overhead that's associated with it

BM: Okay

MP: so, Virginia Tech has a you know, an overhead rate of, I forget what it is now, 62% or 59% or something

BM: Okay

MP: say 60%, so if I need $100,000 to do work I'm asking a foundation for $160,000

BM: ah

[20:21]

MP: National Science Foundation [unclear – department of ed?], right, so that $60,000 is overhead. The state gets a cut, the university gets a cut, the college gets a cut, and then it goes back to the departments and the organization

BM: wow

MP: and that's the money that keeps the lights on, right

BM: Yeah

MP: that's why you can plug your computer and you get electricity, that's why, you know

BM: right

MP: there's wireless internet

BM: right

MP: and all that kind of stuff

BM: Right

MP: um, so, VTECC gets some overhead money out of that, so it gets, we get project funding from the grants that we submit and get, um, we get a little bit of overhead funding that does supplies, we get, we have a poster printer, um, so supplies for the poster printer are directly charged to, we charge people $12 to print posters

BM: Mm hmm, okay

MP: and basically I talked to Kelly Bellanger

BM: yeah

MP: a long time ago when we first bought it, because Gary her husband, her …

BM: yeah

MP: former husband, whatever, had um sort of figured out how much it cost to print a poster

BM: yeah

MP: so basically, we just charged people materials cost

BM: right, okay

MP: Um, so if you want to print a poster in the center, you've got to transfer 12 bucks from some other university account to that

BM: yeah

MP: and that's what pays for printering and stuff like that

BM: Okay

MP: Um, there are some things that are funded um out of the, the institution in terms of access to the center

BM: mm hmm

MP: so, because our center serves as kind of a graduate student space for the department of engineering education, in particular

BM: Mm hmm

MP: Because it's sort of housed in Engineering Ed, um, our students get swipe-card access to the center, so the student support fee, right, so graduate students, like undergrads you pay

BM: Right

MP: You know, engineering fee

BM: right

MP: well, in engineering, you pay the engineering fee money, so we use that to cover the cost of the swipe card

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BM: Okay

MP: so, there's some institutional funding in there

BM: Yeah

MP: but then we've also, over the years, gotten donations from private corporations

BM: Oh wow

MP: for furniture, supplies, structure

BM: yeah

MP: sort of how the [unclear]

[22:28]

BM: how does that give you flexibility instead of, or not, um instead of it just coming from the institution

MP: well, yeah, donation money has basically no constraints on it

BM: Mm hmm

MP: so, donation money is discretionary funding, you spend it in all kind of different ways

BM: Okay

MP: Usually, institutional money is more, like, if we're going to ask for engineering fee money to do something

BM: Yeah

MP: that has to be approved, because engineering fee money that differential tuition is for specific purposes in terms of lab support

BM: Okay

MP: and equipment and that kind of thing, so I have to go to Ed Nelson and make a case and say, "Here's what we're going to do, here's who it supports, here's how it directly benefit the students who are doing it …"

BM: Yeah

MP: "… here's how much it's going to cost." Right

BM: yeah

MP: Um, overhead is more flexibly

BM: Mm hmm

MP: but there's still some limits on what you can do with it, um, so but one of the things we're trying to figure out actually, as Lisa and I move into next year, is what are other ways, we can support the center. Now, the college gives us space

BM: Okay

MP: so, the space that we have is, because the college owns space

BM: right

MP: the departments don't own space, nobody owns space except the university, right

BM: Right, right

MP: so the college says "you can have this space"

BM: Mm hmm

MP: so they give us the physical location

BM: And how important is location in your building. I haven't' seen that

MP: I think it's huge

BM: yeah

MP: um, and actually, we got to, this center's really nice because we got to design it

BM: Oh wow

MP: so, it's in the atrium, it's in the capsule that hangs over the atrium, so it's this oval, we have white boards, fixed white boards on one wall, movable white boards on the other wall

BM: Cool

MP: there's an overhead projector built in, there's a curtain that's way too heavy to move that sort of screens off, it was designed, we're trying to figure out a way to make it more multi-functional and let multiple meetings happen at once, and the curtain is sort of the attempt at that

BM: mm hmm

MP: but it's too heavy, it's not really workable, so at some point, we going to review that with something different, um, so we got to sort of design it, so the institution then funded, because it was part of the new building, right

BM: yeah

MP: so that was paid for in the institution because we served the college

BM: Okay, okay, um, so how do, well maybe you've already answered this, how do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and the development of the writing support space

MP: So, that's the way in which, we really designed this space to think about the kind of outreach that we wanted to do for the college, and so it was designed, we've only been in the building a year, two years

[25:04]

MP: when did we move it? Summer 2014, so I guess we're going on two years

BM: Wow

MP: it only seems like one year because I haven't been there this year, um, but we were really sort of designed it for the long term

BM: Yeah

MP: Thinking about, how can it function as an outreach center within the college, and what kind of workshops do we want to have there, what kind of activities do we want to have there so it's

BM: Yeah

MP: sort of designed for that kind of space, um, but then that also means, I mean in this case, it was designed as part of a new building, and the college has a vision for the building, and the architects have a vision for the building

BM: Right

MP: and VTECC is in this really premiere spot in the building, on the first floor, in the capsule, right, so there's a whole like, "Wow, we're really visible"

BM: right

MP: how did we create this into that space

BM: so what does that say in terms of how the college values the work that you do there

MP: I think it's really intentional

BM: yeah

MP: I mean I think that the idea that writing is sort of the center, that communication is at the center of this building is important, and so that's where Lisa and I are really trying to work on what are the outreach activities that we can do, um, that are going to sort of live that out

BM: yeah

MP: and we've started in small ways, but the next probably three years or so, I think we're going to do a lot more development

BM: Yeah, um so then what other kinds of institutional and administrative issues emerge when developing a writing support space

MP: um, so some of it is, right, there's always space competition

BM: mm hmm

MP: so that's one of the things we're facing. So, we're a college center, but we're housed within the department

BM: mmm

MP: Um, so for example, right now, the department gives Lisa and I office space for our graduate students outside the center

BM: Okay

MP: but, we're you know, everybody's, every department on campus is out of space

BM: right

MP: and so that may change over time, and if we have to house our graduate students, if their offices technically have to be in the center, then how's that going to change

BM: right

MP: the center space

BM: right

MP: um, so we're trying to think about, I mean, a lot of it is just space is at a premium

BM: mm hmm

MP: and then thinking about sort of that tension between being housed in the department because Lisa and I are in that department versus trying to serve the college as a whole

BM: right

MP: and be a resource for the college as a whole

BM: right

MP: and so, we do that now through an array of different kinds of, one of the challenges is people see us as a meeting room

BM: a meeting room?

MP: yeah, so I get lots of requests for, "Oh, can I use the conference room in the pod." Because if you walk in, I mean, there are, there's lots of small tables on wheels that can be put into a big table, and it can function as a meeting room

BM: sure

MP: right, we do dissertation defenses in there, advisory boards can meet in there, um, but I think people don't yet know enough about what we do, and because space is always at a premium, there's sort of that tension, um and then there's the tension between, in a research center, between our need to do research in there, so Lisa might have a research group meeting in

there as do a couple of [unrecognizable], um, you know, we want to be able to do experimental studies in there

BM: Yeah

MP: and then you want it to be an open space for students to write

BM: yeah

MP: so, how do we balance the multiple needs that are going on in there

BM: yeah

MP: and that, and so that's the other tension is um

BM: Yeah

MP: sort of space is short on campus, we have beautiful space, um, but then also space is only so big and we want it, and it needs to serve multiple functions

BM: right

MP: because it's not just a writing support space

BM: right

MP: so

[29:08]

BM: right

MP: so some of those tensions are unique to what it means to combine a research and outreach center

BM: mm hmm, right, right

MP: um

BM: not just a writing space

MP: right, and that's, but that's true I think, um, you know, if you talk to Christine about MSE, the space issues are there too, right, because the program has grown, the space isn't big enough anymore, where do you put people, where do you house people, how do you maintain that relationship because being next to the student lounge is a great place to be

BM: yeah

MP: but now we're really tight on space, so how do you get everybody in, and how do you maintain that sense of connection and visibility

BM: right because it's just going to keep growing

MP: right

BM: so, for the last few minutes, can you talk a little bit about just kind of um well, interdisciplinarity and writing, how writing might look different, because you wrote that article with Diana and Kelly and Lisa

MP: mm hmm

BM: um, about starting the first-year

MP: mm hmm

BM: class with you know, kind of engineers

MP: yup

BM: and so I wonder what your perspective is on writing in English versus or with and writing in Engineering

MP: yeah

BM: um

MP: you mean, housing an interdisciplinary writing course in the English department versus housing it in engineering or do you mean, putting students from different disciplines together

BM: well so I'm um interested just kind of in the kinds of genres that are written in English versus the kinds of genres that are written in engineering, and then how writing might look different in those two spaces

[30:45]

MP: so, it's really interesting, we do an, there's an ASEE paper that we wrote um, that looked at, and I'm actually trying to, I'm working on the article now, but the relationship between um, we took the value rubric, have you ever read the AACU value rubrics

BM: no

MP: so there American Association of Colleges and Universities, um, a couple of years ago did this big project on evaluating sort of the place of the, liberal arts-like skills

BM: mm hmm

MP: so, they brought together faculty from all over the place, and they created rubrics for critical thinking, teamwork, written communication, oral communication, and a bunch of other ones

BM: yeah

MP: right, so they have these sort of national rubrics for people to start from, so we took the value rubric for writing and compared that to these interviews we'd done with faculty and students from 5 different universities, and one of the things that has really emerged and I've been thinking a lot about and it's actually out of some data that I have from a European university too

that I'm working on is, it has to do with how you make arguments, um, and I think in scientific disciplines, like what's the role of sources

[31:58]

MP: um, because that was um and if you e-mail me, I can send you the paper, the ASEE paper where we talked about it, but it's sort of this idea

BM: thank you

MP: about the use of sources so in text based disciplines, English, history, um a lot of the humanities, we think about articles, published research as sort of evidence for what we're talking about

BM: yeah

MP: um, and ways of making arguments, and really in engineering, if you're writing a research article, sort of the prior lit is the set up and the background

BM: Yeah

MP: but in, especially in undergraduate, you're making arguments from data, you're making arguments from equations, from models, and so it's a different sense of, so at an abstract level, there are some principles about how to use evidence

BM: right

MP: and what counts as a data, and what counts as support for an argument, and so you can go all Toolman

BM: right (laughs)

MP: whoever your favorite argument theorist is

BM: right

MP: but sort of in the nitty-gritty, the role of outside sources, prior research versus the role of data, I mean, it's much more like when you get to graduate school, and the text is your data

BM: right

MP: right, so at the undergraduate level, it's less about orchestrating the conversation of all these different sources that say things, and more about, okay, here's my lab data, how do I make sense of it, how do I present it in a way that leads to action or decisions [inaudible], so I think that that's one of the biggest differences that I see. And then the other thing I think is different is, um, the role of interpersonal communication, oral presentations, teamwork, and again, different is a spectrum, not a English does it this way,

BM: sure

MP: it's not a binary

BM: right

MP: um, and, but I think communication is much more embedded in the work of the discipline, how do I say it, so not teaching students to write essays

BM: mm hmm

MP: right, I'm teaching them to write reports about their own work and sometimes it's about opposing ideas, and you can get into tech and business writing

BM: yeah

MP: that are more that way, but

BM: right

MP: but writing in the disciplines is going to be closer to technical writing, business writing, than it is to standard first-year composition, although I know there's sort of research places and ways of thinking but Engineers communicate on the job much more with more limited audiences, so you're not, and this is true of workplace writing, right, disciplinary writing in general

BM: right, sure, yeah

MP: unless you go into research and publish articles

BM: right

MP: for the other researchers in your field, you're not writing essays to a broad audience

BM: Mm hmm

MP: right, your boss needs a report that's got to go into documentation for legal

[35:20]

BM: right

MP: you know, you're doing a pitch to these clients on this day, for this project, and it's these 8 people

BM: right

MP: right, so the writing is much more embedded in these specific contexts and I think helping students understand that kind of context specific writing from their own work, writing where they're the expect, where they've done the work, and then they have to communicate it

BM: yeah

MP: right, so it happens in a different way, and talk and text are much more embedded, right, so the report doesn't go out in a vacuum as if we've never had a conversation about this before

BM: right

MP: we've been talking about it

BM: right

MP: we've been working on this, so it's not, it doesn't exist as this thing I sent you as if you'd not been involved in the project

BM: right

MP: you know, if I'm send you a proposal, it's because you asked, you know, you put out an RFP for a job

BM: right

MP: or and the sales person have given you calls, and you've done, you know, I think about that even as my work as a technical writer, you know, like I work for a forestry consulting company, and I do proposal letter or things like that, well, you know, there's a whole set of conversations that foresters have with the land owner before the letter comes

BM: right

MP: so, it's not a, the text is part of a dialogue

BM: mm hmm

MP: right

BM: right

MP: it's part of an ongoing sort of thing and that, that is harder to replicate in writing classes

BM: yeah

MP: it's harder to replicate in undergraduate education, period, so

BM: yeah

MP: so, even within disciplines, um, but and so that's why you know, in engineering, and a number of other STEM disciplines, we think more about project-based learning and some of that kind of stuff, so that's kind of a big answer

BM: yeah, well

MP: I think a lot about this

BM: yeah

MP: as you might know

BM: Yes, I do know

MP: (laughs)

BM: again, that's why, I mean, I could probably talk to you forever, so I'm not going to take any more of your time

MP: and I'm happy, what's your timeline for your dissertation

BM: I will be done May 2017

MP: Oh, okay

BM: So, I'm just you know

MP: so if you want to talk more

BM: oaky, that would be great

MP: and I could send you. I wrote the chapter for the Cambridge handbook of engineering research on engineering communication

BM: wow

MP: I mean, it's going to be real familiar to you because it basically says, "What are the theoretical framework people use to study communication"

BM: sure

MP: "what are the research methods"

BM: right

MP: you know

BM: right

MP: I mean, it's pretty dense, it's got something like 180 references in it, it's a little appalling

BM: (laughs) wow

MP: well, because engineering communication is in the larger history of communication discipline, right

BM: right

MP: so, I'll try to remember, send me an e-mail and I will send you a copy

BM: I will, yeah I will

MP: so, it's, but it's interesting to have a center, like I said, that is in which we're really trying to figure out how do you put all this research into a practical outreach space

BM: right

MP: you can't serve every student in the college

BM: right

MP: and what do you need to do in that space

BM: right

MP: and I don't know that I have good answers yet

BM: Yeah (laughs)

MP: So I have more questions than I have answers

BM: yeah, that's how I feel about this project, every time I do an interview, I have more questions than when I started with

MP: Yeah, that's very cool

BM: well, thank you very much, I'm not going to take up anymore of your time

MP: OH, you're welcome, and like I said, if you have follow up questions, or if there's more I can do, let me know

BM: Yeah, thank you so much

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BM: and then, I'm going to have to um, this thing likes to die, and when it dies, it stops the recording

CH: I do the same thing

BM: okay, so here are the interview questions

CH: okay

BM: and each section is then one of my research questions, so I'm looking to see, I'm looking to find out the exigence of the development of writing center satellites, I'm interested in tutoring practices, and then institutional structures surrounding those spaces

CH: sounds good

BM: So, um, I'm just going to dive right in, is that okay? Or why don't you tell me a little bit about yourself first and then we'll dive right in

CH: okay, so I'm a PhD student in Engineering Education, I'm in my 5th year, I came here and did a Master's and a PhD, I did not do a thesis for my Master's, so other than like conference papers, journal articles, and then my dissertation, that's the formal academic writing that I've done

BM: yeah, okay

CH: um, and it was, it's very interesting process to transition from traditional engineering background where you write but it's very formulaic writing, right, I mean, there is a very specific way you write and this is formulaic, like academic writing is formulaic in another way, but like

BM: Mm hmm

CH: but like, looking at literature reviews and looking at stuff like that, it was a writing I didn't understand

BM: right

CH: on any different level so, a big portion of my first two-ish years was figuring out like how do you actually write

BM: yeah

CH: and I still, not that I have it down, but I still like, wrestle with that all the time, right

BM: sure

CH: like how do I make this argument, how do I structure this, this type of thing, uh what else would you want to know, so I was part of the engineering education, what we called engineering education writing group, but

BM: Yeah

CH: really

BM: great

CH: I don't know if this will help you at all or if this is going to go too far into the weeds, so feel free, the way that started was as a, we need to get writing done, but …… ehhhhhhhhh …………

BM: yeah (laughs)

CH: it's writing, and there are so many other fun things to do

BM: well there is anything other than writing to do

CH: yeah, yeah, so, it was basically a dedicated time where we could protect ourselves

BM: Mm hmm

CH: from the little annoying things that get in the way and are great reasons not to write

BM: yeah

CH: the other thing, and I think this was part of the article, I believe it was, but the time, right like

BVM: yeah

CH: a lot of the folks that have, that are my peers in the program and stuff like that, it's like, you need a dedicated time, like you need, 2, 4, 6, a full day of hours, like however that works because you gotta get ramped up, and then you get in a flow

BM: right

CH: and then you need feedback

BM: right

CH: and then you gotta get ramped up, you gotta get in a flow, so it's like, I don't know if that's the same across disciplines, but I know that there's at least, you know, a decent number of people who also work that way

BM: Mm hmm

CH: like if there are little, mini distractions throughout a writing session

BM: Mm hmm

CH: it just completely wreaks them

BM: yeah

CH: so, even the group meeting in a common space and different people being there was a barrier to some folks, right

BM: yeah

CH: people still would say, "No, no, no, no, I'm still just going to write at my house."

BM: right

CH: because I'm in my office, and I can do that. So, it started off much more as like a very informal, we've got to get work done

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and then has moved into somewhat of a more formal, we have a day, the day is sheltered for us, um, and when I say "us," I mean everybody in the department can come to it, including faculty, and sometimes you'll have faculty coming into it

BM: interesting

CH: yeah, they're writing grants and stuff like that, too, doesn't happen often, but every once in a while we will, we will get faculty coming into it, yeah, what else do you want to know

BM: so, it's really interesting because I think that having your perspective from the writer's perspective is going to be really interesting to me in combination with Marie's

CH: yeah

BM: talk about VTECC as well, um, and also I'm interested in, so the m, so it sounds like you folks created a space for yourselves as students, PhD students and writers

CH: yeah

BM: how did it get formalized then, was that with the help of faculty?

CH: well, so a faculty was the catalyst, a faculty member was the catalyst, right

BM: okay

CH: so, it all started with her research group

BM: okay

CH: so, it wasn't Marie, it was another faculty member in our department, and her research group started to just kind of say, "you know what, we're going to shelter this day …"

BM: Mm hmm

CH: "…everybody come write as long as you can, and then go whatever you've got to do." Um, other folks heard about it, and we're kind of like, "hey, can I get in on that," um, meaning graduate students

BM: yeah

CH: other graduate students started popping into to those days, right, and as that happened, a small nucleus of us said, "Okay, this is really valuable."

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and we've got to figure out a way to keep this going, um, it was kind of a culmination of a bunch of different things that happened all at once, because we moved from McBryde

BM: Mm hmm

CH: to the new

BM: right

CH: to Goodwin Hall, Marie and Lisa got the space

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and it was kind of like a, well, of course, why don't you use this space for this formal type of a thing. The interesting thing about the group is how people ebb and flow in and out of it

BM: Mm hmm

CH: because it depends on where you're at in your program

BM: Mm hmm

CH: like if you're super early in your program, you don't necessarily need to commit a full day, if you're at the prelim, proposal, dissertation, like actual write up your dissertation phase, I mean, it's, I think it's super helpful, and I think the folks who come think it's super helpful

BM: yeah

CH: so

[5:48]

CH: uh, I don't know, I can tell you why I go if that would be helpful

BM: sure, yeah, of course

CH: so, I go because there is something about sitting in a room with other people and you're all doing the same types of activity

BM: Mm hmm

CH: that I find valuable, right

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so even though, I don't necessarily want everybody to talk to me the whole time I'm there

BM: right

CH: because I want to like focus on writing, knowing that they're there, and we're all writing, and we're kind of a group together, working through this process, I don't know, community, I guess is the best way I can describe it

BM: yeah, that's

CH: um, the other thing is like if you get sometimes, I get stuck on small, trivial things, but I can't get over them

BM: right

CH: Like I can't get around them, right, so if I, if you're in the room with me, and I can say, "hey, can I have two seconds," and we talk through this

BM: Mm hmm

CH: we talk through it, and I can keep going

BM: right

CH: whereas, if I'm by myself, I either have to mentally say, "push that to later"

BM: yeah

CH: which is hard

BM: right

CH: or, I sit there and I just spin and spin and spin and spin and loose a couple hours on

BM: yeah

CH: something silly and trivial, so I think those are the two major reasons, um, why I continue to go and want to continue to go and really on some level, help facilitate the fact that it happens every year

BM: right

CH: um

BM: right, you really see the importance of that have sacred or protected time for writing

CH: yeah, I mean, and even if people don't use it, the fact that we do it

BM: yeah

CH: and that we, there's at least some folks within our discipline that value it, I think is important, um, because I think writing's tough

BM: Mm hmm

CH: in engineering ed, not just engineering ed, but I think writing is tough because people are transitioning from very technical

BM: exactly

CH: fields

BM: right

CH: into, I mean, one of the requirements for us to come in is we have to have at least a bachelor's in engineering

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and I'm pretty sure everybody has, there may be an exception or two to that

BM: yeah

CH: but it's like, we're coming from very technical spaces

BM: Yeah

[7:57]

CH: and we're moving into much more of a social science, much more of a different type of field

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so

BM: um, okay, so how many people on average would you say come to that every week

CH: so there's four of us

BM: four

CH: yeah four that are consistent

BM: pretty dedicated

CH: yeah, four that are dedicated, um, but it will range, right, as people travel, or

BM: yeah

CH: family stuff, you know, some of us have kids

BM: Mm hmm

CH: some of us have other life things, and certain times you get meetings that you can't shake or something like that

BM: yeah

CH: so, I would say four is on average, a pretty good number, the max you'll get, at least this semester, is probably six

BM: okay

CH: and then, it's not surprising that you'll go in and it's just you and one other person there

BM: okay

CH: for that day, so

BM: Mm hmm, so what is a typical, how long is it, is your particular writing group

CH: yeah, so really, we're less strict this semester than we've been in the past, um, and I think that's just by the nature of the people that are involved this year, or this semester, um, but we typically liked to do it in the past where it's like you either commit to the morning, or you commit to the afternoon, or you commit to the full day

BM: okay

CH: uh, so you can think of it as like 4 hour chunks

BM: okay

CH: a little bit of time for lunch, and then 4 hour chunk, or you're there all 8 hours, because that's what you do, now, you'll get different people in different schedules. It's hard for me to do a full 8 hour day

BM: yeah

CH: one because my brain just

BM: right

CH: gets slow

BM: right

CH: towards the end of the day. Um, two because I don't know, I just, I don't know if my brain works in that full 8 hour

BM: right

CH: process, now I will work the full 8 hours

BM: right

CH: but will I write the full 8 hours, it just depends

BM: right

CH: um, it also varies in terms of like when people come in and when people leave, so I am barely ever there after 3:30 or 4:00

BM: Mm hmm

CH: because I go home before my son goes down

BM: Mm hmm

CH: um, so but I'm there at 7:30

BM: yeah

CH: you know in the morning, and then some people will come in at 9 or 10 and they'll stay until 6 or 7 at night

BM: right

CH: so, it just all depends on that schedule and we're good about it now to where people flow in and out

BM: Mm hmm

CH: pretty seamlessly

BM: yeah

CH: and stuff like that, so

BM: without kind of disrupting other people that are already there

CH: yeah, and we give each other visual cues

BM: sure

CH: I mean, if somebody's go their headphones in and they're like, they're in it

BM: yeah

CH: you try not to bother them

BM: it's nice that you respect that, because sometimes in the writing center, it doesn't work so well

CH: yeah, you try not to mess with them

BM: yeah

CH: and then sometimes, I'll be in there and I'll have my headphones in and somebody comes in and I'll pop them out and I'll be like, "hey, what's going on."

BM: yeah

CH: so, it's like, it just all

BM: yeah

CH: it all depends on, yeah so we try to do our best with that. I don't know if that answered your question

BM: yeah, absolutely, um, okay, so, I think that on this it asks why was the writing support space created, and I think you might have answered that

CH: yeah

BM: do you have anything to add to that one

[11:06]

CH: mmmmm ….

BM: maybe this is like another part of that, was there a space for people to write prior to that

CH: okay, no

BM: yeah

CH: not a "formal", not a "formal" space, we primarily just did that in our, we probably got feedback for our research groups

BM: Mm hmm

CH: right, but, my dedicated writing space prior to that was at a coffee shop or at my house

BM: yeah

CH: you know what I mean, like, there was no place where we intentionally got together to do this activity, um, I can't tell you that consciously everybody was like, "Oh my gosh, we need this," you know what I mean, and like that's where it came up, but it was like Holly started it, and then through that, people were like, "Oh yeah, that's actually really useful" or that's just a useful period of time, how do we keep that going

BM: yeah

CH: how do we keep that going, how do we keep that going, um, and then as people got to that phase in their time where they literally needed to be writing most of the day

BM: right

CH: it just, it built steam like that

BM: and that's one day a week

CH: yeah, ours is currently one day a week

BM: okay, yeah

CH: yeah

BM: so are research groups different from your writing group

CH: yeah, okay, that's a good question. Um, research group at least in the case of my research group, um, it's much more bring something, we talk about it, we give feedback, we almost like workshopping it

BM: Mm hmm

CH: like if that makes sense to you

BM: yeah, sure

CH: so, it will be a much more collaborative, interactive session, than writing day, like writing day is writing, or doing some type of work that leads you to writing, um, so maybe outlining it, maybe you've got to do some analysis then you get write the next section, whatever it is, but writing day is a working day

BM: Mm hmm

[12:56]

CH: um

BM: for yourself

CH: I would say for everybody

BM: So like the way you talk about research groups, it sounds so much more community

CH: yeah, yeah, research group, like so I would send out my chapter 3

BM: Mm hmm

CH: a week before and when we got there, I'm getting feedback on my chapter 3

BM: ah

CH: so, it's like, I'm not working on anything, I'm trying to absorb everything everybody's telling me

BM: right, I see

CH: and I'm trying to talk back and forth through ideas

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and through different things with them, so that's the primary difference, at least with my research group, like Marie's research group, as compared to the writing day

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so, very very different purposes for those two activities in my world

BM: Mm hmm

CH: I can't speak to other folks

BM: sure

CH: and how they run their writing groups, but I would say that uh, I know at least for one other person, that's very much how it works, uh, I don't know

BM: for you, and since you can't answer for everybody else

CH: yeah, exactly

BM: do you think that that distinction between like writing group and research group is important

CH: ehhhhh

BM: and in like what ways or not

CH: so I think it's valuable

BM: Mm hmm

CH: uh, I can't say whether or not it's important, because I only know this, right, I don't know another model

BM: yeah

CH; to say like it's better or worse, I can tell you that it's valuable

BM: Mm hmm

CH: because you get the two different perspectives

BM: Mm hmm

CH: from it, right, like in one setting, I'm giving and getting, with the other members of the group, that's the research group setting, right

BM: Mm hmm

CH: like, and I do as much giving as I do getting there, whereas when I go in to a Wednesday writing day, it's productivity

BM: yeah

CH: like, let's get stuff done, um, because I've sheltered this time, let's not waste it

BM: right

CH: uh, so it's very very valuable, and I do think, I guess to get back to your question, I guess to circle back to your question, it is important

BM: Mm hmm

CH: to have both of those, in hindsight, it is important to have both of those because you get very different things from them

BM: right

CH: right, like, one you get productivity for the sake of productivity, whether it's good or bad, you're getting stuff done, right

BM: right (laughs)

CH: like the whole, we can get to the whole Marie's writing is revision thing, but like

BM: (laughs) right

CH: but productivity is productivity, and that's good, you need that, um, and then the other one you get the feedback that you need because so much of this process is how many people see it before it goes to the important people

BM: right

CH: and then how much of it, how much can you refine that before it gets to whoever can evaluate you on it, so

BM: yeah

[15:28]

CH: so yeah, I do think they're both important in their own ways

BM: um and do you have different departments in the research group, or is it all just from

CH: uh, so, let me make sure, would Mandy coming be a different department in your mind

BM: yeah, I think so

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CH: okay, so

BM: and even like material engineering versus civil engineering

CH: from an engineering standpoint, no, from an engineering standpoint, our research group is primarily engineering education people

BM: okay

CH: Mandy does come, so there's rhetoric involved in there, but I think that's just because Mandy and Marie have a personal relationship

BM: yeah

CH: like, and that just works

BM: right

CH: um, in general, our writing groups are much more single discipline

BM: okay

CH: engineering education folk, or sorry, our research groups are much more single discipline, the caveat to that would be if a faculty member is like co-chairing somebody

BM: Mm hmm

CH: in industrial systems engineering or mechanical engineering or in civil engineering, then more than likely, they would come to that group as well. We don't have that situation in our group

BM: okay

CH: uh, at this time.

BM: okay, so that's probably kind of a foreshadowing to some of these questions

CH: okay, okay

BM: uh, a little bit, so um okay so then in terms, are you familiar with writing centers do

CH: loosely

BM: do you want me to tell you a little bit about that before I ask these

CH: yeah, yeah, it will just help, yeah, yeah, yeah

BM: um, so well in our writing center here at Tech, um, basically what happens is students, undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty members come to the writing center, they'll sit down for a one-on-one consultation, for a half hour or an hour, um, and you know usually if they're grad students or faculty, that happens over and over again every week to get through a longer document, article, dissertation, something like that. And, so what we'll do, it depends what stage you're at, but we'll sit down and we'll talk with you about your writing, so um, you'll

already have had something written, most of the time, I mean, we do help with the beginning stages of brainstorming and understanding assignments

CH: okay

BM: Um, but most of the time, somebody will come with something written and then we'll talk through the process of how that's being written and how that needs to be revised and that kind of thing, um and they can do some of that revision while they're there, and then the go and do their own work, and they come back, and then we talk about it again

CH: okay

BM: so that's kind of the way that's structured, we also do you know some other outreach, but that's not really in the wheelhouse of this

CH: okay

BM: so why would a writing support space like yours be created for specific disciplines, as opposed to or as an extension of the home writing center

CH: so, I think, that's where I was going when you were talking about the writing center, it's like, why wouldn't I just go over the writing center?

BM: right

CH: and it's like why and I honestly have no idea, like, I cannot tell you why I will go to that writing group every day or every Wednesday

BM: Mm hmm

CH: but I honestly wouldn't even think to go to the writing center

[18:23]

BM: yeah

CH: um, I think the only time I would think to go to the writing center is if I was like really, really stuck and I was looking for any option I could get, I would be like, "What are the available resources on this campus that could help me through this"

BM: so last resort (laughs)

CH: well, not, and I don't mean it in a

BM: sure, of course

CH: in a … what's the word …. In a derogatory way

BM: Mm hmm

CH: it's just a matter of that's not the first thing that comes to my head, is like "oh yeah, we have a writing center, we should go to that"

BM: Mm hmm

CH: um, get back to your question though, what are you looking for

BM: well, so I'm interested to know why the support space is created within this discipline as opposed to or as an extension of the home writing center

CH: yeah, yeah " " " " "

BM: and so, it's not an extension, it's just, and it's not opposed, you know what I mean

CH: yeah yeah

BM: separate from the writing center

CH: I think part of it would be, I think part of it is somewhat of the discipline

BM: yeah

CH: and like, and it's not even a matter of that we're all in the same discipline, but most of the people in the writing group know a little bit about the work that I do

BM: right

CH: so, it's like, that barrier is already a little bit addressed

BM: Mm hmm

CH: for specifically, like, there's um, one of the gentleman that comes to the writing group as well, he and I have a relationship beyond the writing group

BM: Mm hmm

CH: where we talk about our dissertation work

BM: right

CH: a lot, so it's like, I don't, if I'm having trouble with a section, it takes me three seconds and he's up to speed

BM: right

CH: and then I'm like, "okay, now help me with this chunk" and maybe that wouldn't be the same way in the writing center, right

BM: Mm hmm

CH: that being said, there's very, I think there are very compelling reasons why there's a positive to go to somebody else as well

BM: Mm hmm

CH: because they maybe see a blind spot that he and I wouldn't see, or we may be able to abstract out the writing

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BM: Mm hmm

CH: from the content

BM: Mm hmm

[20:16]

CH: um, as I'm doing this, I'm seeing like, "there actually might be more value in going to writing center …"

BM: (laughs) that was not my intention

CH: no, no, no, but it's like, "oh interesting," but I think that's why

BM: yeah

CH: I think it's because, at least in my mind, there's, we already have a common ground

BM: Mm hmm

CH: that we have established. The other too is like, my world is, other than this office, my world is in McBryde, or Goodwin

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so, I don't have to walk, like, I already have to drive to campus, this is going to sound so silly, but it's so real, so, take it for what it's worth, I've already got to drive to campus

BM: Mm hmm

CH: I already have to walk to my office

BM: right

CH: I already have to get out my stuff, I already have to get organized

BM: yup

CH: okay, well, now I've got to do that somewhere else

BM: right

CH: and then, once I'm done there, I've got to pick up and move back to this office or VTECC and then re-work, then get to work again, and I don't know

[21:13]

BM: so, um, where I did my master's at Eastern Michigan, um, we had, we were just starting satellite locations, and our college of business was set two miles off campus

CH: yeah

BM: and so, it's kind of the exact same thing, they were not coming, they were not leaving that building to come to main campus, ever

CH: yeah

BM: I mean that building would have been on fire and they still wouldn't have come to main campus

CH: exactly, and it's not even that far

BM: right

CH: we're not even talking like

BM: I mean, it is staright up hill

CH: yeah

BM: but

CH: Yeah, we're not even talking a big distance, here, but at the same time, it's like, if I have any other reason that day that I need to be in Goodwin, or if I just want to be around the people

BM: right

CH: then, that are in my department, that might be enough of a barrier for me not to go

BM: yeah

CH: to the writing center, because it's like in my mind, again for better or worse

BM: Mm hmm

CH: in my mind, like if I'm going to go to the writing center

BM: Mm hmm

CH: that's where I'm spending my day

BM: so, I have a question for you then

CH: yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

BM: Obviously (laughs) that's why I'm here, um, let's say that Mandy functioned as a writing center person in Goodwin, would you potentially go to her as a writing center appointment separate from the writing group

CH: Once, yes

BM: yeah, once?

CH: would I go back, it depends?

BM: okay

CH: right, so, I'm going to, like I'm willing to give an hour, two hours, whatever that first session is

[22:27]

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and see how it goes

BM: Mm hmm

CH: do I have rapport

BM: right

CH: am I getting something out of this, and this sounds very selfish, and honestly it is very selfish, right, it's like am I getting anything out of this

BM: Mm hmm

CH: because if not, I'm going to use whatever I can get the benefit out of

BM: right

CH: so, probably once

BM: yeah

CH: like my barrier, if you can get me through that first one and I got value, then yah, I'll go back

BM: right

CH: um, and there's a much better change I'm going to go to somebody's who's permanent, or at least semi-permanent in our building, than there would be in walking across the drill field

BM: to Newman, right, um, this is going to be really abstract, but what could you image would be value in that session

CH: yeah

BM: I mean, that's kind of tough to

CH: so I think, I think where I would very much appreciate a second set of eyes in is the front and the back

BM: okay

CH: so the front end, when I'm first trying to develop my argument, and I have all this stuff in my brain and like realistic like what a third of it needs to make it to paper, maybe a third of it needs to make it to paper, right

BM: right

CH: so, how do I winnow down to what actually needs to make it to paper and then structure that in a way where now I'm actually putting words, like bulk words on paper, because I think that's one of the biggest things I struggle with is, I'm writing and I'm writing and I'm writing "''''''''''''" and then I get feedback on it and it's like, "you're all over the place," and I'm like "yup, I am all over the place because when I was writing I was all over the place"

BM: right

CH: and I was just trying to write, so that's the front end, on the back end, you know, so I've done, I've organized it, I've structured it, I've written all this stuff and I've gotten feedback on the writing, and it's like, now let's look at sentence level type things

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and transitions

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and the types of things that like I want to be good at, I know I'm not that good at them right now

BM: Mm hmm

CH: I don't have the time, necessarily to get really good at them, but someone who's gifted at that, who's skilled in that, or who's trained in that

BM: yeah

CH: can come in fairly easily and be like, "yup, here, here, here, here, here"

BM: Mm hmm

CH: you know, you've got to transition better here

BM: Mm hmm

CH: the way you structured this sentence, you know, you're not parallel, you know

BM: yeah

CH: right so it's like somebody that could support on that effort and take it from good content that I've already worked with Marie on

BM: right

CH: and I've already worked with peers on

BM: right

CH: and now make it into good content and good writing

BM: Mm hmm

CH: you know, um, I think would be beneficial, and it's like, you also have to understand, I come from having Marie

BM: right

CH: so, I'm in a little but of a different situation than some of the other folks that are in engineering ed

BM: right

CH: because Marie is good

BM: right

CH: at writing

BM: yes

CH: and she's good at communication and she's good at rhetoric and she's good at these things, so I get both, I get the both / and

BM: Mm hmm

CH: when I get feedback from her

[25:22]

BM: Yeah

CH: um, so that could be another barrier

BM: Mm hmm

CH: for me participating in a formal like writing center

BM: sure

CH: kind of a thing, is like, I get some of that naturally

BM: already, right

CH: from Marie

BM: right

CH: um, now granted, I would never go to her and ask her for like editing help

BM: yeah

CH: you know, it's like, because that's not her job

BM: right

CH: like she has other, more important things to do, but she does help, and has helped over the last five years, significantly with structuring an argument

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and transitioning

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and being concreting in my writing and like all of these things that I would get, I think from a writing center, she's helped tremendously with those type of things

BM: so, she's, because her background is in rhetoric

CH: yeah

BM: and she's got a past life or whatever in that

CH: exactly

BM: so, she's contextualizing the instruction, if you will, of writing in your own work

CH: yes

BM: and so that's been really helpful for you

CH: yeah, and like you could potentially talk to somebody else who works with Marie

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and get a completely different story because my goal was to go into academia

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so writing is a big part of my future

BM: right

CH: if I'm going to be successful and I acknowledge that Marie has this background and she's good

BM: right

CH: like, it's well known that she's a good writer, so

BM: and all of the journal articles

CH: well exactly, and so I go into those feedback sessions not only wanting content help

BM: Mm hmm

CH: but like, I say, like I ask specific questions about like, "why did you get rid of this whole paragraph"

BM: Mm hmm

CH: or why did you move this whole section four pages from know, you know, like what should I actually be thinking about this here, not just, oh Marie says to move it, I should move it

BM: right

[27:11]

CH: like, so I intentionally try to ask those questions as much as I can, and Marie and I will have like actual sessions where I'll be like, "Marie, I don't want to talk about anything other than writing structure today"

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and we don't even, like, we don't hit content all that hard

BM: yeah

CH: we hit setting up chapter 4

BM: Mm hmm

CH: or you know, like those types of things, so she and I, or I try to be very intentional because I know she is

BM: right

CH: a resource that I should be using

BM: right

CH: in that way, and she's open to it, to her benefit, she's open to doing this

BM: right

CH: so

BM: right

CH: so, yeah, because a lot of people would just be like, "No, I'm going to do that."

BM: a lot of people would say:

CH & BM: "go to the writing center"

BM: yeah, (laughs)

CH: yeah exactly (laughs)

BM: You're right, not a lot of people do

CH: yeah exactly

BM: um, okay, so you have probably answered these two questions, too, but so what might the support space provide to students that the home center does not

CH: support space, home center meaning the one we have

BM: yeah

CH: just making sure, um, I think an intentional third party

BM: Mm hmm

CH: is good

BM: Mm hmm

CH: somebody who's separate from the content could be very very helpful, and I'll give you an example. I took a writing course um, Josh Eoreo (?)

BM: Mm hmm

CH: I don't know if you ever heard of Josh, but he's in construction management

BM: okay

CH: construction engineering, or something, I forget what the actual department is, but he's like a Marie in their department, and he teaches a writing specific course, so a technical writing tech course, and he doesn't know anything about engineering education, well I shouldn't say anything

BM: (laughs)

CH: he doesn't know a lot about engineering education, he doesn't really care about engineering education

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and there was a lot of freedom in that relationship, because when he reviewed things for the course, he just looked at the writing, right, like he just looked at the writing and was like, "listen this argument you're making is complete crap."

BM: Mm hmm

CH: like, "I don't buy it, like I don't even care if the evidence is true or not, you're not making a strong argument here, and here are the reasons why you're not making a strong argument." So, I think something that's devoid of you know, people are going to challenge me whether they want to or not or on certain things that they don't agree with around the field of engineering education, and that could potentially get in the way of like, "No, I just need feedback on the writing right now."

BM: right

CH: like I don't feedback on the content right now

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so I think, that could be a big help. The other thing is I 100% am whole-heartedly in favor of as many different perspectives as you can get on something

BM: Mm hmm

[29:46]

CH: right, so it's like, I'm going to get feedback from you in one way, I'm going to get feedback from this person in the writing center in another way, and it's my job to take all that feedback and say, "okay, what actually am I going to change and implement," because it's like, I can't implement everything

BM: right

CH: so, getting those different perspectives helps me see how different audiences might perceive the work that I'm doing, um, and what that means, uh so specifically, so a good example is the article

BM: Mm hmm

CH: right, the (inaudible) article

BM: yeah

CH: because like, we weren't writing for engineering education, we were writing for writing center scholars

BM: right

CH: so

BM: right

CH: trying to, like granted, we had a leg up becaue Marie has a, she has a foot in that world

BM: Mm hmm

CH: but it was a different way of writing, it was a very different way of thinking

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and going into that revision process, I was like, okay, we need to communicate in a way that's somewhat different than the way that we communicate in engineering education, so it's like, I think you can get a lot of those perspectives, um, from a writing center, what else can I get from a writing center that's detached? I think there's a potential as well to get other students perspectives, and that's both technical

BM: Mm hmm

CH: students and non-technical students, uh and I don't, I hope that wasn't, I hope that's not a derogatory way to say that

BM: no

CH: but it's like, engineering students even across the disciplines of engineering, getting all their perspectives

BM: Mm hmm

CH: but at the same time, like having Mandy

BM: right

CH: in our research group

BM: right

CH: is really really interesting, because she'll say things and you'll be like, "oh my gosh, I would have never thought about that"

BM: yeah

CH: it's so cool to have that other perspective in there so I think a writing center

BM: yeah

CH: could provide those types of things, too, and like, I don't know if this is relevant or interesting or valuable to you at all, but it's like, I think there's a potential, so you have the main writing center

BM: Mm hmm

CH: where I could get university-wide feedback

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and university-wide input

BM: Mm hmm

CH: then a satellite inside of the school of engineering, okay, now I'm just getting technical, you know what I mean

BM: exactly

CH: like, so it's like I think there's a very interesting dynamic there and then the thing you brought again, too, is do I have time to go to all those different groups and how do I choose which one I go to and when I go to that one, and um, you know, knowing now that I'm in my fifth year, right, and I'm actually writing the big long book that hopefully people will read, uh, well at least four people will read it

BM: right (laughs)

CH: I just want four or five people to read it

BM: plus my mom

CH: and tell me "you did a good job" (laughs), like that's really all I care about

BM: yeah

CH: um, but oh where was I going with that, uh you know, knowing what I know now is that you have so much stuff going on

BM: yeah

CH: and you're still trying to do analysis, and you're still trying to structure your writing, and you're still trying, and it's like, "okay, I need to get feedback on this, and I need to revise it, and I need to," it's like nobody, the resources are there, but using them and utilizing them and when to utilize them, and when's the most beneficial time to utilize them, it's not straight forward

BM: right

CH: you know what I mean, like you don't necessarily know it until you're past it, and go "oh man, that would have been really helpful I've I'd done that three months ago."

BM: right

CH: so and it's really easy for those types of things to fall to the wayside because we are in the discipline we're in for a reason, right

BM: right

CH: so, it's like writing, you know, right now we're in the conference portion of our, so it's like, I'm reviewing papers for conferences, and it's like

BM: Mm hmm

CH: okay, if I'm not going to work on my dissertation, that is the next thing I need to do

BM: Yeah

CH: oh yeah, and by the way, I should go to the writing center and get some support, but I've got these reviews to do because I've got to do service to my field, and I want to stay connected to the field, so it's like, it's easy for that to get thrown away and then be like, "oh yeah, it would have been really nice if I had done that three months ago, four months ago," so

BM: yeah

CH: not that it would need to be handed on a silver platter of like, you must follow this process, you know, but a way to know, like, "hey, these types of experiences have really been beneficial for folks in the past"

BM: Mm hmm

CH: when you hit second semester of your fourth year, you may want to start thinking about doing these things and the writing center is a great way to do that

BM: Mm hmm

CH: or, yeah, I mean just, different like, general guidelines. Will people follow them? Who knows.

[32:25]

BM: yeah

CH: I mean, but it's like, we know, at least, I know the writing center's there

BM: Mm hmm

CH: but I'm going to have to, there's a learning curve just for me to get in the door

BM: sure

CH: and to know what the writing center will do for me

BM: right

CH: and am I willing to, or, does it make the cut. It's not even am I willing to, is it, does it make the cut in all the other activities that I have to do during the day

BM: right

CH: so

BM: yeah, um, okay, so you had mentioned about, because the article you had wrote with Marie, et al. was in the writing letter newslab, and so you had mentioned that it's a very specific writing center audience, one that you're probably not super familiar with

CH: absolutely

BM: so, are there places that you can pinpoint exactly how your writing was different for a journal article you would do in your field versus the article you wrote for writing letter newslab, writing, I think that's right

CH: yeah, yeah, yeah, it's transitioning to the journal of writing center scholarship

BM: right

CH: the only reason I know that is because I had to write it like 90 times

BM: (laughs) right

CH: (laughs) because I used to write writing letter newslab

BM: right

CH: so, yes. Oh gosh, I don't know how to say this. The structure of the article

BM: Mm hmm

CH: the flow of the article

BM: Mm hmm

CH: the attention to detail in the actual writing of the article is much more prominent in writing center scholarship than it is in engineering education. Engineering education is somewhat formulaic, right, like I know if I have an introduction

BM: right

CH: and then I have a literature review

BM: Mm hmm

CH: then I have a methods, then I have results

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and a discussion, it's like, it's pretty good

BM: right

CH: like, it's pretty, chunk, chunk, chunk, fill in the gaps, um, whereas this one was much more of like a how does the thread of the article flow through the article and people, and people when they were reviewing it, actually cared about how the thread flowed through, you know what I mean

BM: right [36:29]

CH: like, it wasn't just like a, do you have good methods, do you have good findings, did you discuss those findings, it's like, no, no, this needs to tell a story, and how does it tell that story

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and it's very different

BM: Mm hmm

CH: it's just very different, so that's one, that's probably the major way it was very different

BM: yeah, okay, that might come up again

CH: the other way it was different, I'll tell you this, is the other way it is I had to learn about, like, I had to learn in the moment about some of the feedback, right, so it's like, they would say things, and I was like, "I don't know what you mean"

BM: sure

CH: like they're giving me feedback about um, oh son of a gun, what is it, we were giving, I was giving like a, I was make a thing that was not a person a person

BM: yeah

CH: so, it's like the center guided and developed … and it's like, can a "center" really do that?

BM: Mm hmm

CH: or is the center this inanimate thing

BM: right

CH: and the people in the center

BM: right

CH: guided, so you know what I mean, so it's like, there was a word for one of the things they told us that we were doing, and I was like, "shoot, I don't even know what that word is"

BM: (laughs)

CH: so I had to go online and figure out like, "Okay, like what the heck are they meaning," so that was another primary difference

BM: yeah, so the language is different, too

CH: yeah, yup

BM: and if you tried to submit an article with an introduction, like the IMRAD to a writing center journal, they'd be like "psh" or vice versa

BM: yeah

CH: yeah, I think so, yeah

BM: okay so what might the writing support space, what might the writing center, wait, so did you, I think you kind of answered both in one. So, you mentioned that the writing center satellite would provide a certain set of things that the writing center couldn't

CH: mm hmm

BM: in terms of disciplinary content

CH: yup

BM: Um, and then what the writing center would provide, that the writing support space does not, and you talked about like writing

CH: yeah

BM: in terms of the back and front end of that

CH: I can add one thing to that, I don't think, I think there's more opportunity to learn about other people's work

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and learn about potential collaborations and I think the writing center is a really interesting way to do that

BM: I agree

[38:32]

CH: because everybody is sharing, like, depending on the structure of the center, right, but everybody is potentially sharing their work

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and you may not know that you connect with somebody

BM: Mm hmm

CH: who is in on the other side of campus

BM: right

CH: until you've reviewed their stuff and you're talking about it

BM: Right

CH: I think potential collaborations, like, just natural collaborations could just form out of that, so I think that possibility exists both in like a satellite one within the, like, the engineering program

BM: Mm hmm

CH: or across a university type campus as well

BM: so, like, Marie talks about that as the interdisciplinarity, so creating new knowledge from

CH: yeah

BM: those collaborations

CH: yeah

BM: yeah, that's cool. Okay, so, these are tutoring practices, so and I don't want to keep you for more than an hour at all, um, what are some of the typical genres of writing, I say need help with when they seek writing support at this location, but what are some of the typical genres that you write, in your writing support space, you and your colleagues

CH: okay, when you say genres, how are you using it, or what do you mean

BM: so

CH: to make sure I understand

BM: yeah, so I teach business writing, and one genre is a proposal, and one genre is as memo

CH: okay, I'm good now

BM: and then I situated it kind of in a community of practice

CH: okay, so I would say that the primary writing that takes place in the satellite, um, would be conference papers

BM: okay

CH: like, abstracts, papers

BM: Mm hmm

CH: um, journal articles

BM: Mm hmm

CH: everything from the idea and like the initial submission of the, should we even write a paper about this

BM: right

CH: to, um the actual, full flushed out article, and then every, well I shouldn't say, every, the later stages of our PhD program, so you won't really see people writing qualifying results or prelim responses there, and that's primarily because um, you want to balance that space and not look like your'e getting support with those, because those are individual assessment

BM: right

CH: uh, the other thing is, it's really hard to not talk about them when you're trying to write them, right

BM: right

CH: because the way that ours work is that they're three and a half days

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so, three and half days per question

BM: three and a half days per question

CH: yeah, so you get three and a half days to answer each question

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so it's hard not to talk about that

BM: right

CH: if you were around somebody for three and a half days

BM: right

CH: but when you get into the later stages of submitting your prospectus or your proposal, or your

BM: Mm hmm

CH: final document

BM: Mm hmm

CH: that's just an (inaudible) of process, right, so like your timeline and your "test" has kind of gone out the window and it's basically, whatever you can do to get a good document to your committee, that's what you're trying to do

BM: right

CH: so, I think those are the primary things that are written within our

BM: Mm hmm

CH: uh satellite

BM: great, okay, um, do you find, I don't know if you'll want to answer this, how do you find that the practice of tutoring changes based on discipline

CH: writing tutoring

BM: yeah

CH: I don't think I'm qual, like I don't think I'm able to answer that question

BM: yeah, um, then probably not what kinds of practices do your tutors engage in that's different …

CH: I mean, if we treat Marie as a tutor, is that?

BM: Yeah, sure

CH: so if we would treat her as a tutor, one of the things I talked a little bit before, but it's not just giving me the feedback of like, this needs moved here, or we need to adjust this section or this isn't clear, this isn't concrete enough, but it's like really diving into and here are ways

BM: Mm hmm

CH: that you could make it more concrete, or I know you know X,Y, and Z, that builds this argument in these four ways, you know what I mean, like getting into the details of how, not just what

BM: right

CH: if that makes sense

[42:51]

CH: um, I think another practice that is valuable is actually doing a review of someone else's writing

BM: oaky

CH: and actually talking about like, "was this a good article," or "was this a good conference paper," or something along those lines and picking it about in not just a completely negative way, but like, in a "this was done really well"

BM: Mm hmm

CH: "eh, this could have been improved in these type of ways." So, it's I think, and that was much more in the earlier part of my program, that I think she and I did those type of things, where it's like, I would talk about you know, "what do you think about this article," and "what do you think about this article," and that happened also in our classes, a little bit as well, so I think those are some of the practices, um

BM: and you do that kind of in the research group, too, right

CH: so those type of things are more for me, they were done more one-on-one, but the review and the critique

BM: ah okay

CH: I would say, yeah, is in the research group

BM: okay

CH: because the cool thing about that, and it's like, I don't know how broad your definition of tutoring is, right

BM: yeah

CH: but it's like, the cool thing about that is like I can be in a research group and give feedback to somebody else

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and Marie's there to be like, "eh, I don't know if I agree with that"

BM: yeah

CH: or, you know, like "Cory's making a good point right now." So, it's like, she can be there as kind of like, the center or the rock

BM: yeah

CH: of the feedback, whereas she's not really going to let either with content or with writing, that's too out there

BM: right

CH: she's not going to let that fly at least without at least making a comment about it

BM: so, I think that's another unique, um, advantage of your space versus the writing center

CH: yeah

BM: because you actually have not only the two of you but this third party that's, obviously, really credible

CH: yeah

BM: and potentially has the ability to pass / fail you

CH: yeah, exactly

BM: so that's really cool

CH: and I think one of the things we could do better

BM: Mm hmm

CH: or we could do, yeah, better, is supplemental times where we're getting multiple groups together

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and it's either multiple groups together to write and give feedback, or multiple groups together to workshop, or multiple groups to get better things around writing

BM: yeah

CH: I think there's an opportunity to be there, I think it's just time

BM: so, also would that be useful if like a, let's say a writing center satellite situated itself over in Goodwin, and they facilitated some of that stuff, would that be useful

CH: yeah, and one of the things that, yeah, definitely, one of the things that it's in the article too, is right, like actual training

BM: Mm hmm

CH: you know, it's like, okay for the first hour of this day

BM: yeah

CH: we're going to learn about X,Y,Z right and it's like

BM: that's right

CH: because it's important to what we can do, so it's like, one of the things that I got in that class that would be really valuable for other people in our field is like the different structures of different writings

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so an abstract, like the way he did it was with like glasses, like alcohol glasses

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so it's like, you know, like a wine, or like a martini glass, it starts really wide

BM: Mm hmm

CH: gets real specific and stays real specific until the very end and it gets real wide again

BM: interesting

CH: and it's like, that has a purpose

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and other types of writing is like a whiskey glass with is basically like a short, standard

BM: yeah

CH: so it's like thoise types of things, because they just help set that, "Okay, I'm writing a journal abstract right now"

BM: right

CH: or, sorry, a conference abstract right now, it's typically going to look like this

BM: right

CH: okay, I can do that

BM: I can work within that

CH: yeah, so it's like, I think there's an opportunity for those types of things

BM: yeah

CH: to happen within either a satellite campus or within our little, tiny world

BM: yeah, cool

CH: it's just trying to get them implemented, I think is the hard part

BM: right, that's the fun part

CH: yeah, exactly

BM: um, what are the advantages and implications to writing support located in a specific discipline

CH: right, so I'm going to ask a caveat with this, is the writing support familiar with the discipline

BM: yeah

CH: okay, I mean, definitely there's the content barrier is somewhat broken down

BM: yeah

CH: um, there's also the field barrier could potentially be broken down, right

BM: Mm hmm

CH: so it's like, if somebody who understands what submitting to an IEEE publication is like

BM: Mm hmm

[47:28]

CH: they get why you structured the paper that way

BM: right

CH: or, at least from a formatting standpoint, like they get why it's like that

BM: right

CH: whereas, somebody who's maybe not familiar with IEEE and the way they format different stuff, so it's like, now not only do I have to like learn the way IEEE wants it, but it's just like one less barrier

BM: right

CH: it's one thing I can let off my brain, the other aspect of it, too, is that one thing I can help you with, right, like, "actually IEEE wants it this way"

BM: Mm hmm

CH: we need to make sure we understand XYZ

BM: right

CH: so, you know, the easiest, probably one of the lowest hanging fruits there would be like references

BM: yeah

CH: or like, in-text citations, and bibliography and stuff like that, I know with ASEE, it's abysmal

BM: yeah

CH: like, I can't even describe to you when you're reviewing papers how bad citations are, how bad the reference section is

BM: Mm hmm

CH: and I think that would be like a potential that's like, if someone is even in our context, or in our world

BM: Mm hmm

CH: that's just one lower barrier to entry that is there

BM: barrier to getting to writing

CH: yeah

BM: yeah

CH: to getting to nuts and bolts of like developing a clean argument

BM: right

CH: to developing content that supports that clean argument, um, and actually gets to words on the paper, is the way we would colloquially talk about it, right

BM: right

CH: is like getting from stuff we know in our head onto some format that somebody else can read and make sense of

BM:

CH: yeah

BM: Yeah, I think the barrier piece is really important because, yeah, mm hmm, okay, and then how do you train your tutors to work in the writing center satellite, I don't think that's

CH: yeah, no, that's not relevant

BM: okay, so just a few more questions about institutional structures if you feel comfortable answering them

CH: yeah, let's do it

BM: um, who funds your writing support space

CH: uh, so there is no funding of, like, there is no funding of the space, the funding comes in terms of resource of Marie and Lisa, who are the co-founders, co-directors

BM: Mm hmm

CH: I don't know what their official title is

BM: Mm hmm

CH: of VTECC

BM: Mm hmm

CH: they shelter Wednesdays for us

BM: okay

CH: right, like they say, you know what, no, sorry, nobody else gets Wednesday, the writing group gets Wednesday

BM: yeah

CH: um, at least from this time to this time

BM: Right

CH: that's the writing group's time

BM: right

CH: now, granted, there's always grey areas and bends to every rule, so if the Dean of the college of Engineering needs to use that space

BM: right

CH: and the only day is Wednesday, yeah, we're going to move

BM: right

CH: but we, in my mind we should move

BM: yeah

CH: like, that's not that big of a deal, but it's like, if somebody wants to just meet in there for an hour

BM: right

CH: no, like, find another space, because that's writing day

BM: yeah

CH: like that's, the other thing that they've been very very proactive, at least in terms of discussions about, is what support and resources do we need additionally

BM: Mm

CH: um, and then that has been achieved to different levels, um in terms of it actually happening, so it just depends on, um, depends on the type of thing, like one of the things that we've talked about, and I think we included this in, it was like a little line in the article, was like, it would be really beneficial to have multiple monitors in there

BM: right

CH: right, like, some place where I can hook up my laptop and I have at least two screens, um, and it's like I don't' know where they're at with that process, but I know that they are at least willing to entertain things like that

BM: right

CH: and they're at least willing to think about how do they do stuff like that, so, I don't know if that answered your question

BM: yeah

CH: or if there's

BM: so, there's a couple of questions I want to go off of that, how, I'm kind of like leading you into this, so I apologize

CH: okay

BM: but how valuable it is to have, I don't know much about Lisa's background, but I do know a little bit about Marie's, so how valuable is it to have somebody that values writing direct a space like that

CH: hmmm

BM: versus another faculty member that feels, so you know, I've read articles in the literature review that I'm kind of writing through, that the hesitation in teaching in engineering is that they feel uncomfortable one assessing it, and also they don't feel equipped to teach it, and not that they don't find writing valuable

CH: yeah

BM: but in an engineering college, you know, we could say, some faculty members would be a little less

CH: yeah, yeah

BM: willing to put, you know

CH: I think the fact that it exists sends a message

BM: Mm hmm

CH: right, like the fact that there is a communication center and that communicating effectively is valuable, sends a big message, um, I don't know that that message has gotten out much more broadly than our department

BM: Mm hmm

CH: but I know that in our department, it does like, okay this is a space dedicated to these type of things. In terms of, like so, like it's hard to answer, because it's a little bit different than how I understand the university level writing center to be, where there's like continuous ongoing activity

BM: Mm hmm

CH: in there

BM: Mm hmm

CH: that's not really the way VTECC works. Like VTECC is like a hybrid research space, does some writing support type stuff

BM: yeah

CH: but, it's not like every week, other than our group, it's not like every week there's a course or

BM: sure

CH: or a meet up about writing type of a thing, right

BM: yeah

CH: so, I don't know if like specifically like Marie and Lisa's background really influences it all that much

BM: okay, um, so there was a line very early on in the article that mentioned that you were separate from the Virginia Tech writing center

CH: mm hmm

BM: um, why was it important to like very clearly be distinct from the writing center, do you think

CH: uh, I don't think, I think that was the nature of the way VTECC started, like I don't think it, my gut is that it was an intentional thing

BM: yeah

CH: it wasn't like, "Oh yeah, there's the writing center, and we want to be different than that."

BM: sure

CH: I think it started more as Lisa and Marie wanting to develop a center that focused on communication

BM: Mm hmm

CH: teamwork

BM: Mm hmm

CH: identity, uh, writing, like rhetoric, writing, like it wanted to value these type of things within an Engineering context and that was a complimentary activity, you know what I mean, it, that's my take on the way things got going, it wasn't a, they're not doing something we need

BM: right

CH: it's a here's an additional mechanism that could be used and valued within the college

BM: so, I just did um an interview from the university of Washington and in their law school, they have a specific writing center for law students

CH: mm hmm

BM: completely separate from the writing center, and that's why I think, that's why I ask that question, not because I think you guys are like, "Oh, the writing center"

CH: no, no, no, no

BM: but I think that um, you know, it really important, because I think that these spaces serve something that the writing center doesn't

CH: and I think if you revisit with Marie, or I don't know if she covered this

BM: Mm hmm

CH: or if you going to talk to Lisa, I think that would be a really interesting question

BM: yeah

CH: because, is that, did you have an intention in mind

BM: yeah

CH: to be this distinct on purpose

BM: right

CH: from the university level writing center

BM: yeah

CH: I don't know that, I know that, I think, I think they both have the desire for it to wrap it's arms around the college of engineering

BM: yeah

CH: more than it has to this point

BM: yeah

CH: and I think that there are opportunities for it to do that, it's just a matter of implementing them and getting those up and running

BM: right, well, and then politics

CH: well, and funding, and resources, and you know, one of the things that I think in order to do a lot of those activities, I think you need somebody to organize them and direct them

BM: right

CH: and that's their role, is to do that, and I know that Lisa and Marie are both active, tenured faculty, so it's like they have a lot of other things going on

BM: right

CH: is that the thing that bubbles up to the top every time, eh maybe not

BM: right

CH: so

BM: um, how do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of the writing support space

CH: how do institutional structures

BM: this question, just to be really transparent with you, was designed for a writing satellite, so like the example I gave you earlier about the satellite in the college of business, there's a lot of political, uh, nuances there with it being funding completely by the college of business

CH: yeah, okay

BM: you know, in terms of tutoring practices and that kind of thing

CH: so, ask your question again just so I

BM: so, how do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of the writing support space

CH: the only one that I can think of that I know of is, um, using it as a classroom space

BM: Mm hmm

CH: they're very cautious not to do that

BM: okay

CH: because, from my understanding, once it's a class space, the registrar controls

BM: ah

CH: the activities that are done in there

BM: interesting

CH: right, so it's like, there's a very intentional uh thought process behind how does this not become another classroom space

BM: right

(inaudible)

BM: uh, and then just one more question, what other kinds of institutional and administrative issues emerge when developing a writing support space

CH: so I didn't develop it, so I don't know

BM: yeah, I asked Marie that question, and she gave me probably what I needed

CH: yeah, I was going to say, I wasn't in the development phase, so I don't know

BM: this has been really, really helpful (thank yous and ending [58:21])

January 14, 2016

[talking about irrelevant information until 0:10]

BM: And, I think, so I think we covered section one, I think we stopped at section two, is that right?

BS: I agree

BM: We were talking about tutoring practices in the writing center and I think we were starting to touch on how you tutor your GAs

BS: How I train them?

BM: train, yes

BS: Okay

BM: Sorry, thank you

BS: Um

BM: It's been a long … week. Month. Year

BS: Lifetime

BM: PhD program

BS: Okay, so how I train them, um which I will still e-mail you some more documents

BM: Thank you

BS: In addition to that book, I'll show, I'll e-mail other things too

BM: Thanks

BS: Yeah, so I think to just kind of harken back to where we left off last time, we were talking about how there's this challenge in that though they come with, these GAs come with their biology knowledge

BM: Mm hmm

BS: They don't necessarily have writing center knowledge

[1:07]

BM: Right

BS: and that that's the tricky thing, right

BM: Yeah

BS: So they have this great content knowledge, but we kind of have to fill this other gap. Um, oh and I did mention last time, just kind of, this is more me thinking out loud, reminding myself where we were

BM: Yeah

BS: I mentioned last time too how I think it's really great that they have already taught at least

BM: Right

BS: one semester

BM: the intro level course

BS: Right, so they at least having had that experience, they at least, um, they have a little bit of a sense already of struggles students often have in writing lab reports

BM: Mm hmm

BS: because the course that they taught last semester, um, there are five lab reports. A series of five that students write

BM: Wow

BS: and this is the intro level, very first class

BM: Wow

BS: So, for most students, this is like the beginning. They've never done this before. So, they have a really good handle already on where students often struggle

BM: Yeah

BS: and I think that's really handy

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I try to build off of that teaching experience that they have

BM: Mm hmm

BS: in the training

BM: Okay

BS: I think that' really valuable. Um, anyway, so our training in terms of what it logistically looks like, we meet one hour a week each week of the semester, I mean so that's obviously not a ton of time

BM: Yeah

BS: Um, but I actually went to the department head and asked her if that was okay

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that I do that

BM: Mm hmm

BS: because I technically, it's obviously not a class

BM: Right

BS: So, I'm going to make sure it was

BM: But, she said, "Yeah, it counts as one of their hours"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know the 20 that they're supposed to give me every week. Um, and you know, she said, "That sounds really valuable." And, I like that support from the department head that this was something she valued that was legitimate for me to do

BM: Yeah, for sure

BS: So, so that was great. Um, yeah, so we meet once a week, um, I have kind of, not even a syllabus, but kind of like a course schedule if you will

BM: Mm hmm

BS: of what we'll cover each week

BM: Oh, okay

BS: Um, so much like you would for a class

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I do see it though as always being adjustable

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so the things come off

BM: Yeah

BS: As we know sometimes they do

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know, I'll, I'm willing to move topics around in our training if that seems appropriate

BM: Could you send that to me, too

BS: Yeah absolutely. I'm going to write a note down. It's a google, thing

BM: Oh, okay cool

BS: so, I'll just share

BM: Thank you

[3:32]

BS: Um

BM: If you feel uncomfortable sharing any of this with me, please

BS: Oh, no

BM: I mean

BS: I don't care. Um, I mean, I share it with them, why wouldn't I share it with you. Um, anyway, so because I think that's one thing, so building off their previous teaching experience is part of what I consider, um, kind of setting topics, but also be willing to adapt them to things that come up

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that's another thing, a kind of big consideration. Um, I'm not entirely convinced that the way I train them is the greatest best way, again I feel like I am working within certain limitations

BM: Yeah, and also you were kind of just thrown into the deep end, too

BS: Right

BM: So, you're really learning as you're going with everything including tutor training

BS: Right, right, well because you now, when we think often of like ENLG 595, or like the peer tutoring class, those things are actual, credit bearing courses

BM: Right

BS: So, they can you know, they can assign homework

BM: Right

BS: They can ask students to do some writing in preparation for a topic or something, I don't personally feel like that's really my place

BM: Yeah

BS: to do that

BM: Yeah

BS: So, often what I'll ask them to maybe like familiarize themselves with something

BM: Yeah

BS: before we meet again

BM: Yeah

BS: But, I don't feel like the training situation we have here, is it really appropriate for me to say, "You're required to read this document before …"

BM: Right

BS: I don't know, is it

BM: Right, I'm

BS: It's a rhetorical question

BM: Right

BS: I don't expect you to answer it

BM: Right, yeah

BS: These are the things I kind of worry, like when you're doing tutor training outside of a course

BM: Right

BS: How does that work?

[5:22]

BM: Well, for professional development for the writing center, we were asked to read things outside, I mean not anything super heavy

BS: Right

BM: or too time consuming

BS: But, to be fair, since we only met every other week

BM: Yeah

BS: YOU know on the weeks we met we obviously had that meeting, but on the opposite weeks

BM: Oh, that's true

BS: we theoretically had that hour that we weren't meeting

BM: right

BS: to do that reading

BM: right, that's true

BS: I think that was their rationale

BM: That's true, right

BS: I don't know, I haven't done that

BM: Yeah

BS: Yeah, so, I just, I don't know, when I ask them to do "homework" things, um

BM: Couldn't you ask them to take some of their time if they're not busy

BS: Yeah

BM: And, kind of like

BS: Yeah, I mean, I try to frame it and say, "Hey, this assignment is going to be coming up for this class …"

BM: ah, yeah

BS: "… so if you have some down time and we're not busy …"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: "… in the science success center, maybe take a look at this link so you can read about the assignment …"

BM: Sure

BS: "… and look at the rubric" and that kind of thing

BM: Yeah

BS: So, I kind of frame is as more suggestions, I guess

BM: Yeah

BS: Yeah, anyway, so when we actually meet, um, typically, I mean the training is like PowerPoints, obviously. I I think it hits on a lot of things that you would expect

BM: Mm hmm

BS: we do a PowerPoint on working on with um non-native speakers

BM: Okay

BS: Um, a PowerPoint on working with students with learning disabilities

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Um, I'm trying to think off the top of my head

BM: that would be useful

BS: working with students in different disciplines, so like, for example, I do one whole session on APA

BM: Mmm

BS: because my Biology students have no experience with APA

BM: What do they use

[6:57]

BS: Um, in biology, every single discipline within biology actually uses a different system, I know

BM: Oh my gosh

BS: Yeah, every, like every journal uses, it's crazy, but, but the great thing, again there, I can build on what they already know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: because the systems that they're used to using in biology are similar in many ways to APA

BM: Okay

BS: The whole like author, date

BM: Yeah

BS: concept and everything, so luckily, in there, I can kind of build on what they are already familiar with

BM: Yeah

BS: and you know

BM: yeah\

BS: but so that's, that's a whole thing right there because I literally have one of my GAs ask me on Tuesday, she heard me talk with someone on APA

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and she chimed in and said, "Oh, what's that." Like totally innocently. Okay, so we're going to move up in the schedule

BM: yeah

BS: when we talk about that, you know, that kind of thing

BM: well, that's interesting, too because that's, I think that's another, um, not to go back in questions, um, not to go backwards, but I think that's something that um the writing center satellite can provide to students that the home center does not. They couldn't walk into the home center and say, "oh, I've got this biology system of formatting, can you help me with is?" And, people would be like, "I don't know"

BS: Right, right

BM: "No, I cannot, actually." And you can

BS: Right

BM: You know, you can

BS: Right

BM: You and your, you know

BS: Or, at least I'm aware that these other systems exist

BM: exist and therefore can probably help them in terms of formatting

BS: Right

BM: And, finding resources and that kind of thing

BS: Right

BM: Yeah

BS: right, yeah, absolutely, um

[talking about unrelated topics (how to keep computer awake and not going into sleep mode – esp. during interviews. There is an app called "caffeine") from 8:36 – 10:30]

BS: Um, anyway, see writing center people have all sorts of areas of expertise

BM: Yes, yes we do

BS: Um, I don't know, I don't know, I feel like, what else do you want to know about tutor training?

BM: Well, how do you find that the practice of tutoring changes based on discipline? I think that we've talked about this

[10:49 – 10:52 cannot understand BS]

BM: but maybe you can, um, pull from, I don't' know why I emphasized that "P" so much

BS: Pull from, we're going to really Pull

BM: Pull (laughs) really hard, um, really pull from um, it's been a long week

BS: It sounds like it

BM: Um, how you are thinking through because it sounds like, I mean, obviously and knowing you, this is obviously the case, you're um training is very well thought through and very you know, I'm not sure I want to say meticulous, very meticulously created for a specific purpose

BS: Right

BM: Um, so maybe you can pull from um the thoughts that go into creating that sort of tutor training and uh maybe the workshops that you've done in the writing center, um, or professional

development that we've gotten, or the you know, the tutor training we've received here, which I feel like, I don't think I really received any tutor training

BS: Interesting

BM: And, and how are people training, and what are the differences in practice

BS: Yeah, I will say this. When I train the GAs, I give them the schpeal about doing the read-aloud

BM: Mm hmm, yeah, okay

BS: you know, protocol, um, but I will admit, and this is hard to admit, but here I am, officially saying, "I Beth Sabo, do not do the read aloud technique, protocol whatever you want to call it, as frequently in the science success center as I did it when I worked like here, in Halle." Um

BM: because

BS: because, yes, I'm thinking, um, for a while, because I don't know that it was ever at least initially, an intentional decision

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I just kind of started noticing, "Gosh, I don't read aloud very much." And, so I started to think about well, why is that?

BM: Mm hmm

BS: right, why is that practice different? Should it be different, right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and, I think, I think there's a number of factors, right. One, is our space is a little different whereas like in our main location, I mean, that room is dedicated specifically to the writing center

BM: Mm hmm

BS: right, um, so when you start reading aloud someone's paper, everyone in the room knows what you're doing, right

BM: Right

BS: because they're all writing center folks, whereas the science success center is a shared space

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so, yes, we have you know, two tables of tutoring going on but then we also have tables of students eating their lunch or doing their homework

BM: mm

BS: you know, I mean, so it's meant to be kind of a quiet space

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BM: yeah

BS: I don't know so I think some of it is just those space constraints

BM: Yeah

BS: part of it too though I think, we don't how do I say this, like, I find a lot more often what I do instead of doing the read aloud is the student will sit down, you go through the usual you know, "what are you working on today, blah, blah, blah" look at the rubric with them, whatever, and then you of course ask them of course the key question, "What part of the lab report do you want to talk about," right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: just like we do in the regular writing center, um, and lab reports, because they are already split up into parts, right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: they already have headings, and so they'll identify like a specific section and you know usually that's fairly short, say maybe a page or two, so a lot of times what I'll do is, I'll just read that quick to myself

BM: Mm hmm

BS: silently, and then that gives me a much better idea of where the whole things going

[14:41]

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and I know that that's really kind of the opposite of what we really do in the writing center, um, or in a the main location of the writing center, um, I don't know, so for a while I was just worried that I was being lazy, like that maybe that was laziness kind of creeping in there

BM: Yeah

BS: but, I think the benefit to doing it that way, just reading, just again, that one section, so it's a page or two, it gives me a sense of where this student's going in a way that I think I would miss if we were kind of doing sentence by sentence, you know, reading

BM: Right, right

BS: Kind of gives me a larger sense of like the rhetorical whole

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, and you could type that W H O L E or H O L E

BM: (laughs)

BS: Whatever way you want to look at that, um, that we kind of miss I think otherwise

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BM: Mm hmm, and then so where do you go from there

BS: um, yeah so and again, I'll often like give them a little something to do or whatever while I'm reading

BM: Yeah, yeah

BS: you know what I mean, like, let's say, for example, they say, "Oh, I'm really having trouble with my methods section, that's what I want to talk about today," I'll say, "Great! I'm going to read that, while I'm reading that, you know, I notice you don't have a title yet, here why don't you work on writing a title while I work on your methods .." you know what I mean

BM: Yeah

BS: so, they're not just staring at me while I'm

BM: Right

BS: You know what I mean

BM: right

[16:01]

BS: Um, anyway, so, um, anyway, so yeah, so you know, I read um you know whatever two three minutes, however long it takes, and um and then by then I feel like I kind of know in my head what are those HOCs

BM: Mm hmm

BS: we've got to hit on here, you know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, because those are already clear to me instead of becoming clear as

BM: right

BS; as the student reads, um, I don't know, so then you know, I'll say something cheesy like, "Hey I don't want to interrupt you, but whenever you're ready, I'm ready to chat with you," um, you know, stop their thinking about their title. I have stories, it's funny

BM: (laughs)

BS: Um, but you know, and and so then we'll kind of just into, and of course, I always start with the saying something I think they did really well

BM: Mm hmm

BS: before I'll say, "But here's a couple things I think we could work on or talk about together"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, and, and you know, most of the times, students are, as soon as you say, "Here's the thing I think you should work on," most of the time they're like, "Yeah, that's the thing I really struggled with"

BM: Yeah

BS: So, I think it helps too because since I have the sense of the whole

BM: Yeah

BS: They kind of, they get that validation that the thing they were struggling with was also the thing I noticed

BM: yeah, sure

BS: Does that make sense

BM: yeah, absolutely

BS: and, again, I think you might miss that opportunity if you're doing the sentence by sentence reading out loud thing

BM: Yeah

BS: I don't know, um by yeah, I think after that, pretty much the consultation goes

BM: Mm hmm

BS: as you would expect I just start it, yeah, a little differently

BM: So, do you find that um so I think one of the things with you know people have been worried about like um well, okay, for example, a person will remain nameless who I'm talking about, this person I noticed this week as working with a student and the student came in and said, "I need help with X"

BS: Yeah

BM: And the tutor then, the consultant was then like, "Okay [reading document]" and "you need to do this, you need a comma here, you need this, you need that"

BS: Mm

BM: so, one of the things

BS: so, were they strictly grammatical changes

BM: Yes, yes

BS: Okay

BM: but, I think, um, I was worried that that was potentially satellite specific, but now I think it's just person specific

BS: Yeah, that's

BM: after talking with more than one person that works at that satellite

BS: I will say that in in the fall, I had different GAs than I had now

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and I did see one of my GAs doing that in a consultation and as I think any of us would, you know, I didn't interrupt the consultation

BM: Yeah

BS: but afterwards, I kind of pulled her aside

BM: Sure

BS: and said, "You know, so I noticed this going on. Tell me why you choose to do that that way you know, that's not typically the way we …"

BM: yeah

BS: "…conduct a consultation" you know, that kind of thing

BM: Right

BS: So, again, it's not really my place to yell at her

BM: Well, right

BS: I'm not her boss, but I kind of wanted to be like

[talk unrelated 19:09 – 19:23 – joking around]

BS: but, you know kind of doing like what we do in consultations, I told her, "I noticed this"

BM: yeah, yeah

BS: tell me about your decision to do that. I mean, isn't that the same practice we would do in a consultation

BM: Mm hmm

BS: "I noticed this happening here, tell me your decision, why you picked that word"

BNM: Right

BS: or, whatever

BM: Right

BS: so, I tried to use that kind of same approach

BM: Mm hmm

BS: in "correcting" her

BM: Yeah

BS: but, yes, I actually have a pretty good idea, I know who you're talking about

BM: Yeah, I'm sure you do

BS: Yeah

BM: But, so I think the risk is, right, when we're talking about um like deviating from that read aloud protocol

BS: Mm hmm

BM: um, uh, a directive approach to tutoring

BS: right

BM: and so the way you're, it sounds like you're talk about it, that's not necessarily the case

[20:06]

BS: Yeah, I feel like I'm trying to hit a middle ground between the reading aloud every paper that walks through the door and the directive, I take your paper away from you, mark it up, and hand it back

BM: Right

BS: I'm trying to hit a middle space

BM: right

BS: between those things

BM: Well, so tell me why that maybe it's just the space, but tell me why potentially beyond the space, and because the discipline calls for it, that that's different

BS: No, yeah, that's a really good point, too, um that I find it more so with psychology where their concerns, like, as a discipline, their concerns about confidentiality of information um make it so that many of their students are kind of uncomfortable

BM: Ah

BS: having certain

BM: Sure

BS: things read aloud

BM: yeah, yeah interesting

BS: Um, you know, just for example, I know there's, there's one class, so people in the clinic psychology graduate program, um, they're learning to become therapists and clinicians, right, so

there's a class they take on kind of like a writing in the disciplines sort of class and one of the things they do is they learn to write like case notes

BM: Mm hmm

BS: right, so like after a therapist has worked with someone

BM: Yup

BS: they have to go and take notes on the session right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, and so even though the assignment they do is like a made-up person

BM: Mm hmm

BS: but they still even when they come in to work with me, they still have to act as though this is a real person

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that I can't reveal, you know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: for ethical reasons, I can't reveal personal information on

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know what I mean, so for situations like that, so especially in psychology, I know that they they have real conc3erns about the ethics of confidentiality

BM: yeah

BS: and so, that right there for disciplinary reasons

BM: Right

BS: makes sense why we would not read out loud

BM: right

BS: their case notes

BM: right

BS: on their therapy session

[22:08]

BM: right

BS: So, that would be an example, um not a good answer to your question would be sometimes, certain disciplines, it's really hard to pronounce the word

BM: (laughs) sure

BS: don't put that in your paper

BM: no, but that's true

BS: Please don't put that in your paper

BM: it's true – I mean, sometimes, we don't have the language, the vocabulary

BS: well, or, you know, like scientific names are written in Latin. I don't know how to read Latin

BM: right, and neither does the student, likely

BS: right

BM: right, so they're just tripping over it anyway, and it's like

BS: right

BM: You could butcher that and I could think it's right anyway

BS: right

BM: so, it doesn't matter

BS: but, so I guess, you could say that's a disciplinary reason, too

BM: (laughs)

BS: that might be an iffy disciplinary reason

BM: (laughs) um, okay, okay, what kind … this sounds like the same question. What kinds of practices do your tutors engage in that is different from the tutoring that happens in the home center. I think we just talked about that

BS: Yeah, I think, yeah, other than read aloud, the only other thing I can think of, that's different, and this really had less to do tutoring practice and more so just the things we cover

BM: Yeah

BS: is in a writing consultation, kind of what that means to us, is a little broader

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so like within a writing consultation, we might also question someone's math

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know what I mean? Or, we might question their document design, like how their graphs look on the page and is it really representative of their data, you know what I mean? So, I think that has less to do with kind of the tutoring practice

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and maybe has more to do with a broader definition of what tutoring writing in the sciences looks like

BM: Yeah

[24:00]

BM: can you talk more about that

BS: (laughs) it looks like a lot of things, let me tell you

BM: yeah

BS: um, you know, I mean, in any one given session, I will, I will have a student ask questions about like the actual content of their course, you know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so like understanding the scientific concepts or vocabulary of their class, certainly we'll of course talk about the writing, you know, the rhetorical choices they're making, or the grammatical choices they're making or whatever, um, you know, we'll talk about like time management, we'll talk about um maybe other resources available to them on campus, we'll talk about their math

BM: Mm hmm

BS: situations, or like, how to do something in excel. Let me tell you how many people come in and ask, "How do I get standard deviation bars to appear on my graph in excel," you know? And not that they couldn't ask those kinds of questions in the main writing center, but I think in the main writing center, that's probably not the place they think to go to for those kinds of questions

BM: Sure, yeah

BS: you know, um, whereas we get that stuff a lot, um, questions about like how to search the databases for the types of articles they need, um, so again, I don't' think that these things necessarily *can't* happen in the main location, but I think they happen more frequently

BM: yeah

BS: in a satellite

BM: and maybe it's more like approachable, I don't know, like maybe having a satellite center like more approachable to students

BS: Mm hmm

BM: like okay, I'm going to a writing center in, you know, the science success center, so you know, Beth's going to know how to do these things because she's here

BS: right, yeah. Let me tell you, Beth has had to learn a lot about statistics and excel

BM: I bet Beth loved that (laughs)

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BS: (laughs) um, I have learned that vassarstats is not my favorite thing

BM: Mm

BS: nor is it students' favorite things

BM: So, what are some of the advantages, this is a two-pronged question, what are some of the advantage and implications, or just advantages to writing support located in a specific discipline

BS: where, where are we? Oh, number 8

BM: Number 8

BS: okay, advantages and implications to writing support located in a specific discipline. Okay. I mean, I feel like we a little bit talked about this just in section 1

BM: Mm hmm

BS: when I bungled my way through questions 3 and 4

BM: (laughs) yeah

BS: um, advantages, obviously would be, just an increased knowledge of the genres they're writing in, increased knowledge in even just the content

BM: Mm hmm

BS: they're, you know, um, other advantages would be like familiarity with the instructors and the courses and the common assignments

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know? Because that's always handy, once you already an assignment that you see frequently, that always helps, right. Um, so I think there are plenty of advantages, um, implications is an interesting word

BM: Mm hmm

BS: because implications can be both positive and negative, right. Um, I think all the things I just listed, you know, certainly have positive implications. Kind of increases our ability to give students, you know, really targeted help, um I suppose a more negative implication, though, of those advantages would be that I wonder sometimes if we're so focused on getting the student through this particular lab report

BM: Mm hmm

BS: with this instructor, with this chapter of their textbook, that I wonder sometimes how much do students take away in terms of writing lab reports in general

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know, like, maybe they don't see the more general side of it

BM: Mm hmm

BS: which they certainly probably would if they were in a non-satellite, you know

BM: right

BS: Non-discipline specific thing. I don't know, I mean, I don't have a way to measure that

BM: yeah

BS: so I don't know if that's happening or not

BM: right

BS: but, sometimes I wonder if our ability to focus so very closely on the specific assignments they're working on at the time, if that actually takes away from that larger ability to, I don't know, see the bigger picture

BM: Yeah

[28:22]

BM: I mean, I think that's a real, um, a real concern

BS: Mm hmm

BM: in satellite locations. Especially depending on tutor training and personalities and

BS: Um, yes. What I was pulling on my computer, I swear I was not ignoring you

BM: Do you want me to go?

BS: Yeah

BM: Are you ready for me to go?

BS: Yeah, I'll kick you out, was um that um google schedule

BM: Oh

BS: that I was telling you about, just because I was trying to see if it jogged my memory about others things that we covered that I didn't mention. I think I've pretty much mentioned all of it

BM: So, yeah, I think all those are really good points, um, we definitely already talked about nine, how do you train your tutors

BS: Yeah

BM: um, okay, so this is the fun one. Institutional structures. Uh, who funds the writing support, who funds the writing center satellite, um, and staffs you and your GAs

BS: This is a very, long complicated answer

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Okay, so

BM: I assume it would be

BS: Alright, so science success center is funded by the dean of the college of arts and sciences

BM: Okay

BS: okay

BM<: and the college of arts and sciences also has a satellite in pray-harrold

BS: correct, but that's a generalist satellite, whereas this obviously is a discipline, well, more discipline specific

BM: Mm hmm

BS: than pray-harrold is, um, so that's technically who funds us

BM: Okay

BS: But, our staffing doesn't necessarily come from there

BM: Okay

BS: So, that's where it gets complicated, right

[30:03]

BS: so, so, CAS is who pays for me

BM: Okay

BS: however, the biology department pays for my two GAs

BM: Mm hmm

BS: okay, and then just this semester, like literally this week, um Ann gave me three of our main writing center people

BM: Okay

BS: So, the question is who funds them (laughs) um

BM: are they GAs, or are they hourly

BS: they, well, I'm just going to use names

BM: I'll take them out

BS: obviously take them out

[30:42]

BS: but, so there's Jacob, who is still technically a peer tutor though we forget that because he's been around forever, and he's so darn good that

BM: yeah

BS: I always think he's a grad student, um, then there's Ella who is a GA in English, and then there is Jill who is actually a part-time lecturer in English

BM: Okay

BS: so, I have a little bit of everything, basically (laughs)

BM: Okay, yeah

BS: and that's the first time we've ever done that

BM: And these GAs are bio

BS: these are bio specifically, yup, so yeah, so our funding comes from a whole bunch of different places, um, so IU would assume that Jacob, Ella, and Jill are being paid out of the writing center fund, probably, I don't 100% know that though

BM: Okay

BS: because like I said, I only just

BM: right

BS: was given them this week, so I would assume the UWC budget which currently is housed in the provost's office

BM: okay

BS: So, yeah, that means, yeah, we have money coming from multiple different locations

BM: Mm hmm

BS: to fund the different things we do, um, so that's science success, then um for what we do in bio, that's straight forward, bio just they pay for my work there, they pay for what the GAs do there, that's easy, and then in the Psych, I'm the only staff member and Psych funds that, um yeah, so within one building, we have the three different sites and they're all being funding different ways

BM: Okay

BS: and staffed different ways

BM: so, I'm going to back up again

BS: yeah

BM: how do you plan on training Jacob, Ella, and Jill

BS: well

BM: or, your three new

BS: so Jacob, Ella, and Jill, um were hand-picked because these are people who have experience I think would be valuable to the science success center

BM: Okay

BS: um, and it kind of differs for each one of them. But, like, Jacob for example has been a peer tutor for I think three years now, yeah, it's gotta be three years now, um, and though he is actually, I think a history major, um he's I think just time and time again really proven himself to be very adaptable, very knowledge, I mean, there's a reason why we all think he's a grad student.

BM: Mm hmm

BS: even though he's still an undergrad you know?

BM: yeah

[33:15]

BS: um, so he has actually like back in the fall, we were in a pinch one day, and without any training at all, he came over and pitched in and helped and did great, you know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so, he was one of the people on my very short list of names I was willing to accept over there

BM: Mm hmm

BS: he was one of those people

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, I don't, other than you know, kind of making him aware of some of the common assignments and stuff, I don't think there's a whole lot of training I need to do there

BM: Mm k

BS: I feel like he's coming in pretty much with what I would want him to know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and he already has the ability to to adapt and think very quickly on his feet

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so I'm, I'm not a whole lot I'm planning on doing with him. Um, Ella, our GA from English, the interesting thing about Ella, even though she's a GA in the written communication program in English, she actually holds her PhD in I think it's like Public Health and Epidemiology

BM: Mm hmm

BS: something like that, so she's actually faculty at UofM

BM: oh, okay

BS: In the sciences

BM: Okay, okay

BS: Don't feel like there's whole lot I need to do there

BM: Gotcha

BS: Um, yeah

BM: so why is she getting her Master's here, I mean not here, I mean why is she getting a Master's

BS: I think because she's sort of switching, not switching gears

B M: Oh, okay

BS: I mean, she still sees the writing component very much related to the science component

BM: right

BS: but because she specifically wanted like a writing related degree

BM: okay, okay

BS: It's cheaper than at UofM

BM: because after I get my PhD, I'm done getting any degrees, that's it, that's it. That is the last one

BS: You never know

BM: No, I do know, I do. Know.

[talking about unrelated 34:55 – 35:08]

BS: So, with Ella, um, she this is her second semester, uh, as a writing consultant

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, and so you know, she had 596 last semester

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um she has you know, now a semester of experience under her belt

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um

BM: yeah

BS: again, I don't feel like there's a whole lot I have to do with her

BM: yeah

BS; again, other than with Jacob, kind of get her familiar with some of the common assignments we see

BM: right

BS: you know, these are, you know, common things you'll see, um, the, the wild card in all of this, and I don't have a great answer for, just yet, is what to do with Jill, um, for one thing because she hasn't come over to the science success center yet, so that's part of it, um, but she will next week, and Jill's background, I'm not as familiar with as the other two, um, I know she's a part-time lecturer in English, I know that she teaches or has taught creative writing for the English department

BM: Mm hmm

BS: but I believe Ann told me that she has some kind of past history in technical writing

BM: okay

BS: I need to talk to her next week to kind of find out a little bit more about that, um, so I don't really know if she's going to need kind of more

BM: yeah

BS: training, or what's that entailed, or what's entailed in what she has already done

BM: Yeah

BS: I don't know, so she's kind of the question mark to me right now, um

BM: So, she does not have, um, you know, like, a, I mean, for lack of a better word, appropriate genre knowledge

BS: right

BM: what could you imagine doing

BS: yeah, um, honestly, I you know, I mean, it's tough too because if she's a part-time lecturer, we go back to that question of like what does that look like

BM: sure

BS: what's appropriate for me to kind of require of her

BM: Right

BS: you know what I mean?

BM: Yeah, right

BS: um, so that's tricky, um and I guess part of that kind of comes from with this weird funding situation there's kind of there's not really like a clear hierarchy, I mean, obviously, Ann's my boss

BM: right, I was going to ask about that, actually

BS: but, then I'm, but you know what I mean, I'm the coordinator of the site, but I don't know

BM: yeah

BS: eh, I don't know

BM: yeah, right

BS: I don't know, um, so that's a real [cannot understand]

BM: that's, it's a good place where you know, some kind of hierarchy, might actually be useful

BS: right because I mean obviously Ann has the right to say, "we will have these bi-weekly meetings that you are all required to attend"

BM: right

BS: um, and that that's part of the hours that we all do

BM: Right

BS: but I don't really have that, at least not with Jill

BM: Right, maybe you should wear a tiara, maybe that would help

BS: probably, probably, you know, or like a diamond studded choker

BM: Or just a crown

[continued unrelated conversation (then talking about the picking up of toxic waste in bio) 38:23 – 39:27]

BS: um, anyway, I don't know, so Jill's kind of a question mark, I don't know what that

BM: that's interesting

BS: will be. I imagine it will probably and this is me guessing, but I imagine it will probably be very informal

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, kind of a when we have some down time, let me talk with you and tell you some things

BM: Yeah

BS: because I don't see how or when we could have like a formalized like training

BM: yeah

BS: time

BM: right

BS: but, yeah, so that's tricky

BM: So, let's say we were to pull uh, one of these pieces out, because this is like Jenga here

BS: right

BM: it feels like.

BS: okay

BM: what happens to the science success center if bio pulls out

BS: (laughs) we, if bio pulled out, we would be nearly decimated for a number of reasons, obviously the funding

BM: Mm hmm

BS: it would hurt to have that go, but they're also obviously a large portion of my staff

BM: Right

BS: but the bio department is also the vast majority of my um usage, I don't remember the number off the top of my head, but it's like 80 something percent

BM: wow

BS: of students who come to the science success center are seeking help for a biology course

BM: wow

BS: so, if suddenly biology started, you know, poo-pooing us or whatever, yeah, we would have very serious problems as a satellite

BM: so, then here's a question

BS: now, if astronomy pulled out, I probably wouldn't notice

BM: right

BS: because I think I've only ever one astronomy student ever in the like three years we've been open

BM: interesting

BS: and they also provide us no funding, so

BM: oh, right

BS: it really depends here which piece are we pulling

BM: right

BS: out of the Jenga pile

BM: maybe Psych wouldn't be quite so

BS: Yeah, I mean, psych, if psych pulled out, obviously that would be that the psychology satellite would disappear, but if psycho pulled out, that wouldn't really affect the science success center very much, and I can get you the specific numbers if you want them or anything, but psych does not fund the science success center in any way, um, the, you know, they don't provide me any staff, I do see again, I'm guessing at numbers, I want to say it's like maybe 10% of people I see in the science success center

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um come from Psych, so if for example, psych pulled their funding, and their satellite closed, perhaps we start seeing more Psych students in the science success center, because they wouldn't have their own satellite to go to

BM: yeah

BS: that's a possibility

[42:14]

BM: yeah

BS: but that's like, you know, that's just a guess, um

BM: so then, as we're talking a lot about relationship development and talking about know faculty and that kind of thing

BS: Mm hmm

BM: so, um, if I'm not sure that you've had this experience, and if you haven't then maybe you could imagine this experience, um, how important is it then to especially with bio, well, we know that it's, it's critical to keep relationships with faculty

BS: right

BM: strong

BS: right

BM: and positive

BS: right

BM: so, if um, a faculty member came in to ask you to do "X", like

BS: like the drug

BM: No … yes

BS: (laughs)

[talking unrelated 42:54 – 43:31]

BM: um, so okay, so maybe it would be better to contextualize the

BS: mm hmm

BM: question in an example, so um, in the college of business, I feel like there is and was a very strong pressure to make sure we are um helping students with uh very specific kinds of things

BS: Okay, meaning, like turning them away if they were asking for help with other things

BM: no, meaning, like, we better make sure those LOCs are on lock

BS: okay

BM: and maybe that's not so, as I kind of get a bigger picture of that satellite, I think that might, what I think I knew is changing

BS: oaky

BM: and for the better

BS: well and it has also been a few years since you've been there

BM: yeah

BS: so that's a possibility

BM: for sure, but like I wonder um, and maybe this isn't an applicable or viable question, but um, if you were to feel pull on certain faculty members one or many to do something that you felt uncomfortable with in terms of tutoring

BS: okay

BM: how would you handle that situation, because if bio were to pull out of this, it would be really bad

BS: yeah, um

BM: I mean, that's probably a hypothetical

BS: right, no, yeah, that is a hypothetical because I've not actually had that experience happen, um, I mean, you know Ann always has our back

BM: yeah

BS: so I think, probably, if you know, whatever it was that I was being asked to do, if you know, it kind of rubbed me the wrong way or concerned me or whatever, I think the first thing I would do would be to talk with Ann about it

BM: yeah

BS: and see you know if she also thought it was also inappropriate

BM: questionable

BS: or to see if we could kind of come up with a way with kind of dealing with it but in our own terms

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so I think she'd honestly be the first person I would even go to

BM: yeah

BS: um, you know, beyond that, I also think she would probably help me figure out who the appropriate people are to bring it to

BM: yeah

BS: like, certain faculty members, I have, you know, such a, such a strong relationship with them that I would feel comfortable straight to the faculty member and say, "Hey, here's my concern, blah, blah, blah"

BM: Yeah, okay

BS: "this is what's happening" or whatever, um, versus other faculty members, maybe I don't know them so well

BM: Mm hmm

BS: in which case, you know, then obviously that gets a little trickier, because you don't want to stomp on someone

BM: right

BS: if you don't really know where they're coming from

BM: right

BS: um, so I guess my approach would kind of depend on who the person was

BM: yeah, okay

BS: that made the request, but um, yeah, I think, I think mainly, my approach would be go to Ann first, talk it out and then kind of contact the faculty person sort of directly and try to you know, of course never tell them they're wrong

BM: yeah

BS: but kind of have a collaborative discussion about, "So, why are you thinking that that's what you want and you know, how do you envision us doing that, okay let me tell you a little how I envision it, how can we meet in the middle" sort of a conversation

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, yeah

BM: yeah

BS: I don't know

BM: okay, okay how do institutional structures in the university inform the creation and development of writing center satellites

BS: okay, um, that's an interesting question, specifically, for the science success center

BM: okay

[47:07]

BS: um, not really for the other two because they are funded by department, you know what I mean, so like individually those departments decided they wanted this

BM: okay

BS: so it was a pretty local decision, right. But, I think the idea of like larger institutional structures, which is what this question is asking is interesting for the science success center, because originally when we came up with idea for the science success center, and we knew that we wanted it to be all the sciences, so we initially had a meeting with representatives from the Dean's office, and then like the department heads of all the different science departments, right, um, so we all met in a room together and kind of proposed this idea, um, you know, got feedback from them on "what do you think? What would you like to see" you know, and then of course, the million dollar question, how do we fund it? How do we staff it, right? So that all kind of came up in this meeting. And, um, and the interesting thing was, I mean the dean's office was on board right off the bat

BM: Mm hmm

BS: there was never any question there, and certain departments like biology and psychology thought, "yeah, this is great, we love it." Because they of course already had their own satellites, so they already saw the value in it

BM: yeah

BS: um, chemistry, um, yeah, chemistry and geology and geography were both like, "Yeah, we don't really care. Do it, don't do it, whatever."

BM: (laughs)

BS: Um, physics was the only one who flat out said, "No. absolutely not, we do not want anybody in this building trying to help our students with their writing."

BM: oaky

BS: so, they were really our only opposition in creating and developing that

BM: Did they give any reasons

BS: that I can say on tape? (laughs)

BM: yeah

BS: Um, officially, the reason they gave was that the physics department supposedly has what they believe to be writing support already in place

BM: What does that look like

BS: um, I don't 100% know, I can tell you what they think it looks like, um, so where the physics department is located, there's a room right next door to the departmental office

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that is like the physics resource room or something they call it, right, and it's staffed by GAs in the physics department who sit in there waiting to answer physics related question, okay? So, in their minds, this was sufficient. If people have physics related questions, that's where they should go. Okay. In no way were we trying to stomp on that, I mean, there's very little I can talk about like physics concepts so if people want to go someplace else and ask those questions

BM: by all means

BS: awesome, right. So, we you know, we tried to explain like how what we can offer is different, whatever. They weren't buying it. They have since changed their minds, but you know, three years ago, they were not buying it. They were pretty vocal, pretty adamant, not buying into this.

[50:38]

BS: anyway, so so in terms of how did that, going back to your question, how did that inform the creation and development, initially, at least, we had to even though we were calling ourselves the science success center, you know, right from the start, we had to actually officially, we were supposed to turn away anyone coming in for physics help, like that was officially what we were supposed to do, yeah, I didn't do that (laughs)

BM: (laughs) no, because you're not going to

BS: I'm not going to turn students away

BM: right

BS: You come in asking for help, as long as it's something I can help you with

BM: right

BS: I'm going to help you

BM: right

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BS: you know, like if someone comes in and asks me to validate their parking, I'm sorry, I can't help you, I don't have that ability, but if you want to come in and talk about a lab report and how you're writing it, I can help you, you know what I mean, so basically kind of like going against what I was supposed to do, I just started working with these people anyway, I would still let them know about that resource

BM: yeah

BS: but what I found was the students are the ones that would tell me how not helpful that resource was

BM: mm

BS: I was hearing that consistently from several different students in different classes and things like that, to the point where I felt like we really are a different service from what they're offering over there

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and it's students who are finding us more useful, and they are telling their friends to come here instead of go there

BM: right

BS: um, anyway, so so that kind of went around sort of secretly, sort of underground

BM: an underground writing center

BS: exactly, you know for a couple semesters, until it got to the point where, about a year ago, I actually had some numbers I could point to to say, we, we work with physics students – look this is what percentage of people who come in are looking for physics help, and it was at that point when the physics department's attitude toward us kind of shifted

BM: Ohh

BS: um, so now, now they say they support what we do, and now we can officially say yes, we also help with physics writing, so that kind of initially informed

BM: Mm hmm

BS: the creation of it, um

BM: was it like, do you think it was like a territorial thing, was it like, we don't want the English department coming in here

BS: I think that was certainly part of it

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know, um, someone encroaching on their culture

BM: right

BS: you know, um

BM: because that's a risk, too you know, I guess

BS: yeah, um, I think there's also and I think this goes back to, which we kind of talked about last time, how you know there are a lot of faculty who they themselves don't really know how to teach or talk about writing in their discipline, right

BM: right

BS: and so, you know, and I think that's true of physics faculty as much as it is anyone else, and I think, I think there was this level of discomfort feeling like we were kind of calling them out on

BM: Oh

BS: you don't know how to do this thing

BM: Mm hmm

BS: we know how to do it, you know what I mean

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, yeah

BM: yeah, sure

BS: you know, which, yeah, I understand, that would be uncomfortable for a lot of people

BM: right

BS: but

BM: I'd love to be told I'm not doing something well, I love that

BS: Um, yeah, so yeah

BM: so there is you know, a political piece to this

BS: Oh, definitely

BM: I've been trying to get at, you know, not just like, you know, with the college of business, oh you know, the college of business thinks that we're valuable, everything's great, look at our location

[54:35]

BS: Mm hmm

BM: you know, it's not always like that

BS: right

BM: um, and so in talking about these things how, you know, how might we navigate them

BS: Yeah, and I mean honestly

BM: in constructive ways

BS: honestly, I think we had a pretty easy time of it

BM: yeah

BS: If I'm comparing to other political horror stories I hear

BM: yeah, right

BS: I think we, we honestly had a pretty easy time

BM: so, that's the things that I wonder a lot about

BS: Mm hmm

BM: a lot of people say, a lot of people vocally don't support writing center work

BS: right

BM: but then they're really not that hard, it seems, to corral or to win over

BS: right

BM: Or to you know, so I'm wondering, and this is not in the scope of this project, but where the threshold is for them to realize that it's a value

BS: Right

BM: like at what point is it that faculty go, "Okay, well my students are finding use of this service"

BS: right, I mean, yeah, I agree, it's not in the realm or the scope of what you are looking at, but I wonder, antidotally, I wonder if it would be interesting to look at numbers of faculty from different departments or different colleges on campus and what percentage of them have attended WAC

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and see if there's a relationship between that, you know, WAC participation and acceptance of like a writing center, or some sort of writing support

BM: Mm hmm

BS: because my guess would be

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that if you have more people that have attended WAC, they're more on board with having some sort of writing center

BM: Right

BS: but, that's just a guess

BM: yeah, that would make sense for sur

BS: but, um, I mean, in our case, again, I think, I think we really had a pretty darn easy time

BM: yeah

BS: um, because, well I think for a number of reasons, I think one because CAS, you know, the dean's office was on board right from the start

BM: Yeah, right

BS: and, um, and biology which of all the sciences, biology, well biology and psychology are the two largest in terms of numbers of majors and that kind of thing

BM: okay

BS: and since they were already on board, you know you've got

BM: right

BS: those are all your biggest heavy hitters

BM: right

BS: right there, the dean's office

BM: biggest stakeholders

BS: yeah, so you know, I, I mean I have no idea how many chemistry majors we have

BM: right

BS: but you know if chemistry has say half the number of majors as biology

BM: right

BS: I think they probably feel like they have a little less

BM: clout

BS: yeah, voice in that argument

BM: yeah

BS: and not that we have ever said it that way

BM: well, of course

BS: imagining that that's kind of

BM: No, you don't have a voice at this table, Chemistry, why don't you just go home, you're drunk

BS: right, right, you know, but I imagine that that might be part of why the they were like, "Yup, let's go along with bio, because that sounds good," you know

BM: yeah

BS: I don't know, um, yeah

BM: so, if we haven't talked about it, what other kinds of institutional and administrative issues emerge when developing a writing center satellite

BS: that is a really messy question (laughs) perhaps

BM: good, good

BS: not necessarily for me so much, um, in general, other things unrelated to this, um, okay. What other issues emerge, okay, so, um I mean, we've already touched on several things, right, like obviously, the hierarchy, or lack there of situation

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and what that means for things like training and stuff like that

BM: Mm hmm

BS: like that, I think, I can see that being both an institutional and an administrative issue

BM: Mm hmm

BS: in some people's minds. Um, I will say, and I think, in the big scheme of things, this is pretty minor, but um, in the past, the bio department has always given me the two GAs, and I've always had them for a full year

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so fall and winter semester, um, and my only real compliant has been that we are not actually part of their decision of whom I get

BM: mm

BS: um, for various reasons, that I'm not sure I really buy

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, so, and again, I think that's a fairly minor issue, in the, in past years, they always tried to pick two people who express some sort of interest, first of all,

BM: Mm hmm

BS: in writing center work, um, and they would pick one person so there are two different tracks in bio, right, so they pick one person from each track

BM: okay

BS: so that we kind of could encompass

BM: yeah

BS: everyone that would come in, um, so all in all that worked pretty well

BM: Mm hmm

BS: this year they kind of changed that up a little bit on me, and again I was not part of those decisions

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so, like this year for example, they gave me two people from the same track and then changed people on me for the semester

BM<: Oh

BS: so I did all this training with them last semester, and then lost them in December, and I'm training all new people

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and my two new people are also in the same track

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so, I guess to make this kind of more a universal answer to what you're kind of asking here

BM: yeah

 BS: I think sometimes, like institutional or administrative issues in terms of staffing in the sense of like who's making those decisions

BM: yeah

BS: that can really have an impact

BM: Mm hmm

BS: on writing center work, um, I think generally I've lucked out for the most part, but I could see how that could become problematic

BM: yeah

BS: um, so that's probably the major one that sticks out in relation to the work I do, um, I mean, of course, and this is true of any institution and any kind of funding structure, even ones that are less chaotic than ours, um, you know, certainly, if you have a change over in who your administration is, that can have an impact on things

BM: yeah

BS: So, for example, Dean Venner, the dean of college of arts and sciences is leaving at the end of the year, um, you know, luckily for us, that whole office is on board with that we're doing

BM: yeah

BS: and, so you know, even when they appoint an interim to take over for him, we know we'll be okay

BM: Mm hmm

BS: sure, I guess we could guess whether or not whoever gets hired eventually

BM: Mm hmm

BS: whether they'll support what we do, but, um, I think that's less a problem for us than it is for other entities on campus, but, yeah, so you know, change over in administration which then can have a trickle down affect

BM: yeah

BS: um

BM: and so how do you make sure you aren't even though relationships are incredibly important in this whole thing

BS: right

BM: how do you show that you are of value kind of more universally versus person by person

BS: right, well, I think I'm very lucky in the sense that you, these days if you say the words, "sciences" or the word "STEM" right? Those are like the magic words

BM: You're talking to somebody from a Tech school

BS: right, exactly, like, those are the words any administration is going to sit up and pay attention to

BM: that's true

BS: you know what I mean, and so if we say "Oh, we have all these great numbers to show"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know, "how many students in the sciences are using this service" you know, speak that kind of data driven

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know administrators also love that, right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: data-driven and science oriented kind of language

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I don't see there being a huge problem, even when the administration turns over

BM: yeah

BS: um, I would worry more for satellites that perhaps are not discipline specific

BM: mm, for example

BS: I'm not sure I'm comfortable answering that question on tape

BM: Do you want me to turn it off?

BS: Can you turn it off for a second, or will that mess it up?

BM: Yeah, no I think I can pause it, or you can just tell me after, and because that's the last question

BS: okay

BM: so, um, do you have anything else that you'd like to add, I think, I mean, so this one took an hour and the one before it took like an hour

BS: I'm sorry, I talk a lot

BM: no, no, I'm happy, I think this is probably one of the most useful um this is kind of like the foundational one because you're so familiar with the home center, you've been working in writing center work for a long time, you've been immersed in this satellite, for three, right, or more

BS: yeah

BM: and so you have a really good idea, and you're not just, you're, well I hate to say it like this, but you're not just a GA being a tutor, you have your hand in being

BS: right

BM: in a sense an administrator as well and you're in you know

BS: right, absolutely, I mean, and I created two of the three

BM: right, so you've got a really good perspective

BS: yeah

BM: and I think this is a really good, um interview to, um

BS: yeah, no, I appreciate you saying that, um, yeah, I think the answer to your question I'd rather say off

BM: yeah, sure, of course

BS: (laughs)

BM: of course

BS: Yeah

BM: um, thank you very much

BS: yeah, no problem

BM: I appreciate it

BS: Um, if you've got real quick

BM: I'm going to stop it

BS: Yeah, you can stop recording, I was going to …

BM: Okay

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BM: Okay, alight, so we can look at Cooper while we're (laughs)

TP: (laughs) cute dog

BM: while we're working. Thanks, um, okay so will you tell me a little bit about yourself

TP: Yeah, yeah

BM: Um, you're kind of position in the satellite center, and then your interests and those kinds of things

TP: Yeah, um, so I, I guess my name is Thomas Passwater, and you have that printed, so the spelling shouldn't be an issue, right

BM: Thank you (laughs). Is it phonetic. Yes it is

TP: Yes, it's just two words slapped together

BM: Yeah (laughs)

TP: Um, yeah, so I'm a first year grad student here in the written communication program. Um, I, I work pretty closely with Derek and Ann, um, they are my two kind of like key mentors here

BM: Yeah

TP: You know Derek

BM: I do

TP: Okay, yeah, yeah. Um, he's awesome. So, I came here from East Carolina University

BM: Oh, great

TP: Where I did my undergrad. I was an English studies major, um, mostly doing rhet / comp work, um, I entered in my freshman year as an English ed major and then went through several majors and then ended up in English

BM: (laughs) Yeah

TP: At first, uh, I was in literature, um and I was hellbent on becoming the next Oscar Wilde-like scholar, um but then one of my chief mentors, Will Banks, um took me to London for his study abroad program and I came back a rhet / comp student. Um

BM: I actually went to a conference, a, a writing center conference at ECU that Will Banks

TP: You were at SWCA

BM: Yes, I was

TP: Ahhhh! Which year?

BM: Um, the year that I um, like ate my words

TP: Oh wait, it was the year that it was at ECU

BM: Yeah, yeah

TP: Yeah, I was there, too

BM: Yeah, I gave a presentation and you know Neal Lerner Paula Gillespie wrote the tut

TP: Mm hmm

BM: So, I was like not ripping them a new one because I wouldn't do that, but I was kind of like talking, I was trying to kind of like, um, show a little tension with the tutoring practices and HOCs, MOCs, and LOCs

TP: Yeah

BM: And, at the end, Paula Gillespie was like, "Oh hi, I'm Paula Gillespie"

TP: yeah, yeah, yeah

BM: And, I'm like, "Oh shit." (Laughs)

TP: (laughs)

BM: So, yeah, that was a really interesting conference for me, but it was great and he's amazing

TP: Will? Or,

BM: Yeah

TP: yeah, oh yeah. He's, he's still my best friend

BM: Yeah

[stricken from the record]

TP: Um, so yeah, I worked with Dr. Caswell there, she's the writing center director

BM: Okay

TP: Will's the writing program director, so she's, um, I guess kind of Derek is here

BM: Okay

TP: Little different because he also is Nicki's boss, so there's, I don't know, it's a little different hierarchy, but

BM: Yeah

TP: Um, I was working at a hub center there, so um, the "home" center, is your coin phrase, right

BM: Yeah, I guess. I really don't know what to call it yet

TP: Eh, that's fine

BM: Yeah

TP: Home center works, has some interesting connotations with Jackie McKinney

BM: I know, I know

TP: might take you to task on that (laughs)

BM: I know, and the coffee pot, I know

TP: (laughs)

BM: I know. When, really

TP: Peripheral visions for your dissertation

BM: I know, and really the reason I came up with the "home" because my boyfriend likes to play Destiny, I don't know if you play video games at all

TP: Yeah

BM: Um, or know of Destiny, but what I was really interested about was that kind of same metaphor, because there's Earth

TP: Right

BM: But then there are all the different planets, but they're all still connected, right? Somehow that's kind of where I got that

TP: Yeah

BM: but, totally

TP: (laughs)

BM: I'm not going to publish that, I don't think. Who knows, I don't know

TP: Yeah, yeah, yeah

BM: Anyway

TP: Um, so yeah, I worked there, it was in the library, first floor, huge fishbowl. Even everybody's individual office were all glass, I'm sure you remember, it's the same space that you guys were in

BM: Yeah, right, yeah. Yeah

TP: Um, and, and that one has a lot, just comparing the two centers, where I worked there is huge, right? I mean, we had a humongous center that had this whole digital writing studio

BM: Oh, wow

TP: that we utilized and that big central TV in case anyone wanted to work on a presentation

BM: Mm hmm

TP: The tables were all movable and there was tons of group work and collaboration going on even between consultations and tutors, and now the image of the sad lady under the stairs for rhet / comp work kind of comes to mind

BM: Mm hmm

TP: (laughs)

BM: Yeah, yeah

TP: Um, I mean granted, this location's great, too, I just

BM: Right

TP: just coming from one to the other is a very strange kind of experience. Um, let's see, I did my first writing research, um, with Carrie Bright Flinchbaugh who is there, um, Will Banks, and Erin Herman on Literacy Improv, so essentially playing improv games as a means

BM: Mm hmm

TP: for uh tutor development and tutor training

BM: Oh, cool

TP: So, instead of doing these sort of scripted narratives of, uh, tutor consultant, how the tutor would interact playing improv games, because rather than coming with an established discourse, it forces you to build

BM: Mm hmm

TP: on top of each other to make new power dynamics and make new roles for each other

BM: Cool

TP: Um, I'm doing a study now on, um, high stakes sessions and how consultants deal with it. Um, so like, emotionally responsive ones, if you're like someone comes in with a victim blaming paper, like how does someone who survived a, an assault like deal with that

BM: Mm hmm

TP: Or, as a gay man, um, I've had lots of papers that are opinion pieces on gay marriage that have kind of crossed a few lines, and like how do I respond to that

BM: Right

TP: Um, and so, it's sort of dealing with how does that impact tutor identity and how can we create new training materials to compensate for that which will help make it into writing center policy, hopefully, like, procedures and those kinds of things., So, that's sort of my background. Um, on that, I don't know, I'm starting to get involved with WAC stuff, um, and assessment tools are sort of like my

BM: Okay

TP: yeah

BM: Okay, so just to kind of um, I, I can see, uh, after what two, five, oh five minutes, okay, um Ann definitely wanted to have me talk to you

TP: (laughs)

BM: because one of the things we talked about earlier this morning was ethos, a lot of ethos

TP: Yeah

BM: in terms of her going to find money, um, in terms of, uh, Jane, you know, and her business persona and being a business person, and being in that center. Um, uh, and, and Beth, in terms of her being really approachable, and, and you know she has a certain ethos

TP: Yeah

BM: and a certain persona, uh, in the sciences, so I'm going to probably poke a little bit at that if you don't mind

TP: Absolutely, absolutely

BM: uh, through these questions, um but also I'd really like to get your take on your work with literacy improv and then talking about that from the home center and from the satellite center

TP: Yeah, yeah, definitely

BM: So, have you had experience in working in the home center here, so Halle

TP: No

BM: So, you're experience of a home center or hub would be from ECU, um, which if you, so that's not an apples to apples comparison

TP: Right, right

BM: and I understand that, but I do think that, um, there are still some interesting things that I can maybe

TP: Right

BM: pull out of you from that if you don't mind

TP: Absolutely

BM: Okay, so, I have, these, actually, these three separate sections are three questions, my three research questions from my dissertation

TP: Okay, gotcha

BM: to be completely transparent. Um, I'm really interested in the exigence of developing writing center satellites

TP: Mm

BM: Um, and, I'm going to ask you, I think with you, I'm going to ask all four of them and then you can speak to what you want to speak to

TP: Absolutely

BM: Um, the second section is something that I am really interested in, talking to you about is tutoring practices in writing center satellites

TP: Mm hmm

BM: So, my guess, well maybe I shouldn't, my guess is that things happen differently when you're in a different discipline

TP: Yeah

BM: um and so I'm interested to get your take on that, and then the first section I will probably do like the first section in talking about, uh, it in terms of institutional structures. I'm not sure how much experience you've had with the administration here at the College of Business, so again, speak to what you're comfortable with

TP: Yeah, yeah

BM: Okay, so, section one, um, (laughs)

TP: (laughs)

BM: Why was the writing center satellite in your discipline created, um, which you know, as anyway, I kind of know the answer to that for this specific satellite, but I would like to get your take on it, too\

TP: yeah, yeah

BM: um, why would a writing center satellite be created for specific disciplines as opposed to, or as an extension of, the "home" writing center? So, why is this, pull apart, it kind of feels like monkey bread to me

TP: (laughs)

BM: You know, like, why is that part necessary? Why is it necessary, I guess for it to stand on its own?

TP: Right

BM: Um, What might the writing center satellite provide to students that the home center does not? That's something that I think you can speak to and then what might the home writing center provide that the writing center satellite doesn't?

TP: right, okay. Um, so, I, I'm not super familiar with the history of this specific center, but uh, actually, Carrie's husband, Michael was a grad student at ECU

BM: Oh really

TP: Yeah, and he, his uh whole master's thesis is the three phases of their writing center and he does a history of how it was a home center and how it ended up becoming a satellite center.

BM: Oh, interesting. Oh, that's Will's work or Carrie's?

TP: Um, Carrie's husband's, uh, his name is Michael Flinchbaugh, um

BM: Who's Carrie

TP: Carrie Bright Flinchbaugh

BM: Oh, okay

TP: Uh, she, I don't, program specialist at the UWC at ECU

BM: Okay,

TP: Um

BM: So, that would be interesting to look at

TP: Yeah, and I don't know that it would be super useful to spend that much time with, but

BM: Yeah

TP: but he does a little bit of the archival work and what the exigence was

BM: Cool

TP: for ECU's spread. Um,

BM: Yeah

TP: but, ah, let's see (laughs) um

BM: Would it be better just to go question by question?

TP: Yeah, I think

BM: Yeah

TP: I'm just going to try and go through these lineararily if that's okay

BM: Yeah of course

TP: Um, so why was the writing center satellite in your discipline created? I'm not, again, I don't really know that I can speak so much to that because I don't know the history of EMU's

BM: Mm hmm

TP: writing centers, but I can try and theorize

BM: Yeah, yeah

TP: so, yeah

BM: That would be great. It would be really nice to hear that actually, that perspective because I um, you know, I have feelings of why we created this center, but being out of it and coming back to it

TP: right

BM: um, to see the success of it, too

TP: Yeah

BM: I mean, college of technology, I saw that ebb and flow

TP: Right

BM: And, the college of business has not

TP: Right

BM: It's been successfully, subtly successful

TP: Yeah

BM: so

TP: and I think there's definitely like that point where you reach a critical mass of students where you sort of need to answer to them and sort of provide a certain service, right? Um, and to

some extent, that's amplified all the more by the fact that we're separated by main campus, like there's a geographical component that like

BM: Right

TP: can't really be ignored on that

BM: Right

TP: um, and so satellite campuses sort of need a satellite writing center, right?

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, especially it's triple because our campus is not a residential campus, right? I mean, so much of EMU students are commuters

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, and that creates even more complexity to this issue of like how do you create space for students to interact with

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, and when you're travelling to one spot on, and then you go home

BM: Right

TP: or go to work, or wherever it is that your students goes to

BM: Mm hmm

TP: your population goes, um, you can't ask them to really like go that extra like leg because for some people, that's not even finally feasible

BM: Right

TP: let alone permissible in their, their schedules, um

BM: Right

TP: and I Think that sort of created a, a necessity for for this campus to, to create that space, um, which I think has also been so successful, and why we got the location that we do now which is so cool

BM: Yeah, we really lucked out with that one

TP: (laughs)

BM: we really did

TP: Yeah

BM: We joke about that first spot that we were in, but it did have a two way mirror and that thing freaked me out

TP: (laughs)

BM: but, so,

TP: I've heard about the two way mirror (laughs)

BM: (laughs) yeah, I did not like that thing (laughs) um, so why would a writing center satellite be created for specific disciplines, um, so kind of thinking about this I guess more abstractly and maybe this is something um, you know, like, Cindy could speak to, too

TP: Yeah

BM: because that's on campus

TP: Right, right

BM: um, uh, why would a specific, why would a writing center satellite be created for specific disciplines as opposed to, or as an extension of , the home center

TP: Right, um, okay let's see, I think, so some of that, I think, sort of answers back to the WAC./WID divide

BM: Mm hmm

TP: Um, so like where does authority rest on writing, and and where do administrators value or what do administrators writing, and who gets to articulate those, those values, um, and, and so when does it became necessary, it become uh evident with like who creates those values systems, whose, whose doing the work of assessing and who ultimately is uh consulted right

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, and so it becomes necessary if the disciplines are viewed as like the hub of information that needs to be consulted

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, if you view your writing program as sort of the the central base and foundation of what writing is, and they get some say in what the values of writing are, um, then I think the satellites that you create are going to be more reflective of the home based rather than adaptive to the spaces in which they are housed

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, I don't know if that made sense or not (laughs)

BM: Yeah, I mean it actually makes a lot of sense. Once of the things that I'm sifting through in my lit review is this WAC/WID divide

TP: Mm hmm

BM: um, and and this, this particular site, EMU, is really interesting because Ann's so linked to WAC and I mean, by linked I mean

TP: (laughs) right

BM: she is WAC

TP: (laughs)

BM: I don't mean that in like a slang way (laughs)

TP: the pun of that is just so great

BM: I know. Ann's WAC. Um

TP: But WAC can be cool right, like you're 80s slang needs to come in there

BM: Right, that's right. Um, yeah, and I, and I think, and she talked a lot about that this morning. Her connection through WAC

TP: Mm hmm

BM: in the faculty is, is vital, I think

TP: right

BM: in these satellite locations and so but um you know, I tried to kind of ask her to pull about WAC and WID

TP: Right, right

BM: as well, and so those questions about authority of writing, I think these are all kind of underlying things that I'm not explicitly asking

TP: right

BM: that I think maybe I ought to

TP: Yeah, yeah

BM: so that does make a lot of sense

TP: and, if you're in Michigan this summer, there's the International Writing Across the Curriculum conference in June

BM: Oh, that's at UofM

TP: Yeah

BM: That's right

TP: I'll be presenting

BM: Oh, you will? Congratulations

TP: Yeah, thanks, thanks

BM: Cool

TP: Um, that's on a different project, but yeah (laughs)

BM: Yeah, yeah, I mean, aren't there so many

TP: Right, right? (laughs)

BM: I feel your pain

TP: Yeah

BM: Um, okay, so then and I think that this is a really good uh bridge here, what might the writing center satellite provide to students that the home center does not

TP: Right, um and in some ways, I think, an effective rhetorically savvy writing center that's got, um, staff that are trained in both writing center work and their discipline that their supposing to work for

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, can create bridges between that WAC/WID divide

BM: Mm hmm

TP: when you've got a writing program that is really trying to build these connections and uh create its own ethos as um the creator or foundations of good writing, right, um someone who like a satellite center that kind sort of navigate those two tensions, right. I mean, we're in the college of business, um, we have to, I guess answer to the college of business faculty who have certain expectations of what we do

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, and the college of business administrators have a certain expectation of what we do. Um, and the home writing center might have differing values to a certain extent, um, and I guess the rhetorically savvy satellite needs to be able to navigate those, those tensions um and so along those lines (laughs) they have to keep those two different value sets in mind, right

BM: Right

TP: I mean, I feel like that's mostly what my position is working as the grad for two instructors

BM: Right

TP: within this place, is I have to bring my own, like, writing center experience, keep those values in check while not, and, while not ignoring the expectations of what are around me and the instructors in this campus

BM: So, that's one of the unique things that I think that you can articulate for me that I couldn't articulate for myself when I was here, but I felt that tension ALL of the time

TP: (laughs) right

BM: um, especially, with you know having um Ann and then Jane and then me kind of sandwiched right in the center, and all three of us trying to build this place. So, can you articular um, um, what you believe that the expectations are of faculty and the dean here at the college of business, and and so that's the first part of the question

TP: Yeah

BM: and, how that comes into tension as your training as a writing center tutor

TP: Okay

BM: consultant

TP: Alright (laughs) um

BM: That's a loaded question

TP: And, hopefully not one that will cause me to step on too many toes

BM: No, well, okay, so well that's the other thing, with this, especially with this satellite, is that I, I constantly was walking on eggshells

TP: Right

BM: and, so if anybody understands that, I do

TP: (laughs) right

BM: um, and so seriously though if you at any time you feel uncomfortable you can totally strike anything from the record and I will not put you in a negative light, although I think you're kind of like, yeah, and this is kind of selfish, actually, is that I, I didn't think about these questions when IU was here

TP: right

BM: and only now that I'm outside of it am I kind of able to say, "Wait a second, what did I do when I was there?" (laughs) I can't articulate it

TP: (laughs)

BM: So, you're my voice in that respect

TP: (laughs) okay. So, I guess, I guess off the record [stricken] So, I guess instructors in, especially in this particular satellite have played such a pivotal role in both staffing the center

BM: Mm

TP: and the formation and continued support of the center, um, and I guess maybe because of the geographical distance, um, and the lack of overlap between consultants that work here and in the home center

BM: Mm hmm

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TP: Um, it's sort of develops its own cultural atmosphere

BM: Yeah

TP: um,

BM: it's like it's it's own community of discourse

TP: Right, right (laughs)

BM: but, it's different from the writing center discourse, and it's different from a college of business discourse

TP: right, right

BM: So, we're like this weird

TP: Hodgepodge

BM: Right

TP: Mix of it, yeah

BM: right

TP: um, and I think since it has been staffed by instructors, right, um, there's not necessarily a clear divide between when we're teaching and when we're consulting

BM: consulting

TP: um, and part of that might be a language choice around tutoring, like

BM: Mm hmm

TP: and maybe a lack of um, division amongst, like what power dynamics are and being able to parse out all those terms and feel, sorry I'm a little chilly, and so I'm a little shivery

BM: Oh no, that's okay, do you want, we can move rooms

TP: Oh no, no, no, no this is fine. Um, I'm just sorry if my voice is shaking

BM: Oh, I don't care

TP: um, so, yeah, yeah, I think it, there's a a tendency to revert into these sort of like complacent not even Stephen North, like pre-Stephen North writing center

BM: Right

TP: pedagogies, um, so (laughs) I'm trying to be as neutral as I can here

BM: Yeah

TP: You're in a really tricky spot

BM: Right, right

TP: I want to like say it without saying words or names or anything is, is a tension, right

BM: Yeah

TP: um, and especially since I like, and I guess to be clear, I don't even think that minimalist tutoring is necessarily the best

BM: Mm hmm

TP: I think that allows us to be complacent to a lot of issues in writing and writing instructor that are, well, shitty, I'm sorry for that if you

BM: Yeah, no, that's okay. I said bullshit earlier, so

TP: (laughs) Okay, cool

BM: There are going to be a whole lot of wear words on this tape (laughs). You're not the first or the last

TP: (laughs) Okay good. Um

BM: Can you talk a little bit about some of those issues, you think are

TP: Yeah, yeah, yeah, um okay, um, so breaking expectations and well, I guess that's kind of a bad start, um, writing instruction, regardless of where it is in the disciplines, tends to um, you view writing centers of course as, what's the word I'm looking for, remedial

BM: remedial

TP: um, and I think minimalist tutoring can sometimes fall into the position of making that still remedial

BM: Yeah

TP: um, I don't necessarily think that people should be directing this is what's right, this is what's wrong, either. I think that there's maybe something outside of this divide that we need to consider, um, and then there's the issue of people bringing different identities and different backgrounds into writing, right, and so often we play a role uh whether formalized or not in sort of helping marginalize students sort of navigate this sort of hegemonic culture that is academic, right

BM: yeah

TP: um, and then sort of what do you do with, with like people bringing other grammars and other discourses into writing that are just as sophisticated and rhetorically savvy moves, even if they're not necessarily valued

BM: Right

TP: um, and, and so I sort of think Nancy Grimm, love the text, I don't know if you've read it, *Good Intentions*

BM: Yes

TP: um *Postmodern Perspectives of Writing Centers* I love it

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um she challenges a lot of the minimalist tutoring stuff too and so that's like, in my own writing center in the future, like foundational text, right (laughs)

BM: Yeah, I need to pull that back out. I'm glad that you mentioned it

TP: That and *Noise* Elizabeth's Bouquet's piece, um,

BM: You know what, I just came across that, and I haven't read it yet

TP: So amazing, um, both of them are awesome

BM: I actually think that's in my Amazon cart to be honest with you

TP: (laughs)

BM: Uh, okay, right, Bouquet. I don't know how you spell it

TP: uh, yeah, its b o q u e t, um, so it is bouquet [like the flower] but it might be bouquet [emphasis on the "T"]. Um, she was at a smaller college in Connecticut, anyway

BM: Oh, huh, interesting

TP: Yeah, um, so I don't even know if I answered your question or not

BM: Um

TP: I forgot what the question was, so (laughs) I apologize

BM: Yeah, okay, so what might the writing center satellite provide to students that the home center does not

TP: Right, okay, um so yeah, being able to navigate those two tensions, so we can provide sort of the in the discipline, uh, needs that they might have because we've worked with these genres enough that we can sort of understand their conventions and be able to articulate them to students in a way that a home center might not be able to come to terms with quite as much, that was Derek's vocabulary, so

BM: Should I interview him, he's not on my interview list, but I didn't, you know, I haven't aligned him with writing center work

TP: He's not, um, the, it was just to come to terms with, I, I notice whenever like when someone's vocab filters in

BM: There's a whole lot of John Dunn-isms

TP: (laughs)

BM: that (laughs) that carried through, the skeleton key, a whole ball of wax, can of worms

TP: Yeah

BM: Anyway

TP: um

BM: (laughs)

TP: and I'm a little, I'm sorry if I'm scattered and all over the place, um yeah, so I think that we can, we can sort of provide the in the discipline needs

BM: Mm hmm

TP: Um, but I think that we can't really lose sight of what the writing center, like what writing center progress writing center pedagogy has made, um, because I think we do a disservice to the whole umbrella that we operate under if we

BM: Mm hmm

TP: do that, so our job is I guess, balancing those two to sometimes conflicting needs

BM: yeah

TP: um

BM: So, can you, and this is really hard

TP: Yeah, yeah

BM: sorry to put you on the spot for this

TP: no, no, no it's fine

BM: can you think of an example where those two things do conflict

TP: yeah, um

BM: and then how you would then deal with that

TP: right. So, that, huh, it's very interesting because so many of our students, that we serve are students of the instructors that work in the space

BM: Mm hmm

TP: Um, and they sometimes since they're office hours double as their tutoring hours, I wonder how much teaching goes on, instead of the consulting work

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, but what that does is then creates a culture where students, um, expect more hands on directive editing work and expect the consultant to know, to essentially be a graded, like an unofficial grader, right, and be able to fully, like, I don't know, do that sort of work for them.

Um, and then entering into that is an intensively complex when that is something that you are entirely not, not familiar with, or necessarily thinking is appropriate

BM: Right

TP: for the work of a consultant

BM: prepared for

TP: right, and then especially when those instructors are the ones working alongside you and are the ones giving you feedback on your practice, right. It can create very interesting sort of dynamics between, uh

BM: Mm hmm. That's hairy

TP: Yeah (laughs)

BM: Yeah

TP: um, and, and it's also like, how do you look a student in the face and tell them that's not the work they do when that's the work they receive from every other consultant who works in the center

BM: Right

TP: um, so, there's a lot of like subtle edges, like attempts to influence others

BM: Mm hmm

TP: that you work alongside

BM: Mm hmm

TP: so that hopefully collectively we can all move in a direction

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um and sort of solidify what it is that this satellite looks at

BM: Right

TP: I don't know if that made sense

BM: No, it, well, it made perfect sense to me

TP: (laughs)

BM: um, my first thought was, "I'm glad that there's somebody still on that boat"

TP: (laughs)

BM: because when I left, I mean, when I, I kind of off record [stricken from record]

TP: and these things were established when I entered, right

BM: right

TP: versus like being co-created o

BM: right

TP: and, yeah, yeah

BM: right, and so she probably, or other people that work in the center probably feel as though they can give you, so that's really interesting thing that I did not know, that you receive feedback about your practice

TP: Oh, yeah, yeah

BM: Can you tell me about what that looks like

TP: Yeah, and, it's not necessarily, um, resulted in disciplinary action or any sort of tense awkwardness or anything

BM: oh, no, but we don't get that in the home center

TP: Right, right

BM: usually, right

TP: um, there's, so at the beginning of the year, um, the center sent out, uh forms of just sort of like, just observe somebody casual thing

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, and then it had its own forms and suggestions and written feedback, so that was one sort of way that, I've encountered that sort of thing, but the other thing is just sort of like water cooler talk, right

BM: right

TP: like

BM: right

TP: how would you have handled this situation and I'm coming so stressed because of this

BM: right

TP: and um and how that relates back to your practice, right, because I mean a lot of that you talk about like well I would have dealed, dealt with it in this particular way or

BM: Mm hmm

TP: I think this is the underlying issue under this, um, and whenever those, those uh ideas that either cause problems in the writing center or um make tutoring hard are are something that uh, I don't know, goes against your previous training and it's an interesting sort of mix and how the

way people respond to your practice, uh let's see. Because I think I've even made tallies on how many questions get asked versus statements

BM: Mm

TP: and like it's surprising little

BM: Wow

TP: sometimes, um

BM: In terms of feedback for your own

TP: Oh, no no no, feedback that um consultants have given students

BM: Oh, okay

TP: it's often not operating on a a

BM: like in this particular satellite

TP: Yeah, yeah

BM: Okay

TP: It's often not operating on a like conversational, inviting, questions

BM: Mm hmm

TP: kind of discourse but

BM" It's more, "you need to do this or you need to do that" instead of

TP: right, right

BM: uh, yeah, okay

TP: which is interesting because I think that they at first thought that I was either insecure about uh, especially since my background is in English studies and I'm consulting in the college of business

BM: Mm hmm

TP: so I think a lot of that question asking and inviting conversation on the students had, was read as

BM: ahhh

TP: unfamiliarity with business writing and unfamiliarity with these genres, um when I was do, trying to do other sort of moves, practice wise, so

BM: Mm hmm. That's grounded in writing center research

TP: Right, right, right

BM: Right

TP: um, so yeah (laughs)

BM: That's interesting

TP: (laughs)

BM: Um, so, okay, so I'm going to ask a question

TP: Yup

BM: that then I think we can bury in this fourth question, so how do you see the practices of um what you do know different from what you do at a home center, like, how, how what are some clear distinctions, clear differences in tutoring practices that you've found yourself doing here

TP: Um, so, I I find myself, uh, falling into those sort of complacent sort of rhythms that like not question asking and sort of articulating fewer questions and more statements, right

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um

BM: can I, I'm sorry to

TP: No, no problem

BM: I hate to interrupt, but that brings up two questions for me

TP: Mm hmm

BM: One, I wanted to know what are the implications you think there are of that

TP: So many

BM: Right

TP: Um, it, it contributes to a unanimous voice of authority that is problematic for, for consulting work, um, particularly as I don't know a grad student, right, and, and writing center work is also in this weird place, right, because what constitutes ownership and plagiarism, right. Um, an issue that we have to sort of fight against on an administrative level all the time, um, but at the same time, it sort of disacknowledges the work we do, and not that writing center consultants should, like, take some sort of ownership, but that like writing is social and should invite these kinds of feedbacks

BM: right

TP: on its own, um, and when you don't invite those questions, and you're making statements, it problematizes that relationship especially one so tenuous as writing center administrator who needs funding, like we need funding from them

BM: Right

TP: and when they see us as

BM: right

TP: hands on, taking ownership of a paper, then that puts in question our funding for the following year

BM: Right

TP: um, and it, it puts students and the role of like unknowledgeable person knocking at the gate, hoping to receive some knowledge from an expert on the inside

BM: Right, banking model of education

TP: right, right, right

BM: so, those, what you just touched on, those are some of the institutional structures that I'm looking, that I'm interested in looking more into. Um, the other question I wanted to ask you, then, as a result of that part that I totally interrupted you on was

TP: no, that's fine

BM: do you feel that pull from, to kind of feel more complacent in your tutoring practices, do you feel that pull mostly from students or from the other people that you're working with in the college of business

TP: Usually the other people that I work with, um, and it's usually more so when they're present

BM: Yeah, are you ever there by yourself?

TP: Sometimes

BM: Okay

TP: Usually later in the evening, but we have lower traffic then, so I don't often help

BM: Okay

TP: students during that time, um, I wish I did

BM: Mm hmm

TP: but I don't

BM: Yeah

TP: um, totally lost my train of thought because I was (laughs)

BM: Sorry

TP: No, no, no, it's fine, it's fine, um but falling into these rhythms, right, because they (signs), okay, so, the center being small, as it is

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, usually the times that I've been working there, it's been the two of us helping one student, so one of us is consulting and the other one is doing something else

BM: Mm

TP: but, it invites a sort of eves dropping and instead of being a collaborative, when they, when they do sort of put their voices into the conversation instead of it being a collaborative, "Come help me on this"

BM: Mm hmm

TP: sort of collaborative consulting work, it becomes more of I will take over the session

BM: Ah

TP: for a few minutes kind of gesture, um, and sometimes, I, I guess I've invited that because of some unfamiliarity

BM: Mm hmm

TP: Especially when it's one of their students and they're asking a question that I cannot necessarily discern from the prompt and the instructor is sitting right behind me

BM: Right

TP: I might as well just as the instructor

BM: Right

TP: Um, but then of course, it turns into their consulting session

BM: Right

TP: Um

BM: and that switches into something different

TP: right

BM: that's kind of the point there, the threshold where you move from consulting to teaching

TP: Right, right, um and it, and some of that might be the overlap of office hours versus consulting time

BM: Mm hmm. I was really surprised when Jane said that office hours are, those, that's their office

TP: Yeah, yeah

BM: That really shocked me

TP: It, I think it can be a problematic sort of relationship

BM: Yeah

TP: um, I hate that this is, I don't want this to sound like a slam session

BM: No, no, no, no, no, no. These, I mean, these are the questions that I've been asking myself now for years, literally years, these are the questions, I mean, these are the implications with having a satellite center, there are so many nuances with satellite centers with discipline-specific writing, with discipline-specific writing help

TP: Right

BM: Um, and these, this is all just kind of embedded in that, now maybe, you know, this is one specific example of that that you know, that maybe you know you won't see again, but it all calls into question, um, all the questions that I have about you know, who should be in these centers? Should it be faculty from the cen, from the, because that seems logical, right

TP: Right

BM: To have a discipline specific satellite center seems logical to put in a faculty member

TP: But then that also calls into question what values of writing

BM: Right, exactly

TP: like, who gets to say the writing is, is valued or not

BM: right

TP: um, and what practices should operate in that space

BM: right, right, and for for me, it was important to have a faculty member, because while I had my undergrad in business management, here, um I, I don't remember what happened in my undergad (laughs)

TP: (laughs)

BM: you know, and I had taken many years off in between, so yes I have a piece of paper that says I have an undergraduate degree from this college, what did I do with it, I worked as a server and that's why I went my (laughs)

TP: (laughs)

BM: That's why I did my graduate work, um, but I still think um okay so I'm going to parlay that into a different question, how do you think this experience, then, influences your work, um, with writing centers, and maybe your research potentially

TP: Yeah, um, that's complex, um, too, right. All of these questions are

BM: Sorry, I'm asking the hard ones

TP: It, it's great because I don't get to talk about these all that often, right, um, yeah I mean, there have been days that I have questioned all of my tutoring practices because all of these contextual factors unique to the uh specific situation, um

BM: This experience is why I'm doing this dissertation

TP: (laughs)

BM: I mean, really, that's why I'm doing this

TP: I'm sort of glad that we got to go away from the center

BM: I wanted to, yeah, I wanted to make sure that you had some privacy

TP: I appreciate that

BM: Yeah

TP: Um, thank you

BM: yeah

TP: um, so like, I keep um, Nancy Grimm and Elizabeth uh,

BM: Yeah

TP: um, on my nightstand (laughs)

BM: Mm hmm (laughs)

TP: (laughs) for those days when I just come home and I'm frustrated and I don't know what to do, and I just flip it open and remind myself why I'm doing this

BM: Right

TP: and, uh, can go back

BM: You question life

TP: (laughs)

BM: Yeah

TP: What is writing!?

BM: right, oh yeah

TP: (laughs) maybe there's a point, no, no, no

BM: No. (laughs) yeah, Yes

TP: Um

BM: I can relate

TP: Yeah, and so my research into high stakes um sessions um also so, I'm dealing with feelings of clumsiness and discomfort in high stakes sort of moments, um, the clumsiness is mostly fueled by this

BM: Okay

TP: because we do serve a humongous population that is um English as a Second Language

BM: Right

TP: um, students, and that presents a whole slew of unique challenges that I'm not sure that the writing center world has answered

BM: Yeah

TP: properly, and so part of what I want to come out of this study is new training tools

BM: Mm hmm

TP: and hopefully some that will help create new slots in the tutorer, like

BM: Yeah

TP: toolbelt, specifically from those, from those moments, um so that's sort of where that came from from this experience, uh, but most of my research into writing assessment tools has sort of come out of interactions here, um, and and some from other because I love queer theory and queer rhetorics

BM: Mm hmm

TP: and value bringing and how we value things, right

BM: Yeah

TP: and so, it's, it's come from a lot of different places, but sort of come to a head here

BM: Mm hmm

TP: where, you know, I'm starting to see these values playing out um and how they're including writing in creating context sort of assessment that can sometimes be problematic, um, and how writing centers, like, sit amongst this tornado, right (laughs)

BM: Well, I feel like the college of business is a really excellent example of uh, uh, hmmm I don't have a good metaphor for it, but like living on the edge

TP: Yeah, yeah

BM: I mean, I feel like every other day, it's either teetering off of the edge, or every once in a while, we can pull it back, but I think that this specific site is a really interesting site for um, god, I feel like it's a gerbil, you know what I mean, like, I feel like

TP: it's a gerbil on the wheel

BM: Yeah

TP: yeah, yeah

BM: Or, um, you know, like, is this going to work, let's see

TP: yeah, yeah

BM: Let's see what happens

TP: yeah

BM: Or, you know, how much shit can we throw into one room and shake it up

TP: (laughs)

BM: and see what happens, let's shake it up and see what happens

TP: Oh, yeah

BM: Um, I feel like this is a real conglomeration of um anything that you can throw in, I feel like the college of business is that

TP: Yeah, um, it's, it's been a roller coaster experience dealing with all of this

BM: Mm hmm

TP: and especially, so, okay, I don't know if you want this one or off the record, I don't really care

BM: No, it's totally up to you

TP: Um, so Jane mentioned how she mentioned how she's been working with my teaching and what I should value in, in that sort of pedagogical move

BM: (deep sigh)

TP: Yeah, grain of salt

BM: Mm

TP: grains of salt sometimes less than grains of salt (laughs) because that's one of those moments when I have to inhabit my own field and my own disciplinary values because it's first year writing, and that's what I do, so

BM: Right, so well that's kind of, I don't know if you heard me um but that's kind of why I had mentioned that we couldn't po, one of the things that really um

TP: yeah, I heard that comment

BM: You're poking the bear when you say things like, "Well, they've been through first year writing and they can't learn these things"

TP: Right

BM: You're really poking the bear when you say stuff like that, right

TP: Right

BM: So, then you say, you know, my response is, like you heard, "You can't possibly teach all of these students from all of these different disciplines, everything they are going to write in their career. It's not possible." Just like it's not possible like you just said to possibly teach every genre these kids are going to writing even in this college, so you have a much more concentrated body of students than we do in first year writing and you're saying exactly what I just said, but you're actually blaming us for having no writing skills

TP: (laughs)

BM: Like, I don't see that connection at all, um, I really, I really struggle with that, but I, and I also really struggle and I think I wrote it down actually, she um, talked about remedial writers

TP: Yeah

BM: And, now, I'm, I'm going to have to go back to look at what the context was for that but, so, so how and I ask you this question because this is something that I asked myself everyday, how do, how you, um, how do you juggle that, how do you deal with that

TP: Like, respond to her when she makes those kinds of comments, or

BM: how do you tutor in this, I mean, like, how do you tutor in that situation. I mean, like for me, it felt like, and you know, Ann talks a lot about ethos in one specific way

TP: Right, right

BM: I'm talking about ethos in a kind of like persona, not even a John Dunn persona way

TP: Right

BM: Because John Dunn is very like adamant about having a teacherly persona

TP: Right, right

BM: I feel like it's like a different skin that you have to have in the college of business, it's a much different

TP: Oh yeah

BM: experience than it is

TP: Yeah

BM: in a home center but what I'm not able to do articulate why

TP: why it feels like a different skin

BM: why I have to put on a different skin, and I think we;'ve touched on some of those things

TP: Mm hmm

BM: um, but and maybe that's part of it, maybe it's the value system. What's tricky is that relationships are a huge component to satellite centers

TP: Right, absolutely

BM: The tricker part is that in the college of business what's happening is that faculty of the college of business is building relationships with faculty of the college of business

TP: Right

BM: They're not actually making connections with the writing center

TP: Right, right

BM: and is that dangerous and what are the implications of that

TP: yeah, absolutely because it's, what I mentioned with that WAC/WID debate, right, and satellites needing to be um sort of a reflective mirror, I guess

BM: Mm hmm

TP: even though you sort of hate that reflective mirror that you've interacted with that maybe that's a good metaphor for for

BM: Yeah

TP: for whatever a satellite can can do, um, because when, when those connections are incestuous um (laugh)

BM: that's a good way to put it

TP: (laughs) you're, you're not challenging anything. You're you're reiterating the same sort of values over and over and over again, the same systems of writing over and over again, um, and then expecting growth and results in in ways, right, like

BM: Right

TP: I mean, what's that definition of insanity that cliché

BM: Right

TP: that gets tossed around all the time

BM: Right

TP: Um, and so when you're not making those connections back to a home center that has, uh, a very firm foundation in what writing looks like, rhetorically, what consulting looks like, rhetorically, um you're not introducing those values into that satellite center, and and I think this satellite has sort of closed off that connection

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um

BM: Do you think it's because of the people in it? I know that it was like pulling teeth to have, um to have [off the record] come over to do professional development

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TP: Yes

BM: that was really difficult when I was here, and I would do the best that I could to come back and kind of like, you know

TP: Yeah

BM: but, that wasn't effective either

TP: right, um, I will say that Susan has been going to a lot of those, um, and and she seems a whole lot more receptive, um, to different ideas

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, but that's one of the things that Jane mentioned and not Jane, sorry, Ann mentioned

BM: Mm hmm

TP: when she hired me

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, was just that it's sort of an island

BM: (laughs) here are the wolves

TP: right, right, she said it's sort of an island, it's not just a geographical distance

BM: yeah

TP: between those two centers

BM: that's absolutely right

TP: um, that was actually her words on that, and then she, uh, said that Jane, or that she has had trouble in the past getting consultants to come to

BM: Mm hmm

TP: professional development and that she's hoping that I can relay

BM: Yeah

TP: um, part of what I mentioned about being a spy, right

BM: Right

TP: (laughs) I'm the subversive force or something

BM: right, right, and that's an, that's a very precarious position to be in as well

TP: right

BM: um, as a graduate student

TP: (laughs) right

BM: and I mean, as a person, but especially as a graduate student

TP: and especially since this isn't my GA-ship, I mean this is just an hourly job for me

BM: Oh, it is?

TP: yeah

BM: so you're assistantship is what, then

TP: I've got 50% teaching

BM: Okay

TP: and then I've got a 50% through the McNair scholars, um, right now

BM: so this is in addition to that

TP: yes, so I work three jobs on campus, and then I take three classes, um, so it's

BM: So, there's that, too

TP: There's that too. (laughs)

BM: right, so the reflective mirror piece, I am really fascinated with this

TP: (laughs) it's just an off-the-cuff thing, I haven't really

BM: No, no, no, I think it's really interesting, right, because and, and in combination with the part with kind of challenging the notions, right, and I think this is something I haven't thought about

TP: Mm hmm

BM: until kind of talking to you, what, and okay so I have, part of these questions come from working in the college of business, right

TP: right

BM: the other part is Lerner just put an article in November, I think of 2015, or October, the last, um *Writing Center Journal*

TP: yeah

BM: that came out, talking about the um in, uh, in … this goes out when I let it go to sleep, um, the insularity of writing center scholarship

TP: yeah

BM: so writing center scholars are only, well not only exclusively, but mostly only citing other writing center scholars from the *Writing Center Journal*

TP: yeah

BM: so, um, we're questioning things, but we're only questioning things through our lens

TP: right, right

BM: and so the reflective mirror is really interesting because, um, it seems to me not through what you've said, maybe through what you've said, but through my experience, it seems to me like oh, there I am in that mirror that's the experience that I get from here

TP: Yeah, yeah

BM: um, but at the writing center, it's kind of like, questioning that reflection

TP: Mm hmm

BM: what I think is missing is the link, um, and you mentioned it's not just a physical

TP: right, right

BM: it's really a found, a value system difference

TP: yeah

BM: um, and for me, I've been trying to kind of, like, how do you build that bridge

TP: and so

BM: and if you're not questioning it, then you're kind of dead in the water

TP: right

BM: right, so

TP: absolutely yeah, I, I so I think rhetoric and composition as a field, so oaky, I guess, first I sort of view wiritng center work as, as being at least a part of rhetoric and composition

BM: Yeah

TP: so I think where I'm going will make sense

BM: okay

TP: um, but, I, I feel like rhetoric and composition has been trying to do that for a number of years, right

BM: Mm hmm

TP: like, how do you articulate what we're doing when other fields already have writing practices, right

BM: right

TP: so, we're generating our stuff by studying writing, right, um, but then trying to get that sort of institutional change can always be an issue, um, especially when there's assessment involved, and assessment often means funding

BM: right

TP: so, um

BM: and that's particularlyo complicated in this satellite

TP: Right

BM: because the writing center isn't funding anything

TP: right

BM: from here

TP: yeah

BM: you guys are solely paid for by the college of business

TP: yup

BM: so, you know, when you're pressed against the wall, what practices are you going to use

TP: right, and that, yeah I mean, part of that is because the college of business has its own accreditation body, right, like

BM: right

TP: um, that's separate from EMU's and that presents its own sort of administrative challenges, um, and I think our writing center needs to, any satellite or home, needs to sort of build that relationship, where we're being able to articulate what our own values are

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, and be able to put that forth as an agenda in a way that other administrators know what we're talking about

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um

BM: and value

TP: right, right and I, I don't know that we're really good at making good assessment models and assessment practices

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, so I'm not sure whether or not we're able to do that work of articulating, um

BM: I think that's the crux of it

TP: (laughs) right, right

BM: you know, thinking, yeah

TP: and at least on that one, because I think this is a multi-faceted issue

BM: yeah

TP: in the college of business satellite, but at least on that one, we're talking about administrators in the writing center, the assessment work, really the only interaction, right

BM: right

TP: and the only thing that this one seems to care about is

BM: numbers

TP: is yeah, volume

BM: yeah

TP: um, Ann did recently try to push us to include more narrative elements

BM: Mm hmm

TP: into our assessment protocols, but that's to the writing center

BM: right

TP: we don't include that narrative when we send it to

BM: the dean

TP: yeah, so that, that creates sort of an interesting, sort of thing

BM: I have way more questions than when I started

TP: (laughs)

BM: I mean, I think that's good, I think that's good, but it's also kind of terrifying

TP: One of the things, so I mentioned our working with WCOnline with ECU and I don't think it's a perfect model, but we used it in a lot more interesting ways, I think, because it was largely an appointment based system

BM: Mm hmm

TP: everyone had access to WCOnline

BM: So, was it synchronous

TP: Yeah, and it was face-to-face, too, you had to make appointments face-to-face ahead of time to be seen

BM: Oh, oh, I see, I see, so you're not doing the tutoring online

TP: Yeah, we use, yeah, yeah

BM: You're just using it for appointments

TP: Yeah, um, the software we used is called WCOnline

BM: Gotcha

TP: You were here before the shift

BM: Yes

TP: Okay, gotcha

BM: I was

TP: There's a software called WCOnline

BM: Okay

TP: and it's what we use

BM: Okay

TP: and what you see when you look at it is like grids based on whatever time increment you set

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, you, students make an account and then they log on and they can click on it

BM: Mm hmm

TP: and it would pull up as booking the appointment, your concerns, all that stuff

BM: Okay

TP: What classes you were in, instructor, if you wanted the instructor to be emailed

BM: Oh, okay

TP: we would pull that up, we would see the results, and then when we would send it back, we would include a summary of the session, what we worked on, what we did, and then a plan of action for them in the future

BM: Okay

TP: uh, we could include references and like online links and that

BM: Cool

TP: if instructors needed proof, we just clicked a little box that said, "email instructor," and since they've included the email, sent it out cc'd. Really great. Um, what is also does, though, the database for the administrators, they can pull out all that information, right? They've got

contextual narratives from these two things, they've got classes, what project, like all this stuff that they can pull from

BM: Mm hmm

TP: Um, and I don't know that we can do that our current operations because we don't use any of that here, students don't even make their own accounts, and don't know their own passwords

BM: right

TP: with WCOnline because we make them for them

BM: oohh

TP: so that we can document the faces

BM: ah

TP: yeah. All of their passwords are UWC777

BM: ah

TP: but, none of them know that (laughs)

BM: okay (laughs)

TP: and since they're all the same, it's not like we can pass that one because someone could use like, hack into somebody else's

BM: right, right

TP: it's just a big bad mess

BM: So, then you fill that out for them, they don't fill it out for themselves

TP: right

BM: and, by "you" I mean Jane and Susan and then they

TP: and, I think that's practiced throughout

BM: yeah

TP: the entire system for this

BM: yeah

TP: it's not just a satellite like thing

BM: right

TP: Um, so I think I might try working implementing something sort of similar

BM: yeah, that's, so what happens then is that, it's all through their lens

TP: mm hmm

BM: yeah

TP: yeah, and it sort of limits then the data you can pull

BM: right

TP: um, and what, what is visible

BM: well that would be interesting, too, to have some like really solid, uh comparisons to see the narrative that comes from the college of business with

TP: the narratives that come from, yeah, I, I'd really love to get my hands on those, but we'll see

BM: Yeah, yeah, no kidding

TP: um, yeah (laughs)

BM: Um, okay, so I think, I mean, even though I didn't explicitly ask

TP: Mm hmm

BM: um, and because I don't really want to take up all of your time

TP: oh, it's fine

BM: um

TP: as long as you're free, I'm free

BM: yeah

TP: because

BM: I mean, the only thing I'm doing is going to the Corner and having a drink after, so

TP: I have class at 6:30

BM: I just want to make sure

TP: but other than that, I'm good

BM: Okay, that's for, okay

TP: (laughs)

BM: Sorry, let me just really quick, and then we just have to be out of here by, um, this is like the rudest ever, I'm so sorry

TP: Oh please, it's fine. I, again, queer theory stuff, I'm usually like, "Just fuck the norm whatever it is."

BM: yeah (laughs)

TP: (laughs)

BM: break out of the, yeah, I mean, um, okay, then I've got, I'm teaching a winter class, too, a three week winter class at Virginia Tech, and so now you know, I open my email and there's just this, you know, you want to be like, "Oh god no! No, don't ask me questions, but ask me questions, but don't ask me questions."

TP: (laughs)

BM: Okay, um, so, and this is a good question for you, what are some of the typical genres of writing that students need help with when they seek writing support at the college of business

TP: Jane and Susan's 20 page reports

BM: right, that's really, right

TP: right (laughs)

BM: I mean, um

TP: I don't see much else, I mean I see resume and graduate school materials, um which are usually like, Oh my God, they make my day, because it's not something that directly interacts with one of their classes, um, and it gives me a moment to kind of take a breath and be like, something different

BM: right, it's really interesting because it seems like it's um gotten even more concentrated since I've left

TP: Yeah

BM: I mean, there were those kinds of things especially, you know, we worked a lot with Susan *before* she worked in the center

TP: right

BM: I worked a lot with her, um, because she was a receptive faculty, and that was really hard to come by

TP: yeah

BM: when we first started here. Um, and so we valued that and um then worked really hard to be like, you know, um, don't require your students to come to the writing center, because they'll all come at 3:00 when their assignment's due at 4, um but also they don't want to be there if you require them to, um, so it's just interesting um to hear the state of the union address

TP: (laughs) right

BM: Um, we've already talked about this, but would you like to add anything on how do you find the practice of tutoring changes based on discipline

TP: yeah, um, I guess there's sort of an operational assumption that we see in the satellite that the instructors hold all authority and value in writing, um, and that the instructors shouldn't have to necessarily engage in interrogating what those values are or what they mean

BM: Yeah

TP: they assign something and our job is to regurgitate and and make their papers meet whatever prompts are turned in, um, in in this particular scenario I think

BM: Right, so that's really like, I, I you saying that now really kind of cements the pre-North comment that you made earlier

TP: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

BM: like this is really kind of the back side of writing center work

TP: right, right

BM: Um

TP: well and, so overhearing a little bit of what you and Jane talked about, um, and even my own tutoring, because she brought in a little bit about how I tutor differently based on the two instructors

BM: Mm hmm, right

TP: based on the two of them

BM: right

TP: um, so much tutoring for at least 1 of the instructors that works in that center ends up becoming drill and kill for their, especially for citations

BM: Mm hmm

TP: and especially for their works cited page, like that's what she expects

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, from her own consulting work, and from my consulting work in turn

BM: Mm hmm

TP: Um, and, and sometimes with grammar, and especially with that whole concision business

BM: right

TP: um, which

BM: right

TP: I mean, I'm, I'm assigning the paramedic method for my students, so [cannot understand], so it's not like I want long, flowery

BM: right

TP: leftward reaching sentences

BM: right

TP: but, but if you need to say something in five words, you can say it in five words

BM: right

TP: You don't need to find like

BM: it's not the end of the day

TP: (laughs)

BM: or, the end of the world, the end of the day (laughs)

TP: it's okay

BM: sorry (laughs)

TP: we're getting to the end of the day, so

BM: I know, I was just, it's the end of the day for me, um, so yeah, man, it's just really interesting

TP: (laughs) I'm sorry, I feel like I'm just bashing

BM: No, no, no, no, no I don't, I really don't, I mean, I really don't want you to think that

TP: yeah

BM: and part of me really kind of debated even you know, talking to you

TP: (laughs)

BM: in the first place because um, you know, Jane was like you might really want to talk to him, he's really interested in writing center work

TP: yeah, yeah

BM: and then I when I talked to Ann, she was like, "totally" because some of these issues were brought up

TP: okay

BM: when I talked to Ann

TP: right

BM: and she's like, "you have to talk to Thomas"

TP: (laughs)

BM: "You have to talk to Thomas"

TP: I'm really glad that she likes me because when I first met her, I thought she hated me

BM: Oh my gosh, that's like everybody's experience

TP: right, right

BM: every, yeah

TP: and then I found out I missed the deadline for the GAships, which is why I ended up in this sort of precarious

BM: Yeah

TP: half here, half there

BM: yeah

TP: um, and she went door to door in the department trying to find me funding, um, and she found the McNair fellows GAship and was like, "You. Apply. Right. Now."

BM: Yeah

TP: She's already said, "Yes," just submit

BM: She's like, yeah, she's really, really good at that

TP: yeah

BM: But, so some of these um it, issues uh and questions and predicaments were coming up when I interviewed her this morning

TP: Right

BM: but also, again, my work comes from this, and I think that this satellite really pushes against everything that I know about writing center work

TP: (laughs) right

BM: and I think, in, in good ways, but I also think in a lot of bad ways

TP: Right, right

BM: um, and so I think talking to you just kind of gives me, like I said earlier, a voice to kind of articulate what's happening

TP: right

BM: um, you know, I mean, like, okay, fine, my dissertation is about what happens in these satellite

TP: (laughs)

BM: every time it goes to sleep, it cuts out the recording, um, you know, what happens um in these centers, I think can really contribute to writing in the disciplines. I also think that um some of the work that I'm thinking about doing with other interviews and other, I'm calling them writing support spaces, because there are some like, um in law schools that have set up, uh, writing support centers that are not affiliated with writing center work

TP: right

BM: so, why? Why that division, why not go to the writing center? What do you offer that the writing center doesn't

TP: right

BM: I'm really interested because I think that writing in the discipline, that kind of work can also inform our work and kind of like, you know, expand the work that Lerner says is too inclusive

TP: right, well, and that's part of like, that's so part of it's funding, but part of the reason why so many writing center directors are also the writing across the curriculum specialist, right

BM: yeah

TP: and, if those, those hats usually get worn

BM: right

TP: dually, um, it's sort of a shame that they don't necessarily interact as fields

BM: Right

TP: uh, so

BM: right, right

TP: uh

BM: I mean there is a lot of crossover when you, when you, there's a lot of connection

TP: yeah

BM: like explicit connection being made between WAC and writing center work

TP: oh, yeah

BM: Um, but the one thing that I've seen is like WAC rarely ever sustainable

TP: yeah

BM: writing center work is

TP: right

BM: um, and so then like too, what can we, what could we learn from that, you know, maybe we aren't able to accommodate our students the best we can in specific disciplines

TP: right

BM: you know, um, and so that's where I think the good side of it comes from

TP: okay, but, so I think part, at ECU at least, it was really nice because WAC had funding

BM: Mm hmm

TP: for um itself to offer $500 for any faculty member that attended the workshops

BM: Oh wow

TP: so, you had to attend all of them

BM: mm

TP: and submit like work what you've done

BM: oh

TP: and you received a $500 check, um really great, but like one of the things that is sort of showcased is like how difficult it is to

BM: right

TP: consider their writing practices, um

BM: or want to

TP: Or, yeah

BM: teach writing

TP: right, right, yeah, because both of those are very real, how do you convince a chemistry teacher who's never, like, or even that lab reports have elements of writing in them, right

BM: right

TP: like, like, all these genres of writing that don't necessarily even get considered

BM: right

TP: um, yeah (laughs), but it's so easy to also view writing centers as remedial and I don't necessarily think that those two issues are um mutually exclusive

BM: right

TP: to each other

BM: yeah

TP: um, I think the, the lack of impetus for faculty members to interrogate views of writing within their fields is just the same sort of like thought process that goes into, "just go to the writing center to fix yourself"

BM: right

TP: right

BM: right

TP: um, so yeah (laughs)

BM: right, so that's why I think that this is a really good place to start to poke at those questions

TP: yeah

BM: but I also think it's a really, um, kind of, terrible place to research because you know, you're like, "Okay, well we spent how many years" I mean, 30+, almost 40 saying like, you know, "This is not the model that we want of a writing center"

TP: right

BM: and there here it is 2016, this model still exists

TP: yeah

BM: I mean, Stephen North would like shit himself if he came here

TP: (laughs)

BM: to like see this, I mean, don't you think?

TP: Yeah, yeah

BM: yeah, because it's really not what we stand for

TP: right

BM: so, what, what are doing then, are we helping students or are we a disservice

TP: I, I, so I do think that we're helping. I don't want to paint the idea that we're not, I don't know that we're helping to the degree that we could

BM: yeah

TP: um, and I don't know that we're helping to create this sort of administrative and cultural changes that we

BM: that's necessary

TP: right, um

BM: so there's a lot of work to be done. There's a lot of opportunity here

TP: right, yes, yes, uh and the other thing, I guess to, uh, I totally lost it, I just lost it

BM: sorry

TP: oh, that's it, okay, um, the, it's weird because we, or I guess they, use the rhetoric of the writing center scholarship, like Jane has utilized the Stephen North line, I don't know how many times, that we make better writers not better papers, right, and it's so weird that these sort of like cliché mantras, um, that sort of half articulate the work can be used as defensives to sort of not interrogate their own tutoring practices

BM: right

TP: um, yeah

BM: right

TP: if that made sense (laughs)

BM: it made total sense which is exactly why I, um, wanted to kind of push back a little bit on that, with Jane's interview

TP: (laughs)

BM: to say, "so, are you doing that though?"

TP: right, right

BM: like, "are you making this person who came in," so, perfect example of the college of business, I came in today at 1, um, to talk to Jane, and I told her, "Look, I'm bringing work with me, I know how this works," (laughs) and she's like, "Oh no it's the start of the semester, it's not going to be, don't worry about it"

TP: she had three people

BM: yeah, so, of course at 1:00, we have somebody come in, um, another person come in to wait, because it was for something completely different, but then the third person came in and she's like, "How many people, like how long do I have to wait," and Jane's like, "just come back after her, who's waiting after the person I'm helping." Well, um, that person says, "Oh, well, but that's due at 2:30 and I can't really wait, and then the other girl, so somehow we figured out that the person Jane was helping and the person that just walked in were working on the same assignment

TP: okay

BM: so, now we're sitting at the same table

TP: Mm hmm

BM: and, and Jane is reading this person's, *reading* this person's draft and saying, "this isn't right, this isn't right, this isn't right," and this person, maybe they're, maybe there's something happening between the two students talking about genre specific elements or conventions

TP: right

BM: but, this is a perfect example of how you are not helping the writer become a better writer

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TP: right, and I think that's part of why the frequent fliers

BM: yeah

TP: exist, um

BM: right

TP: I think part of it is the, the ESL / ELL students that we have, um not necessarily being competent in their writing skills

BM: yeah

TP: um, but then again, that just that another questions raises, well what are we doing to build that confidence

BM: right

TP: as writers, um, and what are we doing to help the instructors of those students do the same

BM: right

TP: um, and, and be somewhat, socially responsive to that

BM: do you think you have answers to those questions

TP: not necessarily

BM: what do, what are we doing

TP: um, so what is the college of business doing

BM: Mm hmm

TP: very little

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, probably nothing, um, because there is such the drill and kill, uh, need and so the questions that get asked by the other consultants that work in the space are usually, but they come in asking for help with grammar, so what, why, it would be bad customer service of me to not give them the assistance that they ask for

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, and to experience, and I mean, to some extent, we all experience that as consultants, right, when someone says they want help with grammar, there's a part of you that like goes, "Oh, maybe I should help them a little bit with that."

BM: Mm hmm

TP: I think most of us know a little bit not to like spend the whole session on what

BM: right

TP: a coordinating-conjunction is

BM: Right

TP: um, but pointed out repeated mistakes and that

BM: but I, so this is one of the things that I, I think has been really important for me, when students come in asking for grammar, for me, 9 times out of 10, of course they want grammar help, everybody wants grammar help

TP: right

BM: but, that's not *really* what they're looking for

TP: I know

BM: so, that's the difference between, okay, so I really don't, I, I'm probably not, I'm making a dichotomy that I don't want to make, but this is the difference between us and them is that we recognize that grammar help doesn't always mean grammar help

TP: right

BM: they see people asking for grammar help as well, if I don't meet their needs then I'm not doing good customer service

TP: right, well and so, students don't have the sort of meta-cognitive language, or like

BM: right

TP: or, like, meta-language of writing so grammar is often the only word that they know

BM: especially ESL students

TP: right, to be able to talk about my writing needs help

BM: right

TP: I don't know how to clarify my ideas in my paper

BM: so, how do you feel about Jane's, "I feel uncomfortable working on the student about her thesis because I don't touch content"

TP: Yes, so bad. It's so bad

BM: Like, she is afraid of that

TP: right

BM: and I think the level is because she had mentioned it earlier in the interview, like we don't' want to tell the student what exactly to write, and the form a form, right, I mean that is, that is a universal language

TP: right

BM: whether I tell you to put the comma there or not, nobody's plagiarizing

TP: right

BM: but when we start to cross the borders into content and I tell you to writing something, because we are not asking, we are telling

TP: right, right (laughs)

BM: and so when I tell you to write something, then those are my words, that is changing the student's identity, as she said

TP: right, right, but if those become questions and invite conversation, "so what did you mean when you said this in the thesis, because I don't feel like it's necessarily as clear as it could be"

BM: right

TP: and it allows them to say, "Oh, well, I was trying to say …" "Oh, well then you should write that"

BM: right

TP: um, and that's like just an easy two-step process

BM: right

TP: to like overcome some of that

BM: But there's so, it, I sensed, I can't be sure, I sensed that there was so much fear there

TP: oh yeah

BM: and I wonder where that comes from

TP: I don't know, I, I part of it might be the fact that she is so spurned of students plagiarizing all the time

BM: yeah, right

TP: and so she doesn't want to be the source of that plagiarism

BM: yeah

TP: part of it might be that she feels that she has to answer to the college of business and that relationship might be tenuous

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, especially since they control all of our funding, right

BM: right

TP: with only one source of funding, that becomes very difficulty

BM: Mm hmm

TP: and, and you become sort of co-dependent on these sorts of dynamics, right

BM: right

TP: (laughs) wow that showed me years of therapy (laughs) because co-dependent is like a (laughs)

BM: yeah, yeah, yeah, I know. Man, I mean therapy / having a flask with you whenever (laughs)

TP: right, right whichever is more convenient

BM: right, um, so I think plagiarism is maybe another one of those grammar, like, "I'm asking for grammar help" things

TP: right

BM: Plagiarism is kind of one those catch alls, and like I don't, you know, I don't want to contribute to that, but is it, you know, um, ignorance has such a negative connotation

TP: right, right

BM: I don't mean for it to come off that way but a grammar, asking for grammar help sometimes I think is just, stems from ignorance, I wonder if the plagiarism thing also stems from ignorance

TP: I think so too, um, well, I think it does, rather, because you didn't necessarily say that in statement form, so (laughs)

BM: (laughs) question mark?

TP: so I think it does, right, right, I think that relationship would be plausible to say

BM: Mm hmm

TP: I, um, that it's some of it's just not having the same vocabulary as somebody who studies writing

BM: right

TP: somewhat professionally, right

BM: right

TP: um, and I, I am, um, so students who ask for grammar help don't necessarily know in-depth what the word recursive process

BM: right

TP: refers to, they don't' necessarily, I don't know, they might not be able to, say, clarify ideas

BM: right

TP: yeah, um, and likewise

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BM: "can you make sure I'm speaking to this assignment prompt"

TP: right, right

BM: like "can you help me" you know

TP: "can you make sure that the multiple audiences I need to refer to here are adequate"

BM: (laughs) right, and "I've contextualized this assignment properly"

TP: (laughs) um and I think the fear of plagiarism can be the same thing

BM: Mm hmm

TP: um, especially on the part of administrators who are so cautious about plagiarism because it makes sense because accreditation might be at stake

BM: Mm hmm

TP: if somebody were to suggest that um our academic aren't rigorous because of

BM: right

TP: the potential help that we had, then that would look bad for the university, um what I don't think that they understand though is the social process of writing, right, like that

BM: right

TP: I mean, what do you, are you like sitting in everybody's dorm room making sure they're not talking to their roommate about their papers

BM: right

TP: writing is a social process, and like even, when we were talking about my research interests and how they've come there

BM: Mm hmm

TP: I mentioned that they've sort of spawned out of this, but that they came from all these different place

BM: right

TP: and I can't even name all of them

BM: right

TP: but, they've all created this person that writes and researches

BM: right, and

TP: and students do the same thing

BM: right

TP: I don't think they can name every place that's influenced how they write, it's just, I don't know, accepted

BM: right

TP: because it's invisible and that because this is tangible, visible

BM: right

TP: and university funded, there's all this sort of speculation that isn't necessarily grounded in anything, um

BM: Right, and so like, this conversation, you know, I mean, it's necessary for me *not* to just sit home and write

TP: right, right

BM: in isolation, it's necessary to contribute to the field, hopefully

TP: (laughs)

BM: eventually, to go out and talk to people

TP: yeah

BM: and um, find these narratives, these like really hidden

TP: (laughs)_

BM: nuanced narratives, um, so you know, this isn't plagiarizing

TP: right

BM: and this is a social interaction that is necessary

TP: right

BM: um, I think that, um, because business writing is seen and valued potentially in a different way, I think that, I , you know honestly, like, like I said, I think I'm just so, um, uh disenchanted almost

TP: (laughs)

BM: almost, like, cause, having separation from it, you can think, right, having separation from anything, you can always glamorize that experience

TP: right, right

BM: um, I think being right back in it kind of reminds me that it was not glamorous

TP: well, and that's

BM: and why I had all these questions to begin with, so that's good in some respect, but in some respect

TP: You've got your dissertation, though, and hopefully your PhD so

BM: We'll see

TP: (laughs)

BM: now I'm kind of like, "AAHHHHHHHHHH"

TP: (laughs)

BM: you know that mean that they like throw up the papers

TP: oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

BM: you know, fuck this shit

TP: yeah

BM: that's how I feel right now

TP: so, Nikki might be a decent person to talk to. She was Jackie's, like, mentee for like a really long time, Jackie McKinney, um

BM: Oh, okay

TP: um, and Dr. Caswell was my former writing center director

BM: Okay, Nikki Caswell, is that

TP: yeah, Nikki Caswell, um, she might have "Nicole" written on her page, but she goes by Nikki

BM: Okay, N I K K I or

TP: Yeah, N I K K I, um, she's super chill, if you love Disney, then you two will get along

BM: Ohhhhh

TP: she does the Disney run every year

BM: cool

TP: and she's got season, annual passes that she goes down three or four times a year

BM: Wow, that's really cool

TP: yeah, she's cool, I love her. Um, so she might be a decent person to talk to because she ran that seminar

BM: Okay

TP: She's got, she's work at Kent State, that's where she did her PhD, uh, and she might be able to refer you to Jackie, too

BM: Okay

TP: I don't know Jackie well enough to be like, "Yeah, just email her and just mention my name"

BM: yeah

TP: you'll get a good seat, right

BM: yeah

TP: um

BM: yeah

TP: um, but she deals with satellites, too, we've got one, two satellites, um one is connected to the first year writing program and serves first year writers only

BM: interesting

TP: um, and one is on our science complex, or not complex, cause the two biggest fields are education and nursing

BM: right

TP: so we've got a medical school, so we have Allied Health writing center, um, but we're sort of lucky that the one that's in sort of high demand there has um I can't remember the order, but she has degrees in both

BM: okay

TP: so, she's a nurse, I think she was a nurse first, and then came back and got her master's in written communication or something

BM: okay

TP: but so she gets both fields, and she can like intersect those immediately and she gets it

BM: yeah

TP: um, and so we've been super fortunate to have that anyway

BM: So, who else might you recommend that I interview

TP: Yeah, um, so Will, too

BM: Okay

TP: yeah, he'd have some interesting thoughts probably, Michael Flinchbaugh did his thesis work, but that was years ago, so I don't know if he would respond

BM: Okay

TP: but you could always try because he wrote a thesis about that

BM: okay

TP: Um, and then, let's see who else, do I know, Trixie Smith, but I don't know, I would have to do some research before I did that

BM: Okay

TP: Um

BM: I will put a question mark by her

TP: she's MSU's writing center director, um

BM: oh, is she

TP: mm hmm she's super awesome, uh, she's bad ass

BM: Huh okay

TP: um, Harry Denny, maybe, but

BM: Oh yeah, I actually, cause he's in Maine, right

TP: is he in Maine now, he was in Queens, but he

BM: uh, I feel like, maybe I'm confusing him

TP: at St. John's university

BM: I think I might be confusing him

TP: but I think he might have moved somewhere recently, so

BM: okay

TP: Um, I can't keep track of people very well

BM: Well, that for sure, especially Nikki, she might be a really good

TP: yeah

BM: and she can then you know, eventually

TP: and she's been in the field for a very long time, so she'd be a much better resource for people

BM: yeah, I kind of look for beyond. It's been such a great conversation, Thomas

TP: (laughs)

BM: I'm so glad that

TP: of course

BM: I mean, Ann knows me really well, and um

TP: right

BM: I just owe everything to Ann, so you know

TP: yeah

BM: I respect her so much

TP: I love her

BM; um, but it's been, it's really great to see, um, talk to somebody who is interested in writing center work, right

TP: yeah

BM: because you could totally be somebody that they put here that you know, you don't have any stake in writing center work, um, there were a number of people that worked in the writing center that were those people

TP: (laughs)

BM: but it's really nice to see somebody who's really in tune with the writing center work

TP: Mm hmm (laughs)

BM: what's really like happening and can have a really great conversation about it, so

TP: well thank you

BM: I really appreciate it and you know, I'd love to kind of like keep in touch with you

TP: yeah

BM: and see what happens

TP: absolutely

BM: and you know

TP: Feel free to send me emails at any time

BM: Okay

TP: I can give you my email if you'd like

BM: yeah definitely

TP: yeah, uh, it's t passwat, so just like my name but cuts off at the t

BM: passwat, okay

TP: and then @emich.edu

BM: and then my email is on the consent form

TP: okay gotcha

BM: um, perfect. Okay, I'm going to stop the tape

TP: Okay, yeah

BM: um

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BM: Okay, so just tell me who you are (laughs) and um, what you do

BS: Okay. Alright

BM: The end

BS: Volume wise, is this okay

BM: Oh yeah

BS: Like I don't know how sensitive that thing is. Okay

BM: I'll hear you

BS: So, I'm Beth Sabo. I feel really weird introducing myself

BM: I know. Hi Beth, it's nice to meet you

BS: Hi, Becky. Becky, it is, right?

BM: Yes, yes. With a "B" (laughs) Little Caesars asks me if it's with an "N", and I'm like, "No, Becky."

BS: And you're like, "actually it's with a 'Q'. It's a silent 'Q'"

BM: B E Q U E Y

BS: Wow

BM: "I'm like, no … 'B' as in … 'Becky'" (laughs) Anyway

BS: Anyway, so I guess my official title is that I'm satellite coordinator

BM: Okay

BS: For the science success center, biology department, and psychology departments

BM: So, what is the science success center

BS: Excellent question, Becky, with an "N" (laughs)

BM: (laughs) thank you, Beth, with a "Q"

BS: You're going to love transcribing this

BM: I know, last time I did an interview with you, I like giggled through the entire time (laughs) that I was transcribing

BS: Well, luckily that hasn't happened yet. Oh boy, anyway, um, okay, sorry, oh you said, so "what is the science success center"?

BM: Yeah

BS: Um, it's kind of easier if I explain what the science success center is if I actually start by explaining how it's different from the other two, is that okay?

BM: Okay, sure, yeah, yeah

BS: So, the biology department, years ago, had um writing support set up just for their writing intensive courses

BM: Okay

BS: Um, and that was it. So the writing support in the biology department was *only* for students in the writing intensive classes.

BM: And was that through Biology

BS: It was a collaboration between the biology department faculty who had gone to WAC

BM: Okay

BS: So, WAC fellows and then the UWC

BM: Oh, okay

BS: So, it was a collaboration that came out of WAC

BM: Okay

BS: Um, so that's what we began with over in the science complex

BM: Okay

BS: Now, um, then a couple years after that, the psychology dept got interested in having something similar

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Um, so they kind of got on board and starting having something pretty similar to what biology was doing and then it was like a year after that when we finally got the science success center up off the group with the difference, with that being that it is open to *all* students in *any* of the sicences

BM: Okay

BS: It's not limited in any sort of way, like

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BM: Okay

BS: It's not just people in bio, or not just people in writing intensive

BM: Okay

BS: Um, so it has a lot farther reach

BM: Okay

BS: In terms of disciplines, but also in terms of levels of students we work with

BM: Okay. So, can you uh, so biology started first

BS: Mm hmm

BM: Do you know what year? Do you remember?

BS: Biology actually existed even before I came here

BM: Okay

BS: So

BM: But, it wasn't happening when we were here, though. Was it? Or was it?

BS: It was. There were a few odd years where, so I've been here, this is my seventh year here

BM: Okay

BS: So, I would guess, I don't know the year for sure, but I would say, I think the biology collaboration was maybe a year or so old when I come around, so it's probably been about 8 years or so

BM: Okay

BS: That's been happening

BM: Okay

BS: Um, sorry, I forgot what your second question was, or the second part of your question was

BM: Um, I don't think

BS: I swear there was

BM: I think I said, "Do you know what year it was"

BS: Right

BM: And it wasn't around when we

BS: Oh, that that was the second one

BM: Yeah

BS: Okay, so yeah, so I would guess that bio is about 8 years old, um, it there was kind of this weird lag time where for a while when it first started, it was a really close collaboration between you know, the WAC fellows and the UWC and then it for a while, it just kind of, it existed

BM: Mm hmm

BS: but we really had no hand in it

BM: Mm

BS: As the UWC

BM: Okay

BS: and then, when I took over the position, that's when it kind of came back under the UWC's

BM: Okay

BS: Realm

BM: Okay. I think I might ask you questions about that

BS: Okay

BM: time period for, if, if you know

BS: Yeah, I don't a ton about, I mean, I know a very little, but

BM: Yeah, so maybe, okay, so the three sections here are actually my three research questions

BS: Okay

BM: so, first I'm interested to know what the exigences are

BS: Mm hmm

BM: for uh developing writing center satellites

BS: Okay

BM: So, maybe, um, you know, psychology and the science success center might be um like, uh, continuation of biology but it would be interesting to know why you, or not necessarily you, but you at that time

BS: Right

BM: When it kind of already existed, like what did you add to that as well

BS: Right. Um

BM: So

BS: okay

BM: why was, oh so, anyway, the second is about tutoring practices in writing center satellites

BS: Mm hmm

BM: and this is something, this is a section that I am particularly interested in talking with you about

BS: Yeah

BM: Because you're really, um, you know what you're doing in the regular, I'm calling them "home" centers

BS: Sure

BM: And, there's a lot of kind of

BS: Yeah

BM: Anyway, um, in the home center versus the tutoring practices that you are doing in the sciences

BS: Mm hmm

BM<: And then um, you'll probably be able to speak to this one, too, the institutional structures

BS: Yeah

BM: And, like kind of the of the complications with administration

BS: (laughs)

BM: and institution and that kind of thing

BS: Yeah

BM: So, I'll start at the top

BS: Yeah

BM: And then, I'm going to ask you a hundred questions in between

BS: That's

BM: but this kind of gives us a guide

BS: That's fin

BM: So

BS: and if at any point, you feel like I'm getting off track or jumping ahead to something

BM: No, no, no, no

BS: just tell me "hey, we'll come back to that" or something

BM: probably, usually what we've done is that we've answered questions before we've gotten to them

BS: Yeah

BM: which is fine

BS: because I can see how these kind of relate

BM: oh yeah, they all kind of like mesh, um, so if I ask a question, you can say, "I feel like I've already answered that"

BS: Mm hmm

BM: (laughs)

BS: No comment

BM: (laughs) I plead the 5th

BS: (laughs)

BM: Okay, so why was the writing center satellite(s) um created? And, how would you, and this is a really unique question slash, um, issue slash, not issue with you in the sense that you represent like, okay so first, you represented biology

BS: Mm hmm

BM: then you represented biology and psychology. Now you're representing the sciences.

BS: Right

BM: So, it's really kind of layered with you. So I'm going to let you pull that apart

BS: (laughs) right.

BM: (laughs)

BS: (laughs) Alright, so, again, I'm just going to go kind of chronologically

BM: Okay

BS: in answering this, because I think that's the most straight forward. So, when we say "why was the writing center, um, in biology," to start there, "why was that created"? Um, as you know from going to WAC with Ann, um, you know, people come up with all sorts of ideas for like workshops or new assignments that they want to do, right. So, in whatever particular year it was, I'm going to guess again about 8 years ago or so

BM: Do you want to say approximately 2007, 2008

BS: Sure.

BM: Okay

BS: Sure, um, uh there were two faculty from biology who both, I should back up, sorry.

BM: (laughs)

BS: In biology, there are two different writing intensive courses

BM: Okay

BS: Um, which is a little different because I know other departments only have one usually that all majors in that department take

BM: Right

BS: where in biology, they actually have two

BM: Okay

BS: because there are two, kind of two different tracks within biology

BM: Oh, okay

BS: So, biology majors only have to take one of the two

BM: Okay

BS: It's up to them depending on which track they they picture themselves being in

BM: Okay

BS: Um, so these two faculty, um, from bio, one teaching each, you know, of those courses, um, they took WAC together that year

BM: Okay

BS: And, they came up with the idea of designing the curriculum for the two classes so that they kind of were doing the same types of assignments

BM: Okay

BS: Um, you know, and aligning them, which is a great idea, um, and then wanting the support of the writing center to offer, um, these writing workshops outside of class time

BM: Okay

BS: because these are still labs, like they need their class time to actually go out into the field and you know collect e-coli samples

BM: Mm hmm

BS: You know, or be in the lab, you know, centrifuging something. Um

BM: (laughs)

BS: (laughs)

BM: ey

BS: and so, they they aligned their curriculums across the two courses and then they asked for the writing center to kind of have these these uh tailored workshops that would fit with that aligned curriculum, um, and then wouldn't take up their class time

BM: Okay

BS: Okay

BM: And that's what at the time, that's what writing support looked like

BS: Right

BM: to them, was writing workshops

BS: Right

BM: Okay

BS: Yes

BM: Customized

BS: Customized

BM: meaning

BS: so, at that, at that point, they had only five workshops

BM: Okay

BS: and those five workshops, yes, they're tailored directly to the writing assignments that students are doing at that point in the semester, um, those faculty members, the WAC people I was talking about, they are the people who originally created those PowerPoints for those workshops

BM: The biology

BS: Yes

BM: Okay

BS: So, they wrote the assignments, they wrote the workshops

BM: Okay

BS: They kind of, they started it all

BM: So, they wrote it but they wanted you as, or they wanted the

BS: the writing center

BM: writing center to deliver them

BS: Yes

BM: just to have kind of a different voice

BS: Yes

BM: Or maybe a different ethos

BS: Mm hmm. And, how those have been staffed has really kind of changed

BM: Mm hmm

BS: from year to year

BM: Mm hmm

BS: So, there have been some years where, um, like before I had this position, um, Nicole Guinot Varty, actually, was the bio person

BM: Oh, okay. Okay

BS: Um, and so, you know, she would do basically what I do over there. Um, the bio department also funds two of their Gas, two of their full-time Gas also to do this

BM: And, are you, I'll, I guess I'll get to that

BS: So, technically, they have, they have two full-time GAs, that's 20 hours each, that's 40 hours, and then they have me and my 10 hours, so theoretically, just for these two writing intensive classes, they have like 50 hours a week of like dedicated writing support

BM: For like, approximately how many students?

BS: Um, it varies by semester, I would say, I'm doing math, sorry

BM: (laughs)

BS: In your transcriptions, it's going to say, "Long awkward pause"

BM: "smell the smoke burning"

BS: Let's see, hold on, okay, and I would say probably on average in a semester, at least starting out, I'd say probably like 100 students.

BM: Okay

BS: Um, one of the classes has an incredibly high drop-out rate

BM: Okay

BS: And, so the number of students who actually finish that course

BM: Mm hmm

BS: is significantly lower

BM: How much less

BS: um, I can't speak to specific numbers of how many drop out

BM: yeah

BS: and I don't know if that's why they wanted this writing support

BM: Mm hm mm

BS: you know, if, if

BM: Yeah

BS: kind of help get students actually through this

BM: Right

BS: sorry, is it okay that I wrote on this by the way

BM: Oh yeah, yeah

BS: Okay. I didn't even realize that I just wrote on the first thing that was in front of me

BM: No, it's just, if you want, you can just, burn it, eat it

BS: frame it.

BM: Yeah (laughs)

BS: Um, so yeah. So that's, that's what it kind of began as was

BM: okay

BS: these workshops and, I forgot my question here, why was it, okay, so why was it created. Alright, so then, few years later, again in WAC

BM: Mm hmm

BS: That year we had some psychology people who were in WAC that year, and they heard about what biology was doing

BM: Mmm

BS: and they were like, "This is a brilliant idea. We want this too"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Um, so, I mean, and honestly that's that's where it came from was kind of jealousy from the biology department

BM: Yeah

BS: that they saw the type of need

BM: Mm hmm

BS: in psychology, they focused more on it bring, at least initially, um, an issue of their graduate students

BM: Okay

BS: in psychology, um, and so in the beginning, um, in this like satellite, I was working just with grad students in psychology

BM: Okay

BS: I don't want to get ahead of myself, do you want me to keep answering

BM: Yeah

BS: okay

BM: No, no

BS: Okay

BM: Keep, keep talking the way that you're talking, because I have questions then that will probably answer these, but

BS: Okay

BM: Go ahead

BS: um

BM: because after you talk about the science success center, I want you to talk about how they exist now, and kind of like

BS: kind of like how these all work together, yeah

BM: the evolution, yeah

BS: Yes. Okay, yeah because right now I still speaking of them all as separate entities

BM: Yeah

BS: Which for a while, they really were, they were very like specialized, very separate

BM: Yeah

BS: Um, okay, so then, so that kind of existed like that for a few semester where bio was just the writing intensive classes, the workshops, and psychology was just consultation support for graduate students

BM: So, that was one-on-one with grad students

BS: Yup

BM: okay

BS: Yup, and it was like just those things

BM: Okay

BS: Um, science success center then came about um gush I'm trying to think, how did that, what was the impetus that even started it. I know what it was, okay, um, at the time, I was in addition to working at the science complex, I was also working in our main location

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and, um, we were starting to see this issue for lack of a better work

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Um, this issue with students in like earlier, like 100 level bio classes

BM: Mm hmm

BS: coming over here, to the main location, to get help with their lab reports

BM: Mm hmm, mm hmm, I remember

BS: and, we were kind of like, "Pschhhhhhh"

BM: (laughs)

BS: I don't know how you're going to transcribe that sound, sorry

BM: (laughs)

BS: um, you know just

BM: fart noise (laughs)

BS: yes (laughs)

BM: via mouth

BS: (laughs) not butt

BM: (laughs) yeah

BS: (laughs) oh, okay, and so, you know, it kind of came to our attention, like, "Hey, it's kind of backasswards that we are focusing all of our support on all this upper-level"

BM: mm hmm

BS: you know, 300-level, grad level "and there is nothing for anybody floundering through 100-level classes."

BM: Right

BS: and that I think was the moment when we kind of, the wheels started turning and we started going "you know, we need to be reaching out farther"

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BM: mm hmm

BS: "to everybody at all levels," and that was kind of what the science success center was born from

BM: Can I interrupt you for a second

BS: absolutely

BM: so, the "Pschhhhhhh" piece of it

BS: (laughs) yes

BM: was, as writing tutors in the home center, were you having difficulties um feeling like you were helping students effectively in tutoring sessions

BS: Yeah. Without jumping ahead too much

BM: Or like, yeah, no go ahead

BS: because I think what you're asking kind of gets at these section 2 questions

BM: Yeah, mm hmm

BS: because the kind of help students in the sciences need

BM: Yeah

BS: isn't the same

BM: Mm hmm

BS: as students, say, writing in English paper or something like that

BM: right

BS: Um, just to give you an example

BM: Mm hmm

BS: there is so much like vocabulary and content knowledge

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that students in the sciences are grappling with that and they can't possibly write a lab report until they've wrapped their brains around, you know, the concepts themselves

BM: Right

BS: Right? Um, and not to say that writing an English paper that there are not concepts and vocabulary, there are, but they're often much more familiar to us

BM: Right

BS: Whereas writing in the sciences, I mean, it's like a foreign language

BM: foreign language

BS: It's a whole new culture, it's you know, brand new

BM: mm hmm

BS: And, so I think that was the problem was we were equipped to talk about lab reports from like an English perspective

BM: right

BS: but not necessarily equipped to help more with like the scientific concepts

BM: Right

BS: inherent in it, or sometimes even the mathematical concepts inherent in these questions they were having, um, so I'd say that was part of it. I'd say the second part of it was we recognized from the assignment sheets and the rubrics that students were bringing in, we recognized that there was this big disconnect—what students in the 100-level classes was being told was good writing and how they were being graded and assessed and everything

BM: Mm hmm

BS: versus what the students in those upper level classes whose faculty members have been to WAC, they were being told good writing was something very different

BM: Mm

BS: and so there was a big disconnect kind of just within the whole department where um it was very clear that for multiple levels, this problem needed to be dealt with differently from how we were, you know, traditionally doing it. Does that make sense?

BM: Yeah

BS: Um

BM: can I ask you a question that I will probably ask later anyway

BS: Yeah, absolutely

BM: Well, two things, one what defines science as science?

BS: (Laughs)

BM: You know what I mean

BS: It's, it's no that's a great question. It's pretty much anything

BM: Okay

BS: I mean, you know how it is, it's not like I would ever turn someone away

BM: Well, no, or

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BS: I've had people come in with, you know to the science success center and say, "I'm in ENGL 121, can you help me?"

BM: Yeah, yeah

BS: OF course, I'm going to help you

BM: Right

BS: you know, um, but yes, in terms of what we define as "science," uh, it I mean, we've never really put like a hard boundary to it

BM: right

BS: I mean, there are your "hard" sciences

BM: mm hmm

BS: you know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: So, those are your lab based things, you know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: You biology, your chemistry, your phsyics, um, astonomy, geology and geography

BM: Okay

BS: um, then there are your "soft" sciences

BM: Mm hmm

BS: That was a quote, unquote by the way, don't forget the air quotes

BM: (laughs)

BS: Um, psychology being the main one, um, but we obviously have overlap also with other, um, well COT is now no longer

BM: Right

BS: there was a lot of overlap with COT

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Um, there is some overlap even with CHHS

BM: Mm hmm, because sociology, right

BS: right, I mean even, even like nursing and health administration

BM: Yeah

BS: I mean, these are social science based disciplines

BM: Right

BS: So, we've never like hard defined it

BM: Right

BS: We just kind of say, "you know, we'll encompass any and all of that"?

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Um, yeah, which is both a challenge and really really cool

BM: Right

BS: At the same time

BM: Right, right. So, and I think that another way to kind of speak to that question is, so you talked about, there's going to be a difference, and I'm definitely jumping ahead, but I think this a good time to talk about it. What is the difference between reading a lab report, um, as a tutor from say English, like, you could read it like an English person, or as a bio person

BS: Right, um, I think, I think the probably the biggest difference is genre knowledge

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Because if you are more um bio oriented person, then you know lab reports have really specific, I think it's even safe to say "formulaic" expectations.

BM: Yeah

BS: Um, and you know what those are you and you where those happen and why those happen, um, and so you know, if you're tutoring in biology and you are a more biology oriented person you can, you can point out to a student like, "Hey, this specific argument you're making here, actually needs to happen down here …"

BM: Right

BS: "… it doesn't belong up there."

BM: Right

BS: You know

BM: Right

BS: That kind of think because you know what the formula is

BM: So, it's more genre specific HOCs in a sense

BS: Yes. Yes, absolutely. Yeah, um. Yes, whereas if you kind of more looking from like the the traditional, I mean, I keep saying "English"

BM: Yeah

BS: I don't know how you want to call it that

BM: I

BS: You know what I mean

BM: Yeah, yeah

BS: the more like English major, traditional writing center kind of approach

BM: Right

BS: if you don't know that much about the genre, then you're, you're probably looking at it more like the later order concern level

BM: Right, right

BS: because that's, that's what you know

BM: Right

BS: that's what you can fall back on

BM: Right, right

BS: Um, I don't know. So that's probably the major one I would say would be

BM: Okay

BS: like genre knowledge

BM: okay

BS: um, but then even moving into like the MOCs, (sigh), goodness, and this one will probably be the death of me

BM: (laughs)

BS: but, um, every discipline within the sciences has very specific but completely different from all the different disciplines

BM: (laughs)

BS: ideas about things like, verb tense, um, active voice versus passive voice

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Um, you know, when you're allowed to (laughs) slip into the, um, present tense, or when you're allowed to slip into personal pronoun usage, things like that

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that are just so specific to the discipline

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that again, I think that someone with like

BM: mm hmm

BS: general English tutor knowledge wouldn't know that

BM: right

BS: you know, most people erroneously believe, "Oh, in science writing, you can never use personal pronouns." But that's not true

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Actually, in certain disciplines, we can

BM: Mm hmm, so, and this is something again that I'm going to ask you, but

BS: Mm hmm

BM: this is um, uh, Ann and I talked about, um, tutor training in terms of putting people into these satellites, and part of it is, you know, my undergrad was in business

BS: Mm hmm

BM: so, I went to the college of business

BS: Mm hmm

BM: Like, Cindy taught you know social work, she's in CHHS

BS: right

BM: You know, Joy has an educational background and she went to COE, um, Ann said, you know, "Beth's brain just works that way," (laughs)

BS: (laughs)

BM: "that's why she's there." Um, and when I asked about tutor training, she's basically like, "Well, you know, I just kind of threw them to the wolves" and that's a particular characteristic in people in the satellite centers that they can pick up on that kind of stuff

BS: Mm hmm

BM: and learn them

BS: yeah

BM: learn it, um, so can you speak a little bit to how you were able to um to do that

BS: Like, me personally?

BM: Yeah, so how did you go from being in English, like, you know, like sweeping generalization English, you know, consultant

BS: right

BM: to a sciences consultant

BS: Yeah, um, I mean, I think kind of like what Ann said, I think part of it just my personality

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I, I just lean more towards that kind of

BM: Mm hmm

BS: very rigid, objective

BM: (laughs)

BS: slightly formulaic, writing (laughs)

BM: right

BS: so, yeah, part of it is just that, um, I've always, um, I've traditionally been a better science and math student that I've been a better English student

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, and that was kind of a challenge I posed to myself a long time ago. When I was in high school, I was, I took every STEM course I could, and I took English because I had to, and it was find

BM: Mm hmm

BS: but ehhhhhh, it was like touchy-feely subjective, talk about your feelings, crap

BM: Yeah (laughs)

BS: I wasn't real into that

BM: right

BS: um, so when I went to my undergrad, I decided to be an English major because it was harder for me

BM: mm okay

BS: So, I kind of, again, that kind of goes back to, I've just always had this personality, this interest that this is sort of more

BM: Yeah

BS: I comfortably fly, so that's part of it. Um, other than that, I don't know a lot of, a lot of reading, a lot of asking questions, a lot of noticing

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I, I wish I had a like a magic book that I said, "Oh, I read this …"

BM: Yeah

BS: "… and it explained everything to me." But, no

BM: Right. So, just immersion

BS: Yeah, pretty much

BM: Yeah

BS: pretty much, um, willingness to say, "Hey I have no idea what you're talking about"

BM: yeah

BS: "Let's figure it out together," you know?

BM: Yeah

BS: Um, which I think any tutor needs to be able to do that

BM: Mm hmm

BS: But, I think especially when you're kind of the fish out of water

BM: Right

BS: Thrown into a discipline that is not your own

BM: Right

BS: you have to really be comfortably with saying that

BM: Right

BS: Um, yeah, and I know you didn't really ask this question, but I think it relates

BM: Mm hmm

BS: So, um, I now also do the training for everybody who works over in the science success center

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Um, and we can go into later, kind of how the staffing, blah, blah, blah has changed over there, but um, but the interesting challenge that's happened over there, is that, at least it used to be, that we, the only people we had available to work in that building were me, the English tutor coming into the sciences

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and then, the two bio GAs that they gave me

BM: Oh, right

BS: so, science people coming in to English, right

BM: Right

BS: and, so there's always kind been this like, we have to meet in the middle kind of thing

BM: Right

BS: Um, so with those GAs, I, we, we do a weekly training meeting, I mean, I have an hour a week with them that we train on this stuff. That's the official training, you know, that we do, but um, I mean, there's also just lots of just conversations, you know, when it's slow and you start talking about,

BM: Mm hmm

BS: "hey! This happened, how do I do this," or

BM: yeah, right

BS: You know

BM: It's like an underground writing center, you know, like

BS: Yeah

BM: practice, that a lot

BS: it is

BM: somebody, Joy said that earlier today, like, "That's where I've learned a lot of this stuff, is just, in casual conversation," not official training

BS: Right, yeah

BM: Um, okay, because I'm aware of what "meeting in the middle" because I think the "middle" shifts a little bit

BS: Yeah

BM: when we're talking about things like the college of business

BS: Oh yeah, the middle is real squishy

BM: Right (laughs), unclear boundaries

BS: Right

BM: Um, meeting in the middle in terms of the English person and the science person, um, I that's something that I've struggled with and something that I've noticed Thomas is also kind of grappling with

BS: Mm hmm

BM: is meeting in the "middle"

BS: Right

BM: So, can you speak a little bit, um, to what that looks like for you

BS: what it looked like initially or what it kind of looks like now

BM: Either, which, what it looks like now, I think

BS: Okay, I only ask because now that I've been there several years, it's been less hard

BM: Yeah, yeah. Well, talk about both, if you can

BS: Okay. Um, well, I think initially, um, for me, I was very aware of what I didn't know

BM: Mmm hmm. Do you think that's important

BS: and I, I do think that's important, like now I can look at that and say, "Oh, that was valuable, that I recognized that."

BM: Yeah

BS: I think then, it was just terrifying

BM: Right

BS: Like, someone is going to ask me X and I'm going to have no idea what they're even saying, you know?

BM: Right

BS: So, which is interest because when you have, you know, an extensive background in English

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you're used to being really comfortable in talking about certain things

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I can pull apart a text and talk about themes, and character development, you know, and denouement, and all of that crap

BM: (laughs), right, can you spell that for me, because I'm not going to know how to spell it

BS: Yeah, it's a French word, I can actually, because my minor French, denouement

BM: Oh, thank you

BS: Yeah, um

BM: I'll be googling that shit for hours. (laughs)

BS: (laughs) you'll be like, d a n

BM: (laughs) yeah

BS: you're funny

BM: "did not hear the word"

BS: "mumbled" "fart noise with mouth" (laughs)

BM: (laughs) fart noise via butt

BS: (laughs) fart noise, question mark

BM: (laughs) dot, dot, dot, period.

BS: (laughs) Anyway, um, so yeah, sorry, I lost track, so I came in with you know, this extensive knowledge in English-y things, right? And being really, really aware of the disconnect between those touchy-feely English-y things and all of these really like hard, specific, very detailed things that the science people, I'm using the term very loosely, the science people wanted to know, right. So, it's kind of like I guess for me, initially, I guess it felt like this clash between the subjective versus the objective, like

BM: Right

BS: I'm just used to talking about feelings and character developed, and they wanted to know like, "well, is your data significant?"

BM: Right

BS: You know, that kind of thing

BM: Right

BS: So, that, for me, was the clashing point

BM: You can't kind of bullshit your way through that, right?

BS: No

BM: Like, is it significant? It either is or it isn't

BS: Right

BM: and you have to talk about that

BS: Right, exactly. Um, so for me, that was kind of clashing point, right? Um, or clashing point, middle, whatever, whatever you want to call it.

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, I think for the GAs, it's, the bio GAs, it's a little different

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Kind of, because they are coming from the opposite side of that where they're really used to talking about

BM: Mm hmm

BS: "Yeah, statistical significance, let me show you how to calculate that." But, where they're not comfortable is asking those more touchy-feely questions, like, "Well, how do you feel about this version of the draft," you know?

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Um, I can't think of a touch-feely question to save my life right now

BM: Well, maybe

BS: But, you know what I mean, like they

BM: Yeah

BS: they so, I think, the meeting in the middle was kind of each of us, from our, you know, different perspectives, coming to that sort of middle point, being able to say, "I'm good with this, I'm uncomfortable with that," and like learn from each other

BM: Yeah

BS: So that we could kind of start to take on each other's qualities or values

BM: Mm hmm

BS: That, to me, is kind of where the middle is

BM: Yeah

BS: Is when, you don't lose, like I haven't lost my English background

BM: Right

BS: But, I've kind of now gained these new pieces

BM: Mm hmm, yeah, so I think what you are articulating for me, it sounds like this is the importance of having a disciplinary partnership

BS: Oh, yes

BM: I mean, that, you know because okay, so um having the GA bio students being writing tutors, fine, right

BS: Mm hmm

BM: But, how is it, in what ways is it useful for you to be there to offer your perspective from a writing center standpoint and vice versa

BS: Mm hmm, yeah, I think one of the major things, um, I think about in terms of training new GAs when they're given to me, um, is helping them realize what it is they do now

BM: Okay

BS: Right, because just to go back to the statistical significance example, right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: They know how to do that

BM: Mm hmm

BS: They're really good at it, they've done it for a long, long time, right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: But, they don't necessarily know how to talk about it, or like how to explain it to someone

BM: Okay

BS: Or, or how to see it from the perspective from someone who is confused and new to that, right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: So, I see my role over there, kind of as this sort of outsider, sort of insider person, kind of helping them realize what they do know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: And, learning how to like talk about that

BM: And, all your GAs are from bio

BS: Yes

BM: They're not from the writing center

BS: Correct

BM: Okay

BS: They're all from bio, yes. Now, the new thing that has just, like, just this school year happened, was in the past, they were giving me GAs who were brand spanking new, like first-semester graduate school, here you go

BM: Fresh out of the package

BS: Oh, yeah, and while that can be good and bad for a variety of reasons, what has changed this year, and I think is a wonderful thing, is now they're giving me people who have already, at least for one semester, taught the 100-level classes

BM: Ah

BS: So, now not only do they have their own bio expertise knowledge

BM: Mm hmm

BS: but now they also have kind of seen like one the ground what it's like, what kinds of questions students have

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know, how do you explain these concepts that kind of thing

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and I think that, even though it's, for most of them, it's only been a semester

BM: Mm hmm

BS: but that little bit of teaching experience

BM: Yeah, it's huge

BS: has helped them immensely in the writing center

BM: Yeah

BS: or, science success center

BM: Can you articulate specific ways of how it has

BS: Yes (laughs)

BM: (laughs) these are the hard things

BS: right

BM: because you know they're, when I was at the college of business, I was like, "I know that my tutoring practices are different" I just don't know how or why

BS: Okay, so you're asking me how, like, how do I think they're teaching experience helps influence their tutoring practice?

BM: Mm hmm

BS: Okay

BM: Um, in comparison to the brand new, fresh out of the package GAs

BS: Right

BM: Pause, two things. One, do you have a specific time you need to be done by?

BS: Um, like 4:50

BM: Okay, okay

BS: so

BM: And, then, um, is there anyway, and I know that you probably have all of this, but can you and are you willing to, and do you feel comfortable with sharing of some of your like training materials with me?

BS: Yeah

BM: Okay

BS: Yeah

BM: Okay, um, and I'll talk about that in there. Sorry, I don't even remember what I asked you, The difference

BS: Yes

BM: I do know what I asked you

BS: Okay, um yeah, how their teaching experience helps with their

BM: Right

BS: Yeah, okay, I'm going to say a couple of things, I'm not really saying these in any particular order

BM: okay

BS: I mean, if I were writing this down, obviously, I would put them down in some sort of hierarchical order, but I can't think like that

BM: Okay

BS: Off the cuff, well I think

BM: Well, what good are you, I'm leaving

BS: Alright (laughs), you know what

BM: (laughs)

BS: You know what, I could talk about statistical significance all day long

BM: (laughs)

BS: Um (laughs), okay, I think one of the ways is the brand new straight out of the package GAs

BM: Mm hmm

BS: They've been so steeped in really intense biology knowledge for so long, that they have forgotten what it's like to be a newbie, right

BM: Mm

BS: Whereas have now taught a semester or two, they've dealt with those newbie students, you know

BM: Mm hmm

BS: because they're taking 100-level classes, right, they are, many of them are freshman, are transfer students, they are new in every sense of the word. New to Eastern, new to biology, new to college

BM: Right

BS: And, so it forces the GA to kind of realize that these things they've known for so very long, are challenging to other people

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I think that's huge difference right there, right

BM: Okay

BS: Cause that

BM: So they can, oh go ahead

BS: No, I was going to say, just because I think that forces them to kind of start sort of unpacking for themselves, you know, what they know about a concept

BM: Right

BS: You know, when did they learn it, how did they master it? Like they start to sort of naturally unpack that

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and they realize, this field, whatever it is they're studying, doesn't come naturally

BM: Right

BS: Sorry, go ahead

BM: and it helps them anticipate questions that might

BS: Mm hmm

BM: be asked of them and now they know how to answer them, kind of like you

BS: Exactly

BM: said that a little bit, right

BS: Yeah, no, exactly. And, I'd say that's kind of the second major way I think it, um, impacts their, you know, their teaching impacts their tutoring, is because now they know what kind of the common questions are, or the common hang ups students have

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know, um, having grading lots of lab reports now, they know, "Gosh, a lot of students do okay with this part, but a lot of them really struggle with this part."

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and that way, now, when they're working in the science success center, they can focus on that more challenging part with the student

BM: mmm

BS: you know

BM: Yeah

BS: they don't necessarily have to talk about the part that everyone pretty much does okay on

BM: right, right

BS: so

BM: So, they're kind of using their time more effectively as well

BS: Yeah, exactly. Um, okay, so that's two ways

BM: Okay, that's good

BS: I'm sure I can come up with more

BM: yeah, that's good

BS: if you give me all day, but

BM: (laughs) yeah, that's good

BS: Okay

BM: Um, okay, so why would an um, okay, never mind. Why would a writing center satellite be created for a specific discipline as opposed to or as an extension of the home center, and I think that you kind of touched on this

BS: Mm hmm

BM: um, at the very beginning, I think that people in biology plus you, you know like, I'm, I'm like bio plus Beth (laughs) equals love

BS: Right

BM: No, I'm kidding, um

BS: It does

BM: or maybe, and and maybe we say like a more rhetorically savvy tutor in a sense

BS: Right

BM: So, um, do you want to add anything to that question

BS: Yeah, I mean, I, I would say the only thing I want to add to that is I don't personally view having, having the bio specific, you know, satellite, I don't see that in opposition to

BM: Mm hmm, okay

BS: Um, that I, I prefer your wording here, "the extension of"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, because they're not, they're not opposing forces

BM: Um

BS: Oh, god, physical ugh

BM: twitching

BS: Yeah, that's the only science that I kind of hope people don't come and ask for

BM: Yeah (laughs)

BS: Anyway, um, but yeah, they're not, they're not opposing forces, they, I think they can be complimentary

BM: Mm hmm

BS: forces

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know, but um, but yeah, I don't think, at least on this campus, obviously I guess I can't speak to

BM: right

BS: all the campuses in the world, um, but at least on this campus, I think we see it as an extension of rather than an opposition to

BM: Yeah

BS: That's all I was going to say

BM: Cool. Um, okay, so this is 3 and 4 are kind of two sides of the same coin

BS: Mm hmm

BM: what might the writing center satellite provide to students that the home center does not, and then on the other side, what might the home center provide that the writing center satellite does not, in terms of, um, I'm really thinking, I think in terms of tutoring practices here

BS: Okay, um, a little bit I think we've already talked about this one in that like I said before, I think the major thing that the satellite can provide that the home center doesn't is that increased genre knowledge, um, increased knowledge of the vocabulary, the concepts, that kind of thing, um, honestly it's hard for me to answer number 4. Hmm (laughs). That one stumps me a little more, so what does the home writing center provide

BM: Or what can they

BS: I mean

BM: Do you want to hear where this is kind of comes from

BS: Sure

BM: why don't you answer first, and then I'll tell you

BS: (laughs) I was going to say …

BM: I decided I didn't want to interrupt you, even then I just did again

BS: there are some disciplines in the sciences that like to say that good writing in their discipline should be readable by anyone

BM: Everybody

BS: Yeah, exactly. Like even a layperson can read it, kind of thing, and so for those types of disciplines, or at least those kinds of assignments

BM: Mm hmm

BS: right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: it's not necessarily the discipline maybe, it's just the specific assignment, I think then the the home, or main, location of the writing center can be useful because there you truly do get someone who is, well, chances are, totally an outsider

BM: Right

BS: totally unaware of you know the concepts or whatever

BM: right

BS: um in which case, then you might really be able to test out

BM: Yeah

BS: truly like a lay audience

BM: right

BS: and see if your writing works

BM: right, right, well, so this

BS: that's all I have

BM: question, well both these questions stem from the generalist / specialist debate, and obviously, as I am talking to everybody, it just seems much more logistically sound that instead of having you and Joy and Jane or Thomas, and Cindy, you know, scheduling people with all of you, even though you are the same people, you're doing the same exact thing, um, it would be a nightmare

BS: Yeah, no, okay, I see what you're saying. You raise a really good point, that it is a pain in the butt to have very specific people somewhere other than the main people, doing the work they do

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, because, if a bio students walks into the main location downstairs, I'm not there

BM: right

BS: I don't work there anymore, but they still need to get help

BM: right

BS: you know, so yeah, it does create scheduling and staffing issues

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that kind of thing, um, also there's the issue of um sustainability

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know, like, if I ever leave

BM: right

BS: I don't know

BM: right

BS: Like, this is just a giant question mark

BM: Right

BS: so, I guess that would be one thing that having one central, main writing center, not having any kind of satellites

BM: Mm hmm

BS: just one big old mamba jamba writing center

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that does all of these things

BM: Mm hmm

BS: yeah, that would probably be way easier

BM: I'm not sure, I mean, I think that the location, um

BS: I mean, it would have to be huge

BM: right

BS: First of all, so space is a major issue

BM: Right, and there's the risk of, okay, so one of the things is location. People are probably more likely to come to Mark J because you're in Mark J and they're in Mark J

BS: Right

BM: The college of business students won't come to main campus, because I know they won't because I never did

BS: Right, yeah

BM: None of us did

BS: right

BM: and so locations are a really prime thing

BS: Mm hmm

BM: and I think that if you're uh physically located in somebody's college, they kind of have to claim you, right

BS: Right

BM: Therefore, potentially, you're more likely to get funding

BS: Right

BM: Um, from that college

BS: Right

BM: if you sit on somebody's porch long enough, they just have to let you in, right (laughs)

BS: (laughs) that's what I hear

BM: (laughs)

BS: Yeah

BM: So, and so, in that respect, I think that yeah okay, people now identify you in Mark Jefferson as who you are, you're, you have an ethos in that building um people know that they can come to you, get good help, versus trying to like sort through people at the main center, right

BS: Right, which, and on a side note

BM: Mm hmm

BS: probably unrelated to generally what you're talking about, now the study tables are downstairs, now there's that much more that people have to like trip over

BM: Right

BS: and walk through to even physically get to the writing center

BM: right

BS: So, that kind of highlights the issue that you're talking about there, yeah

BM: Right

BS: Um

BM: So, it's nice to have one place that is identified as

BS: Mm hmm, right. Yeah, and you know, of course any time there's location or space discussion going on, you have to think about um there, there has to be some sort of dedicated space that um, hopefully in the building of where the students

BM: right

BS: of that discipline will be, but that's also going to be stable enough as a space

BM: right

BS: that people can kind of come to know that

BM: right

BS: as a space

BM: right

BS: and that's, that's something that has worked fabulously well in Mark Jefferson

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um and I think that's a large part of why we've been so incredibly successful over there

BM: Mm hmm

BS: because we've been in the same room from the start

BM: Mm hmm

BS: it is a super visible room

BM: Mm hmm

BS: we're like in the middle of it all

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you can't help but walk past us

BM: that's exactly how it is at the college of business

BS: exactly, yeah, and yet then you look at other, um, other locations that haven't done as well, like COT, CHHE

BM: COE

BS: right, part of it's because they've just kind of moved them around and shoved them in different corners every semester or every year

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so yeah, it does, yeah, any time you're separating out these two questions

BM: Mm hmm

BS: issues of space, location certainly come into it

BM: Mm hmm

BS: absolutely

BM: mm, okay

BS: that's like a whole separate dissertation

BM: I know! Dammit

BS: Like, that's the dissertation I would want to write

BM: yeah, right

BS: Writing center space

BM: right, right, I will let you have this

BS: there you go

BM: and, um, okay, so tutoring practices in writing center satellites. Um, maybe I'm more interested because um you know, as far as your tutor training is concerned, it's more like, "Good luck, Beth" (Laughs) deep end, and you were kind of like, "okay" and did it

BS: right, you you mean for me personally

BM: yeah

BS: yeah

BM: So, maybe some of these questions are more geared towards, and and you offer a really unique perspective in this respect that you can say, "okay, this is what I've learned, and this is what I've been able to, uh, I have an awareness of the differences um and and this is how I train my GAs"

BS: Okay

BM: Um, so, maybe we talked about this already, I might have written this down. What are some of the typical genres of writing students need help with when they seek writing support at your locations

BS: Lab reports

BM: lab reports

BS: Like, I would say easily, at least 80% of what we deal with is lab reports

BM: Okay

BS: now, lab reports in different disciplines

BM: Okay

BS: You know, you've got lab reports in bio, you've got lab reports in chem, you've got lab reports in physics, but yes, lab reports in general

BM: Mm hmm

BS: is the vast majority of our work

BM: are there major differences in um like the conventions of lab reports

BS: yes

BM: in the disciplines

BS: yes

BM: of science

BS: yes

BM: can you speak a little bit to that

BS: yes. How detailed would you like me to be

BM: um, you know, I'll put a pin in that

BS: okay

BM: and we'll come back to that

BS: okay

BM: because yeah

BS: because that's like a whole other dissertation right there

BM: right, well and that's I think part of, um, my interest in talking about disciplinary writing um and and having my um having conversation with Jane yesterday (laughs), I don't mean to like giggle, but seriously

BS: insert fart noise

BM: yeah, via armpit maybe

BS: (laughs)

BM: um, it's just interesting the way, um, the more and more I I um look into the literature and uh think through this stuff, the more and more I see how complex and nuanced writing center work is

BS: Mm hmm

BM: Now, I mean, you know that, right

BS: right

BM: we all know that, but when we're talking about, okay, so, if somebody from the sciences was to come in with a lab report into the home center, it's a lab report, that's all it is, when they come to see you, it's a chemistry lab report

BS: Mm hmm

BM: and that holds a lot of significance

BS: right

BM: versus a bio lab report

BS: right

BM: or a whatever, so maybe that's more of a statement, but do you have anything to contribute to that kind of line of thinking

BS: Yeah, no, I since what we're kind of talking about here is how do you get someone

BM: right

BS: doing that work and starting to see those differentiations

BM: right

BS: that you mentioned, I think um, at least for me, from my perspective, um, a lot of it was just jumping in and doing it

BM: yeah

BS: you know, seeing, seeing lab repo4rts from different classes, first of all, you start to realize, "hmm, this one's not the same as that one"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: right

BM: right

BS: um, seeing different assignment sheets or different rubrics

BM: Mm hmm

BS: for different classes um the more like aware I started to become that there were these differences, I kind of personally started investigating

BM: Mm hmm

BS: to see if the things I was noticing were you know just one offs

BM: right

BS: or to see if they were actual consistent convention differences, um, and so that was you know, starting to look for things like, um, reading the style manuals for different disciplines. Like, chemistry, they have their own style manual

BM: awesome

BS: awesome, I've read it

BM: that literally makes me want to vomit in my mouth

BS: incredibly boring, but um, you know, so things like that, so starting to just kind of on the ground, as I'm working with students, realizing, "hmm, there are these differences." And then starting to kind of investigate them on my own

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, I think that's a continual work in progress though

BM: yeah

BS: I don't feel like even now, all these years of doing it, I don't feel like I have all the answers

BM: Yeah

BS: Um, because I think it also, hm, well, as you know, from working, you know from the writing center work you've done, just because that's what the style manual says

BM: right

BS: the correct answer is, or whatever, you know to do something, doesn't mean that's what the instructor wants

BM: right

BS: or how the instructor is going to grade it

BM: right

BS: so, there's always that level of complexity too

BM: right

BS: it's like, "I may know what the correct, 'correct,' answer is in terms of like what the, you know, what the lab manual says, or what the you know style manual says," but until I've learned all the little idiosyncrasies for every single different instructor of every assignment, I'll never

BM: yeah

BS: truly know all the differences

BM: right

BS: and, that's like a level of detail I don't think is necessary

BM: Mm hmm

BS: but that is kind of an extra factor

BM: right

BS: in that complexity that you mentioned

BM: so, you bring up something that um other people have brought up before which is faculty relationships.

BS: Mm hmm

BM: Um, it hasn't been so kind of like in the forefront of our conversation, um it seems as, so well can you talk a little bit about the um I don't want to lead you

BS: No, that's fine

BM: so, will you talk about faculty …

BS: faculty relationships

BM: yeah

BS: Yes. Um no, faculty relationships are a *huge* part of what I do

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and again, I think that's another reason I can point to why we've been so successful

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um like I mentioned before, everything we've built over there started from the faculty relationship of these people signing up for WAC

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and you know living through that week of WAC, um, so that right there kind of just starts to build

BM: right

BS: a foundation of some sort, um but obviously, you know, WAC fellows in most departments are few and far between

BM: right

BS: and so the bigger challenge is how do you reach out to the faculty who aren't WAC fellows

BM: right

BS: and who, you know, for whatever reason choose not to do WAC, um, and I've done different things, I think, with varying success. Um, I would say probably the thing I feel is the most successful in terms of getting faculty to sort of buy in

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um is going to faculty, like, uh, you know, department meetings

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and doing a quick little you know intro speal about who I am, and why it can be useful to them and their students, and really tailoring it so that they see, that me and what we do is both for them

BM: Mm hmm

BS: as much as it is for their students

BM: Mm hmm, mm hmm, mm hmm

BS: um, so I do have faculty who talk with me about their assignment design or their rubric design

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, you know, um just as much as I have students coming to me with those assignments and rubrics and asking questions

BM: right, right

BS: you know, so

BM: right

BS: I think that's huge, um, let's see, I mean, I think another way just to kind of build faculty relationships that works is just visibility

BM: yeah

BS: again, like I'm there, I'm in the office, they see me in the copy room, they see me in the mail room

BM: right

BS: I'm just always around

BM: I'm always there (laughs)

BS: you know, and I think that's part of it, too

BM: and the location

BS: because after a while, they just, you know, it just starts to click

BM: right

BS: Like, "yeah, that writing person I see," you know

BM: right

BS: so, I think that's part of it, too. Um, I would say those are the more successful ways that faculty relationship can you know pan out

BM: Mm hmm

BS: in a way that's been official for everybody

BM: Mm hmm

BS: less successful way, which you're not asking, but your silence kind of prompting me to talk about

BM: (laughs) I wasn't sure if you want to go into those, but

BS: yeah, I think less successful things would be like you know how sometimes you get a student who comes in and they've brought in whatever assignment for teacher, and as the writing consultant, you're looking at the assignment or the rubric or whatever and you're realizing, "Wow, there are some serious problems here."

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I think, less successful things to do would be to kind of going after that professor

BM: Right

BS: like tracking that person down and saying like

BM: oophf

BS: "Hey, you really need some help with your assignment design."

BM: (laughs)

BS: you know? Um, sure, I guess maybe that approach might work for some people

BM: Mm hmm

BS: but in my experience, I find people tend to dig in their heels and get real stubborn if you do that

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, so that's why, again, I think kind of general things like

BM: Mm hmm

BS: hey, faculty departments meetings, everybody's there

BM: Right

BS: We're not picking on any one specific person

BM: Yeah

BS: all of you can benefit

BM: Right

BS: Um, that's definitely useful

BM: Well, and then how important is it for you to have faculty buy in for you to be there

BS: Oh, incredibly important

BM: Mm hmm

BS: it is statistical significant how important that is

BM: (laughs) Um, and do you think that, um, with your experience, the faculty maybe you can give a sweeping generalization and then kind of not so sweeping

BS: Mm hmm

BM: Um, how, how do they value writing centers and writing center work and maybe the teaching of writing as well as a kind of side note

BS: Um, okay, that's a lot of different things

BM: Yeah

BS: Um, how did they value it? The sweeping generalization, I would say, is that in the sciences, in my experience, they do very much value writing center work

BM: Mm hmm

BS: but less so do they value teaching of writing

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I think sweeping generalization wise, I think that many of them still see the teaching of it as kind of this separate thing that happens outside of lab

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, you know, because doing it in class would take away from

BM: the sciencing

BS: the lab time, the sciencing, yes, the sciencing

BM: (laughs)

BS: Um, that's obviously sweeping generalization, but um more specifically, I think there's, I guess when I kind of really dig down into why those things I just said are the case

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I notice that, I think the reason a lot of faculty feel like we should push writing support and teaching of writing kind of into this separate center outside of class, I think, I think part of it, of course, like I said, is curriculum overload and they've got to fit things in, but I think the larger issue is that they themselves don't feel comfortable talking about these issues

BM: Mm hmm

BS: like they themselves have not had this training

BM: Right

BS: and don't know how to do that

BM: Right

BS: um, and so they see it as like just preferable to give it to someone else to do

BM: The teaching and the assessing, potentially, of student writing as well

BS: Um, yes and no. That's interesting. I don't have, I, I can say honestly in the science success center, I have never had anyone come in and say, you know, "My teacher wants you to fill out this rubric."

BM: Mm hmm, right

BS: and let them know what you think you do on it

BM: Right, right

BS: right, because I have had that experience before in the main center

BM: right

BS: where we just flat out said, "no,"

BM: Right

BS: "we don't do that." So, I've not had that happen, but I did have this interesting experience back in the fall where I was working very closely with the um all of the instructors who teach BIO 111

BM: Mm hmm

BS: which is like ENGL 120, it's like the very first, most basic, beginning bio class that we have here

BM: Mm hmm

BS: like there's nothing you can take before it

BM: Mm hmm

BS: kind of thing right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so, um, and when I say "all the people teaching it," I mean there are tenured faculty, there are some part time lecturers, major people teaching it are GAs

BM: Okay

BS: so it's you know, it's a little bit everybody

BM: it's a whole gammit

BS: Yeah, and it's like there was probably 20, 30 people who teach this course, right, um, anyway, so in the fall, they um, they were meeting to kind of practice using the rubric

BM: Mm hmm

BS: before they got their first assignment turned in

BM: Mm hmm

BS: so that they could, you know

BM: right

BS: kind of like a grade-in

BM: Yeah

BS: But, like a practice grade-in

BM: Yeah

BS: Anyway, so they asked me to come to that, and you know, I mean in many ways, this was, this was a phenomenal thing they were doing where they had you know like a sample student lab report

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and everyone would read it and and then "grade it"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: on the rubric

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and then we would talk about why we graded it that way

BM: Okay

BS: which I thought was really valuable, right

BM: yeah

BS: the only thing, I think that was kind of negative about it was that it kind of turned into sort of like a me versus them thing

BM: ah

BS: where you know, they very much wanted to say things like you know, "Oh, this is terrible! Look at the grammar, it's awful!" you know, and I was trying to say things like, "Well, the grammar aside,"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: "I think they're really starting to understand the concept here at this point."

BM: Mm hmm

BS: you know

BM: Right

BS: Or, "this section was really well organized," or you know. So, I was trying to focus more on like the HOCs

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and they were trying to focus on the LOCs

BM: Mm hmm

BS: um, and I thought that was really interesting that, and I don't know, maybe that was just because I was in the room maybe they thought that's what I would think was important

BM: Mm hmm

BS: I don't know

BM: So, that really begs the question, this is the million dollar question

BS: Oh

BM: Or, the Powerball 1.3 billion dollar question

BS: Yeah, god I would love to win that, wouldn't you

BM: Um, anyway, um so what is writing? What is writing to the biology teachers, what is writing to us?

BS: (laughs)

BM: Yeah

BS: are you asking this, like, just rhetorically, like letting it hang out there, or are you expecting an answer (laughs)

BM: (laughs) well, do you, it obviously depends from person to person

BS: right

BM: Even, you know, in the faculty. Every faculty is, every faculty member is different, but from my experience, um and again making sweeping generalizations

BS: mm hmm

BM: there's a particular kind of writing that I think the college of business thinks that writing is

BS: right, I agree

BM: and as I'm talking about it, actually, it's kind of separate. It's separating in my head

BS: Mm hmm

BM: in a way that's like, there is the writing that is first-year writing, and Jane even said to me in her interview yesterday which made me want to .... Fart noises

BS: Insert fart noises (laughs)

BM: Um, that, you know, all of these students come unprepared and they even have a writing class already before they come to us and they still can't write

BS: Yeah, believe me, I hear that in the sciences all the time, too

BM: Well, of course

BS: They'll say, "I can't believe they already took ENLG 121 and yet this is the crap we get?" I hear that alllllllllll

BM: Right

BS: the time

BM: So, why? Why? DO you think that is. Why do *you* think they think that?

BS: um, I think again because there's kind of this you know, no, no one likes to say, "Hey here's this body of knowledge I don't have," right

BM: Mm hmm

BS: and so it's easier to kind of diminish or demean

BM: Mm hmm

BS: how hard writing is and how hard teaching writing is. It's easier to do that than it is to say, "Hey, maybe we need to realign our curriculum or maybe we need to rethink …"

BM: Yeah

BS: "… our expectations of students coming in, you know, the first year" or whatever

BM: Right

BS: Um, so to me, I think that's, that's another reason why faculty relationships are so important because you've got to have those kinds of conversations, you've got to start to unpack that kind of stuff

BM: right

BS: and, the more kind of allies in the department that you have to use, like a war metaphor, but the kind of allies that you have in a department

BM: Mm hmm

BS: help you do that work

BM: Right

BS: because they start reviewing their class, they start talking to their buddy, their buddy starts reviewing his class, and it kind of has this domino effect

BM: Mm hmm

BS: right, but if you're not building those relationships with faculty, then that kind of insidious idea that teaching writing is something someone else does, and I don't do it

BM: right

BS: you know, and all my students are idiots, you know, those kinds of

BM: Mm hmm

BS: terrible ideas still exist out there

BM: Right

BS: and while, obviously, I, I am one person, I cannot eradicate all of the beliefs

BM: Mm hmm

BS: that people have like that, um, I can certainly try

BM: well, and I think a satellite location, potentially gets you closer

BS: Yes

BM: and, allows you to enter conversations like those

BS: Yes

BM: because otherwise, you wouldn't be having those conversations, I wouldn't he having those conversations

BS: right

BM: now, whether they make a difference or not (laughs) Jane, (laughs) is a different story

BS: right

BM: but

BS: and I think, I think that they do eventually, but you have to be really suborn and wait for that change to happen

BM: right

BS: it's not going to be overnight

BM: right

BS: the, the lead faculty guy who invited me to go to that rubric

BM: Mm hmm

BS: grade in session thing that I just described to you, um, he has been for years the most vocal, most stubborn pain in my ass

BM: (laughs)

BS: um, and then in September, I went to a faculty meeting, did my little schpeal and he came up to me a few days later, in the copier room, and said, "Hey, I kind of think we should try this new thing." And, I was like, I felt like the world had like split open

BM: (laughs) yeah

BS: Like oh my god, this guy who has been this really vocal kind of asshole

BM: Mm hmm

BS: in the department like suddenly was starting to click that maybe things could be done different

BM: What do you think that tipping point as for that, for him

BS: Um

BM: Obviously you can't speak for him, but I can tell you that the whole schpeal I gave at the faculty meeting, I focused really on numbers, and we looked at the growth and usage over you know, the several years we've been open, um, and how we've diversified with working with different disciplines and that kind of thing, and I think it was kind of at that moment when he realized, "This is a legitimate thing that's not going away …"

BM: Mm hmm

BS: "… and a lot of people use it, maybe I should get on board, too."

BM: yeah

BS: I think, honestly, I think the data is what kind of convinced him

BM: So, you are speaking to your audience

BS: Right, right, yeah no, I certainly would never tell biology's faculty um or any science faculty for that matter, like, "Hey, here's this really like touching, heartwarming testimonial"

BM: Right

BS: "hey you should read this," no, they don't care

BM: yeah

BS: But if I put it into a graph

BM: Mm hmm

BS: suddenly they care.

BM: right, that's what they know how to read

BS: right

BM: Um, okay, so we're totally running of time

BS: we are

BM: so, um

BS: I mean, we can schedule more time later if some other

BM: that's not a bad idea, actually

BS: if you want, like, I don't want you to feel like you don't get the information you need. You can also just tell me to shut up, like, if I'm totally getting off track

BM: No, because I think this is really valuable

BS: Okay, okay

BM: Um, this is really valuable, you were one of the people that I really, really, really wanted to talk to and that Ann was very adamant about me talking to

BS: Oh, Ann

BM: Um, well you did say you had some time on Thursday

BS: Yeah

BM: And, I will be back on campus on Thursday because I'm going to do the little, the little …

BS: Disciplinary literacy thing

BM: Yeah

BS: yeah, um

BM: So

BS: Which I'm not able to go to unfortunately, but um okay so you're not on campus on Wednesdays at all

BM: Um, it depends, why

BS: Well, no I just, I was trying to give you multiple options.

BM: Wednesday, I am meeting with Susan, but I don't know where – potentially it could be in Novi

BS: Susan?

BM: Susan, the other COB person now

BS: Oh, oh Schanne

BM: Yeah

BS: Gotcha

BM: Um, and we're not meeting on campus, but that doesn't mean that I can't come to campus

BS: Nope, that's fine. They only time I would be able to give you on Wednesday anyway is at 6:00

BM: Okay

BS: So, that is an option, it's there if you want it, um, otherwise, Thursday, I would say our best bet would be to meet in here again

BM: Mm hmm

BS: At like, 4, 4:15

BM: Okay

BS: Or, sometime thereafter

BM: Okay. Thursday, 4:15p

BS: Okay

BM: okay, is that okay with you

BS: yeah, it's fine with you

BM: Okay, I'm going to stop this then and we will pick up on

BS: because you know I'm long winded

BM: No, I mean, so we're going to start in section 2 in, in more specifically talk about then

BS: Okay

BM: And so I'm going to stop for now. Beth Part 1 end.

Appendix D – Sample Memos

Analytic Memo

21 February 2016

Transcribing (James) Interview

Notes	Emerging Themes
General Notes / Thoughts - Why is there such a difference in value systems from people who do writing center work and people who don't. What is the **fundamental / foundational work that we build upon** that helps us to understanding writing as we do. Especially when we even though someone (Stephenson) says that they value North's "helping the writer," but the then make comments that there are "bad writers" and first-year writing should have taught all of them this already - Metaphors with two-way mirrors / reflexivity / transparent practices / fishbowls maybe some of this can go ----------------------------→ - Relationships. While relationships seem vital in the formation of the satellite centers, it is interesting with this specific satellite (the COB) because it seems like the relationship building focuses solely on the faculty, but **forgets about the students.** In terms of relationships, how do we make sure that the relationship building isn't just with the "ivory towers" because isn't what's really important that the students gain something about writing from the center and not feel like they are in the role of the, as Passwater says, "*unknowledgeable person knocking at the gate, hoping to receive some knowledge from an expert on the inside.*" - Passwater mentions that there are many, many tensions between writing center staff and the faculty at the COB (but, I think mostly one in particular). This brings up something that Versluis and I talked about in her interview—the conditions of the working environment in the satellite center. Versluis mentions how there wasn't anyone to work with (staff wise) in her satellite, and Passwater mentions that this is an *extra* position outside of his assistantship - How am I going to frame tensions in a way that I don't criticize or degrade?? - Maybe some of this value system idea is because the faculty at the COB (this is obviously purely speculation, but **maybe follow up** somehow?) feel like there is one right way to do it, writing center work, just like writing, is **static**. Maybe they don't understand the **fluid nature of writing centers** and of writing like those in writing centers do?	Value systems Ownership of writing (in two terms): the paper – the student / consultant AND – who teaches / consults with writing (p. 43 in dissertation notebook) Ethos: the profile of a writing tutor (consultant) vs. / w the faculty member Physical location / distance (but with that comes non-physical distance – abstract?) Working conditions in the satellite center Assessment (numbers and / versus narrative when sending it to stakeholders), but also just assessment in general

- **Student agency:** (in this satellite): sounds like tutoring is mostly directive, consultants even make an account on WCOnline *for* the student and fill out their form for them. Therefore, whatever data is collected is through the lens of the consultant—in other words, the student might think they need a certain kind of help (which they would have written down in WCOnline), but since the consultants are filling that form out for the student, **the consultant's interpretation of what the student needs help with** is actually reported. This might skew data in some ways (this is definitely worth thinking about—I don't know, I don't want to get too carried away, but in terms of the two-way mirror) - And, then, kind of coupled with this, is authoring (which also ties back to ownership) - Can we change the narrative about writing within the minds of other disciplines even if they've taken WAC—it seems like these values and narratives about "drill and kill" (p. 39 Passwater) seems so embedded that those who take WAC and see value in the writing center, that narrative still comes out through their teaching of writing across disciplines (in this case, business) - WAC / WC interact as fields? "it's sort of a shame that they [WAC and writing centers] don't necessarily interact as field" (p. 42 Passwater) - What does it mean to be "helpful" to a student? - "it would be **bad customer service** of me to not give them the assistance that they ask for"(p. 46 Passwater)	Student agency Us vs. them dichotomy Good examples of interdisciplinary work (also see Paretti work)

Methods / Methodology
- Ask about value systems in terms of writing (maybe this could fit into section 1 or section 2) – not sure why I didn't think of value systems explicitly
- How might I work assessment into questions? Institutional structures?

To-Do
- Find some foundational texts (North, of course, but then after that – not just the foundational text, but how we have built upon that to develop a **humanities** view of writing)
- Social constructivism?
- What do the humanities value that other disciplines don't
- Would this be a useful comparison (humanities and, say, business), but not intended to create a dichotomy?
- **Background work** on COB's accreditation separate from EMU

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Analytic Memo
9 May 2016
Transcribing (Carol) interview

Notes	Emerging Themes
General Notes / Thoughts MP: and so when you do work within the disciplines, um, you get a better sense of meeting students where they live, of thinking about, I mean theoretically, it's all about **situated learning.** [9:06] Look at pps. 5 – 6 to see theoretical framework (in a way) for how VTECC was created BM: Um, why would a writing support space be created for specific disciplines as opposed to or as an extension of a writing center MP: so, that's an interesting question, and that goes more towards, um, the writing in the disciplines program I ran BM: Mm hmm MP: which was sort of teaching but also support, and I think my answer to that is I don't know that I think those are necessarily opposed, but I think the advantage of it within a specific discipline is access BM: Mm hmm MP: so, it can be done in ways in which you have um you know, a satellite center that's staffed often, but the thing about the MSE program, and mining has a program, and civil has a program, is you build a different kind of relationship with students. So, when we did sort of writing in the disciplines, in MSE in particular, right, my office, our support office was right next to the student lounge BM: Mm hmm MP: so anytime we were in our offices, you know, you're there, you can pop your head in and get to know the students. We taught them sophomore, junior, and senior year BM: Mm hmm MP: so it was this really embedded program, so you build a different kind of relationship and writing really becomes, and communication becomes sort of more connected and embedded to their normal practice because it sort of lives right there with them [12:41] BM: yeah MP: **as opposed to a think you go somewhere else to do**	Situated learning Access

This conversation is particularly interesting when we are thinking about the whys and whats of writing center work. **Can this ^ framework, this way of thinking help us to move towards what we *say* we do and actually start to do it?** Can this embeddedness really help us to become embedded?

So, this is interesting:
MP: that's the thing we don't do is the direct, you know, student, we don't provide, **we don't intervene in student writing**
[18:27]
She mentions Lerner's *Idea of w Writing Lab* and talks about how VTECC is set up like that in a way, but the choice of "intervening" is interesting (I'm just not sure how or why yet!)

VTECC is not just a writing support space, it serves several other functions [29:08]

This definitely cross hatches with Inga's:
MP: right, so they have these sort of national rubrics for people to start from, so we took the value rubric for writing and compared that to these interviews we'd done with faculty and students from 5 different universities, and one of the things that has really emerged and I've been thinking a lot about and it's actually out of some data that I have from a European university too that I'm working on is, **it has to do with how you make arguments, um, and I think in scientific disciplines**, like what's the role of sources
[31:58]

Methods / Methodology

- Situated learning
- Activity theory
- Genre theory

To-Do
- Find outcomes for Engineering (this could be the theoretical framework that Paretti used to set up VTECC): ABET
- Read "Learning in Context: Technology Integration in a Teacher Preparation Program Informed by Situated Learning Theory" (saved / printed pdf) to learn more about situated learning

Appendix E – Coding Spreadsheets

Coding Schema: Nancy Brown

S1: 1 & 2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
Value	Satellite coordinator has a better idea of what students are doing	"Good experience"	Meeting students where they are	Content / form	Professor's expectations	Aptitude for discipline	WAC / WAC connection - Educating faculty (?)
Need	Specific knowledge of: - Syllabi - Assignments - Faculty	Content	Physical location	Line editing	Stifle students' creativity	Quick study	Funding
Worthwhile	"specialized" tutor can better meet students' needs	Level of training and professional development (maybe more standardized training)	Nursing Students: APA	Tutoring & Ethos: - Caring - Attention - Connection - Relationship building	Familiarity	Immersion - In the culture - Artifacts - Talking w people - relationships	Constantly changing
Physicality	Sophisticated knowledge of assignments	Starbucks metaphor: i.e. franchised (capitalism)	Faculty as informants	Tutoring as performance	Authenticity	Training is of the coordinator's own volition	Development and maintenance - Never ending - Stressful - Constantly changing
Convenience / going to where students are	Understand nuanced discipline-specific language			Understanding student profiles	Consultants relate to student	Interactions are critical	Multiple pieces working together
Ability to specialize				Writing Process		Differences btwn "us" and being WC trained and "them"	Build (in discipline)

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Comparison: main center v. satellite				Relationships w students			Cultivate (in discipline)
Offers sophisticated interactions with assignments							Connection (w those in disciplines)
							Trust (satellite coordinator)
							Relationships (in discipline) - Satellite coordinator building them w/ faculty - Director w colleges (includes: "buds" / good friends / cordial / not friends) - Satellite coordinator building them w / students (admire, respect, a connection)
							Physical location (w/i the college)
							Adjustment

							Control
							  - Staffing
							  - Liability
							  - Funding

							HOCs / LOCs

							Us v them
							  - Writing center people v. "college people" (i.e. Jane)
							  - Writing center people v. those who don't understand the value of (a) writing (center)
							  - Writing center v. admin

							Contextual structure
							Support (of Dean)
							Money structures (allocations) w/i the university
							War metaphors
							Students operating in "the world"
							Value - Of center to admin

							- Of center to students - Of center to faculty - Of university (lead the program)
							Challenge
							Perception of university via the success of their graduate
							Student success space appreciation
							Ethos
							Capitalism language
							Care about students
							Needs of students need to be met
							Needs of faculty need to be met
							Promoting the center - Director - Satellite coordinator
							Institutional context

Coding Schema: James Anderson

S1: 1&2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
Answer to students	Bridge WAC/WID divide		Jane and Susan's 20-pg reports	Experience of tutor - Values - Expectations - Identities (of tutor) - background	Contributes to a unanimous voice of authority	Observe other consultants consulting - suggestions - feedback	Value systems - administrators - consultants - writing center - writing program - satellites - faculty
Provide service	Rhetorically savvy (can do something)		resume	Reverting back to North	Ownership and Plagiarism and administration	Water cooler talk	Staff of satellite - instructors - WC person
Geographical component - Commuters - location	Understand their (the college) conventions		Graduate school materials	Language choice (around tutoring)	Funding	Ways people (them / other writing center consultants) respond to practice - how they interpret the tutoring that's happening - take practice that's grounded in theory as "insecurity" or "unfamiliarity" with discipline	Geographical distance - the satellite is an island (physically and metaphorically)
feasibility	Articulate genres			Teaching vs. consulting	Ivory tower	They vs. me	Own cultural atmosphere (it's not the main WC, it's not the WC, it's something in between)

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Profile of a business student	Provide "in-the-discipline" needs			Minimalist tutoring - dangers - effects of - remedial	Banking model of education		When are we teaching vs. when are we consulting
WAC/WID Divide				Conflicting needs between WC & COB	Reflective mirror		Remedial
Authority of writing				Culture of the COB center - office hours double as consulting hours - teaching v. consulting - directive tutoring v. minimalist tutoring - when one tutor does one and others do the other - questions vs. statements - small space - two consultants helping one student - evesdropping - "Customer service"	Incestuous reflection		Faculty who work with their own students

					Writing center research to guide tutoring practices			Attempts to influence others
					Complacent rhythms - hawk eyed			WC third space / not a third space
					Potential for collaborative tutoring			Who is developing the theoretical framework for the center
					WCOnline - ability to create a client sheet / share with students / send student info - What it's really used for: counting volume			Become complacent in tutoring practices - Not challenging practice - Reiterating the same values and systems expecting growth and results (but not getting anything different: definition of insanity) - Since writing center is not their main focus or discipline, they don't worry about learning new things (prof. development) - Akin to "just go to the

					writing center and fix it yourself"?
		Instructors hold authority on writing			Faculty take over sessions - Then the sessions switches to something different - Faculty give "feedback" to consultants about their tutoring - Shift of disciplinarity value (is it writing? Is it business? Why are these so different?)
		Drill and kill for citations and works cited page			What does faculty value about their students' writing
		Spending entire sessions on grammar / avoiding content			Who gets to decide overarching / driving values for the center? - WC - Admin - $$
		Plagiarism			Assessment - What does faculty value - What does the WC value

							What does the satellite value WCOnline accounts are made for students - Using artifacts / resources for tutoring just to meet assessment needs
								Faculty developing relationships with other faculty, not with the writing center
								Consultants as a "subversive force"
								Additional duties of the consultant - WC work is tacked on
								How to articulate what we're doing when other fields already have writing practices
								Accreditation
								WAC / WC link
								Misappropriating sources - Stephen north - WCOnline
								Frequent flyers - ESL not feeling competent - Drill and kill

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							"Customer Service" (business metaphors / language)
							Plagiarism → student identity - Fear of plagiarism
							Funding / co-dependence
							Writing is a social, recursive process, this satellite doesn't celebrate or allow that

Coding Schema: Amy Dillon

S1: 1 & 2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
People struggle w legal writing; this is the great equalizer	"a lot of the things you're being told to do in legal writing really contradict things you would do if you were just writing a paper for undergrad"	English Language Learners	IRAC (Introduction, rule, analysis, conclusion)	Review students' work (but not allowed to review something being turned in for a grade)	Specific knowledge	Outside of class trainings	Law school funds
First year writing in law school matters the most	Location	Basic level stuff	Repetitive	Help with something students have already turned in	Tutors have been through this before	No training	Exist in a study room in a library (when the legal fellows aren't there, the space functions as a study room)
Three hours of class time is not enough	Nobody's going to walk down to the main writing center		Memo	Asking questions of students "How are you thinking about this?"	Access to institutional knowledge and faculty	In theory, your legal writing class you first year is the training	Legal fellows don't do grading
Provides support to the faculty	Students don't leave the law building (unless it's to go home)		Don't like any kind of artistry	No line edits	Expectations that tutors will just fix everything	People who did well in ^^ are selected to be tutors	Access

Provides support to students	Big stylistic differences that you can't get in a writing center		Straight forward	Available for all, but prepared to help the first year students	There are two camps: litigation and transactional—the legal writing center is prepared only to deal with litigation (by design)	Went to lunch w faculty / quick de-briefing	Faculty relationships - Faculty are reasonable - Have an open line of communication w writing fellows
Legal writing is different from other kinds of writing	One-on-one tutoring—specifically w regard to legal writing, structure and style		Nobody cares what you think	Tutoring also has an aspect of counselling		Advocating for more training	Can't force people to come to office hours, but can be more attentive to them in class
	Also helping with research (and analysis to some extent)		Needs to have substantial support from existing case law	Lunch time training workshops		Trying to do workshops around how you tutor effectively, respond	New hires (and how that affects the fellows)
			A predictive memo	Faculty urge students to use the fellows of their class "you can see any of the legal writing fellows, but bear in mind that the ones that work for me know more about what I want"			Undefined scope of role (especially in regards to non-traditional students)

							How do you address the fact that students *still* don't feel like they are getting the support they need?
			Pellet brief					
			Bench memo					

Coding Schema: Linda Smith

S1: 1 & 2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
Plagiarism (avoiding)	Outreach (off-campus)	Basic principles of "good writing"	Scientific writing	Liaisons interchangeable	Time	Train the trainer	Students aren't trained in "formal rhetoric"
Pro-active	Help to gain point of contact	Students should be able to form a coherent argument	Journal articles	Interfacing one-on-one	Energy		Students cannot build an appropriate argument
Safe sandbox	Immediacy allows students to continue to work	Go to the WC to "get your writing critiqued"	Dissertation	Giving them both what they need and what they want	Staff		ethos
International students	Language	affixed	Thesis	Ability to navigate offering help while helping students retain their autonomy / agency	Knowledge and skills to give good info and feedback		College funds / supports
Western headspace	Student need		Scientific writing	Information access	Shouldn't be an echo chamber to reinforce poor writing		Support of the dean of graduate studies
Train people how to find reliable sources themselves	Behind the scenes / invisibility of help		Communicate research	Professional development	Cultural aspects		Staff
Discipline specific common knowledge (how to identify / use)	Help students sort through information overload			"Our default is our 'We can't do that, we're sorry, go to the writing center.'"	Resources		Marketing

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	HIPPA				Shaping /building student autonomy		Consistent, sustainable practice
	Scholarly communication						interactive
	access						
	Adding to the conversation						
	Assist w publishing						
	Hands-on						
	Doing your own writing						-

Coding Schema: Jennifer Johnson

S1: 1 & 2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
Bio faculty asked for WC support	Discipline specific vocabulary	Good test of a "lay audience" i.e. test readability of document	Lab reports (and each are different in each discipline: bio, chem, physicals, general lab reports) and there are differences amongst them - Then the 100-level bio course has a series of 5 lab reports	Never turn students away	Increased knowledge of the genres	Training happens (w/non WC people): - Formally 1/wk - Informally (i.e. "water cooler talk")	50 hours dedicated help for 100 students
WAC Fellows reached out - Created PPs - Wrote assignments - Wrote workshops - "created it all" (8_P1)	Content knowledge	Outsider perspective / see if the writing works	"formulaic" writing	Have helped 121 students in the science satellite	Content	Training might also include (change based on) the background / really dependent upon the experience of the tutor	Bio wanted writing support to offset high dropout rate with course?
Wanted out-of-class workshops	Writing in the sciences is like a "foreign language" (13)		Active vs. passive voice	When we don't know content, we fall back on LOCs (which has negative implications for tutoring (and writing center theory at large)	Familiarity w the instructors, courses, common assignments	Immersion	Staffing - Preparedness of bio GAs - What track were the bio GAs on? - Experience level (brand new or second year?)

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Psych- word of mouth	Main centers can help with lab reports from an "English perspective," satellites can help with scientific concepts		Verb tense	Immersion (for both WC folks and bio GAs) - Personality for the discipline - Asking questions - Adaptable - Interested in learning - Go-getter - noticing	Challenge: how much are we helping the student *just* through their one assignment, though one particular lab report?	Personal investigation	We (WC people) have to meet in the middle with bio people - the middle is squishy
Psych-saw need	HOCs v. LOCs ^		Personal pronouns	"Let's figure it out together" – good practice for all tutors	Challenge: too close of focus, lose bigger picture	Continual work in progress	Interdisciplinarity
Separate satellites merge	Main center has physical barriers to reach and enter, the satellite, however, does not		NOT touchy-feely; only need "is your data significant"	It's important for a (satellite) tutor to be aware of what you don't know		Knowing every single idiosyncrasy of every single assignment is unnecessary	sustainability
There is a need for WC folk to become more familiarized w disciplinary work	Different formatting systems (i.e. even know that different systems exist)		subjective (English) v. objective (sciences)	Feelings of inadequacy / terror / unease when beginning to tutor in the satellite		Bio tutors have knowledge and it's important to build upon that - content knowledge - prior teaching experience	Space / location

"We [writing centers] need to be reaching out farther" (12)	Better sense of the rhetorical whole (instead of reading line-by-line if unfamiliar with content in a main center)		Even though we have specifics genres in a college, each discipline might use / write the genre differently (i.e. lab reports) - Consistent convention differences	Discipline-specific GAs come with a different background than WC people do - We learn from each other		Training bio GAs is a useful use of time according to dept head	Visibility - Physically (the room the center is in) - And, the visibility of the tutor around the college (the satellite gets you closer to faculty to engage in important conversations)
Support to students at "all levels" (undergrad, grad, etc.)	A general writing tutor wouldn't know the disciplinary rules about verb tense, passive voice, personal pronoun usage, etc.		Style manuals are different for each discipline	WC tutors gain new knowledge		Training schedule for bio GAs is flexible / easily adjustable	Faculty relationships (importance of) - Domino effect - Word of mouth
Tutors in the main center began to see a disconnect btwn what students were being told was "good writing" and how they were being assessed (14)				Disciplinary partnership		Complications with training bio GAs: - Not credit bearing (the tutoring) - Difficult to ask them to	Faculty buy in represents a kind of lineage: Instructors question student writing → WAC → satellite center

						prep or do any work outside of the center	
Main center and satellite are complementary				Helping new (Bio) GAs realize what they already know (and how to talk about it)		Frame outside readings as suggestions (w bio GAs)	How do you reach faculty that aren't WAC fellows
				Bio GAs that are teachers are better prepared - They have their own bio expertise - Also know what kind of questions students tend to have		Have tailored / specific workshops: - Non-native speakers - Working with clients w learning disabilities - APA (different science disciplines)	Marketing the satellite - Dept meetings - Speak the audience's language (graphs – that's what they know how to read)
				Giving bio GAs perspective (on what it's like for students to be "newbies" - Knowledge doesn't come naturally - Common questions - Grade lab reports: see where		Build on what bio GAs already know	Creating value for both faculty and students

				students struggle			
				Adaptability		Multiple sources of funding leads to unclear hierarchies that can impede training	How do faculty value WC work? - WAC fellows: favorably - Those who think WC are impeding on their territory: not favorably
				Trainer accommodates GAs			Writing center work > their teaching of writing
				Read-aloud protocol changes - Psych writing deals w confidentiality - Space constraints don't always allow for it - Shorter works (can read the whole thing to get the entire picture before beginning to tutor)			Writing happens **outside** the [science] lab
				Reflection about practice (deep and regular)			Faculty (in the sciences) don't teach writing - Curriculum overload

								- Discomfort w teaching something they don't "expert" in (haven't had training) - They would just prefer to have someone else do it
				Helps tutor reaffirm students' anxieties				We do not assess student work
				Sense of the whole				Me versus them
				Student validation				HOCs vs LOCs
				Working to train GAs just like she works with clients - Noticing - Questioning (i.e. tell me about your decision)				Negative narrative still circulates among faculty about student writing
				Directive tutoring				War metaphor (when working with faculty) - allies
				The writing consultation might encapsulate broader definitions / broader definition of what tutoring writing in the sciences looks like (17_P2) - Concepts - Vocabulary				How do we train tutors when they don't have "released time" for training?

				- Writing - Time management - Math - Other resources available on campus - Excel - Creating graphs				
								Space restrictions
								Funding comes from a different place than who staffs the center
								Can we do both? Generalist and specialist?
								Profile of a satellite tutor: - Matching / appropriate background - Adaptability - Self-starter
								Certain centers (bio, ssc, psych) have more weight than others within the college
								Dealing w difficult
								What happens when not everyone buys in to a satellite center?
								Backdoor / underground tutoring (for physics students)

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							- Students began to identify the need for the WC
							Faculty discomfort
							Correlation between WAC and acceptance of a writing center?
							Satellite coordinator does not get to choose her bio GAs, but (unlike COB) does get to train them - Whose making these decisions
							Data-driving evidence of value of the satellite center
							Satellites who aren't "as important" should be worried about their own sustainability

Coding Schema: John Williams

S1: 1 & 2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
"there was no place where we intentionally got together to do this activity"	Already have a common ground	Can see a blind spot that the writer cannot see	Transitioning from Engineering writing to the journal of writing center scholarship	Modelling	Content barrier is broken down		Creation was a culmination of a number of different things - Move from an old building
This space was formed somewhat organically	Don't want to leave their building	Form / content divide	Structure of the article is diff from engineering	Review of someone else's writing	Field barrier could also potentially be broken down		Interesting the group of ppl who ebb and flow through the space
"it's like, why wouldn't I just go over to the writing center? … honestly, I have no idea, I cannot tell you why I will go to that writing group every Wednesday and I honestly wouldn't even think to go to the writing center"	Barriers to writing: - Already have to get situated in the office (the have to do it somewhere else) - Distance - Already get some of that "tutoring" naturally from mentor - 100 other things to do	Would appreciate a second set of eyes in the front and back part of the writing - front end: help organize ideas - back end: grammar / style / transitions	Flow is different		"if somebody understands what submitting to an IEEE publication is like, they get why you structured the paper that way"		When there are resources available, how do writers choose which space to use?

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I'd go to the WC if I were really stuck	Rapport	An intentional third part, someone who's separate from the content	Attention to detail is important		One less barrier for writing		Know the WC is close, but it's a learning curve to just get out the door of (his own building)
The disciplinary barrier is already addressed in a space like this	Writer needs to know he is getting something out of this	Helps to gain new perspectives	Engineering is IMRAD; WC studies needs a common connecting thread		References / in-text citations, etc.		"does the WC make the cut" for his time among all other things? // prioritizing
	Value / benefit	Potential to gain "university-wide" feedback	Writing in different disciplines makes me have to learn in the moment		Getting to nuts and bolts of developing a clean argument		The faculty shelter Wednesdays for grad students in that space
	Marie is good at writing, communication, rhetoric	Chance for collaboration / interdisciplinarity	Passive v. active voice		Developing content		Move if the dean needs that space, but rarely for anything else // cautious not to use it as a classroom, then the registrar controls the activities done in that room
	A satellite in the school of engineering: "okay, now I'm just getting technical"	Could be a point of connection for people across disciplines	Conference papers				The fact that it exists sends a message

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	Faculty is there to keep writer's on track / offer feedback		Abstracts				VTECC is a hybrid research space
			Journal articles				There's not a writing course
							Identity
							Need funding, resources, someone to direct the center
							Very intentional that the space is not a classroom

Coding Schema: Helen Miller

S1: 1 & 2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
Convenience - Commuters	Personal knowledge of subject	Remedial writing help	Business writing is more concise	How much do we help a student?	Misappropriating old, dated WC issues (then the circulation of those narratives)		"Everyone sees [the satellite coordinator] as being the one in charge"
Customization	Getting to know the instructors	Bad writers	Business writing and creative writing are at opposite ends of the spectrum	Correcting grammar misrepresents students	What does "writing" mean in this satellite?		What does "helping" students mean?
Customer service	In the groove of business writing	"Writing in general"	Clarity is highly valued / clarity is the goal (vs. the enjoyment of writing)	Difficult to explain why things are "correct"	Often a "one-person operation"		Mktg the center
	Remember assignment from previous semester(s)	English degrees	Efficiency	Rarely follow up (even though a current system permits it)	Do all the administration		Frequent flyers
	Know instructor's expectations	Technical knowledge of writing	Four words can be replaced with one	ELL	Often can't go to the bathroom (i.e. leave the space)		Faculty's support of the center has grown over the years - They want the tutors to work with the students and "fix them"
	Smaller batch of instructors to keep track of	Focus of language	Susan's paper / research report	Show students resources - *Everyday Writer* - Sample APA paper	Helping three people 15 mins before close		Students are bad writers

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		Dealing with fewer students helps us to really meet their needs	Starting from scratch	Resumes (assignments vs. "real life") - If a resume is for a class, it's purpose is to get a good grade - But, if they are graduating, then students are encouraged to "think deeper"	Teach APA	Center is a fishbowl - Are able to establish relationships just with those walking by - Admin can see they're busy - Admin can see they're not busy		Business language: - Commercial (i.e. elevator pitch)
			"Someone who really needs help"	Personal statements	95% of students want us to proofread their papers	Tutoring 5 ppl at once (or more)		
				Scholarships	"I've had [faculty] give me their assignments to look at the assignment description" (proofreading)			
				Case studies	"I've looked at professor's resumes" / "I've looked at their research papers and read them" (proofreading)			

			Content is separate from form	There is *almost* a right or wrong answer		
			"real"	Policy for helping with "worksheets" (i.e. business worksheets, grammar worksheets)		
			"force" APA	Feel like I'm affecting content / unease with working w content		
				Building confidence in students / launching baby birds		
				Help with "correct answers" and "form," but the content, the students "can take it from there"		
				Many students work with their instructor (because of the day)		
				Tracking "teaching" or tracking "consulting"		
				Teaching vs. correcting		
				Assignments for a class = do well		

				Writings because graduating = think deeper / push to the next level			
				One-person show			
				Working with 5 (or more) ppl at once			
				Scholarly journals are not often used in business writing			
				Tutoring practices differ based on instructor: - Jane – every comma better be in place - Susan – different - Students will ask "is this right" they answer they receive is "For her, yes."			

Coding Schema: Mary Jones

S1: 1 & 2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
Non-traditional students	Sophisticated	Value face-to-face encounters	A critical review of an article	Ultimate goals are the same: - Clear writing - Expressed well - Organized knowing your audience	Writing consultant can be invested in a more personal way or stronger	"I'm a strong writer"	Staffing workshops
"faculty had some cautions and disappointments about student writing"	"deep"	There's something about instant feedback, gestures, facial expression	A literature review	College of education students are going to be representing themselves publicly // creation of public identity important	Opportunity to learn new things	"my master's is in literature, not writing"	Support of the dean and director of school of nursing was critical
Teach APA	More complex	More personal	Annotated bibliography	LOCs are important	Tutor engagement and investment both professionally and personally that keeps an added spark	"my background not bring in rhetoric / composition … I'm continually learning"	Many of the nursing faculty have participated in WAC
To introduce students to the technologies and support provided by the college	Understanding APA has more pressure attached to it	More give-and-take	APA style	Teaching in a writing class, we're also tutoring the students	Valuable for students and faculty	Professional development	CHHS is one of the fastest growing colleges on campus
Eases students into academic reading and writing	UWC Online (online		APA workshops	Teaching allows us to establish trust and boundaries so	Build a repertoire	Talking and listening, reading	Shortage in nursing faculty

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tutoring system)				you can tell them if "they have broccoli in their teeth"			
Faculty are committed and particular about APA style	Librarians offer series of videos / tutorial – let's students		Writing in the nursing context	Level of trust	Perhaps it's nice for students to have a variety of writing consultants	"I'm certainly am committed … I get excited about, you know learning about rhetoric and composition"	Director encourages faculty to take WAC—which makes it a kind of entry point
Students feel pressure	Access (from home)		Workshops are geared towards the assignments	What do relationships lead to? What do they afford?		Have people to talk about ELL	These teachers ^^ are enthusiastic about writing centers and writing
Students should be strongly embedded in APA	Off-campus		Hot topics paper	"When you're working with writing, you're also working with reading."		Collaborative assessment	Establishing rapport
Work is submitted online	access		Policy letter to a legislature			Informal talk	camaraderie
Need to learn how to navigate Canvas (LMS)	Workshops are geared towards the assignments		Position paper			newsletter	"You build relationships that add to how you're trying to support students"
Writing in word documents / sending attachments	Help students understand that rhetorical considerations are discipline-specific					Occasionally assigned readings to prepare for bi-weekly meetings	Implications of public writing. (How) are we preparing students for that?
Working w new computer	Teach assignments via nursing examples						Prior knowledge of tutor

Director of the writing center - Her vision - Her capabilities - Her connections - Her relationships	Establishes a relationship						Have weekly administrative meetings
WAC	"We want to work with you"						Even though a certain college "funds" a satellite, "it ain't that much money" (does funding reflect value?)
Established relationships	Collaborations (but who's open to that)						Location could be a detriment or a benefit - Needs to be consistent - visible
							Marketing - signage - bookmarks - hidden
							Scheduling needs to reflect student need
							Faculty meetings to do schpeal
							kairos
							The writing center and / or concerns w teaching writing are on the backburner when larger departmental

							problems overshadow
				-			Politics of who gets credit hours
							Where do you house the writing center
				-			Trend for hybridity
							"Seems like the writing center could make a case for being much more campus-wide"
							Unless it's made its own settling and established itself, WC is easily pushed aside
							"who could be against a writing center?"
							"The whole idea of associating the writing center with remedial writing as opposed to developing writers moving towards expert writers, it kind of has to hold all that, but it's much easier if you see a problem that maybe it could solve rather than something that's a little, I don't know, less easy to measure"

							Breaking the attitude or coming with assumptions and then not seeing anything different

Coding Schema: Lisa Williams

S1: 1 & 2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
Business writing is counter-intuitive	Genre specific writing	Supports students from 30 different fields	Less is more	"we're better [tutors] because we've worked in industry, we understand the purpose of a resume and a cover letter" (7).	Practical application	Poorly	The Dean sees value - Reaping real benefits
	Faculty accessibility	Don't have the same ability as the satellites to form relationships with faculty	Time is money	Ethos	"better understanding of here's why you do what you do, or why you nee to do your writing in this specific format" (11)	"I had a couple of e-mails that said, 'here's how you enter people and log people'" (13).	Those higher ups on main campus don't see value in the main center - "students are expected to know how to write" (15)
	Better understanding of assignments	More "academic" approach to writing	"Business writing is not creative writing, it's not expansive writing, it's fact-based writing, it's very specific writing, and that's a whole new thought process for many students" (1).	"attack" a piece of writing		Expected to know	Students don't know how to write
	Better understanding	Opportunity to work on	Don't want "fluff"	Practical application		Really had no training	It's a reflection on a college if their

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	of professors' needs / expectations	basic conventions like grammar or punctuation					students go into the world not knowing how to write
	Home center is more creative and focused on the writer/ COB focuses on what your audience needs to know	Work on organization, but in a broader, more general sense	Business writing and other writing's processes, though, are the same	View work students bring in from a manager's perspective		Second-hand training	space
	Students who go to the main center come to the satellite and say, "It's better here" (12).	The "home" center's analysis = freewriting	Already an "approved format" / predetermined formula	Bad grammar is a reflection of the student as an employee		Pick it up	funding
	The satellite understands what the student is trying to accomplish / sees the usefulness / the goal		No personal in business writing	Business="judging" WC = "art" / "creation"		-	Welcoming environment / safe space / comfortable / spacious
	Field of specialization (medicinal specialty		memo	There to help and serve			location

	metaphor: you don't go to a general practitioner to get brain surgery						
	"We can help [ESL students] write in their genre" (14).		Direct letter	Tutoring doesn't, or shouldn't, change across discipline. It's the goal of the writing that changes			visibility
			Indirect letter	Safe space			Relationships with students
			Research paper	Practice interviewing with a student			investment
			No opinion "I don't really care what you think about this topic, your job is to research it and prove it to me" (5).	Practical application			Selling point
			Cover letters	Worked on developing business cards			Frequent fliers - Sometimes too comfortable - Indication that students are finding value
			Accounting memo	Focus on content			Satellite center allows writers to: - Be more confident in

							the ability to ask for help - Made the person more confident overall - Helped with writing - Gives courage to ask questions - Helps both the person and the writer
			Analysis				Students come back to share outcomes
			ethics papers				Helps ESL students
			Application letters				Communication
			Business cards				COB satellite is a "much better place to work" (than main center) (23).
			"absolute formula"				One more things (or service we provide to) we do for our students

Coding Schema: Carol Davis

S1: 1 & 2	S1: 3	S1: 4	S2: 5	S2: 6 & 7	S2: 8	S2: 9	S3: 10, 11, 12
Communication is a primary outcome for Engineering—ABET	Not writing for a broad audience; you are writing for your boss	Constant visibility, access		-	Situated learning	Willingness factor	Development of these programs are contingent on the directors
Effective communication: graduation requirement	Writing is embedded in specific contexts	Help w writing				Can't be afraid to ask students questions	VTECC mostly a research center for the last 10 years
Content and language are not separable	Text is part of a dialogue	"we don't intervene in student writing"				Willingness to move outside disciplinary knowledge	Development depends on director's position in the university / sabbatical
Embedded writing	Project-based learning	You can't serve every student in every college				Would be better to train "writing experts" to help engineers rather than vice versa	Strategic plan for the center
Social constructivist		What do you do in that space					VTECC fashioned from Lerner's *Idea of a Writing Laboratory*
Needs to be room for focused writing instruction in classes							How much shaping does a writing support space need?
Interdisciplinarity (gives people							circulation

more of a sense of connection)							
Contextualized within their work							No staff
People (grad students) need to have time and focus to write (often with ppl who are doing the same kind of writing)							Budgets / research budgets / overhead money / small grants
Sharing / collaboration							Trying to serve 10,000 students
access							"we don't need to create another writing center … and we don't need to create a discipline specific writing center
Relationships w students							Thinking of ways of collaboration, but it all comes back to funding
We do "writing theory," not everyone else does							New dean (rollover of faculty who fund the center)
Build up staff and people who are familiar w disciplinary knowledge							Grows out communication in the discipline
Language of the discipline							Writing doesn't happen in a vacuum // It's embedded in contextual spaces

Ethos							Background of director
Access to disciplinary literacy							Constraints on money means no staff
							Trouble w staffing somebody "who is fluent in both writing and engineering at some level and who has the language to talk about both"
							"when we do writing in the disciplines, sure then yeah there was a lot of intervening because it was teaching, grading, conferencing …"
							How much help is help? - Is it enough to serve 1 student? 100? 1,000? - What makes us earn our value? / or be equal to the expense of the center? S
			-				Funded through grants and foundation donation (i.e. mostly funded by sources outside of the university)

							Who gets access to the space - College gives us space
				-			Freedom w/ donation $$
							Location is huge
							Because the university provides the space, outreach should happen from that space
							Directors created the space (and the center was intentionally created in the "center")
							Competition for the space
							Space also implicates its function(s)