Reflections on the Madison Writing Center
from Alumni and from Other Writing Centers

Kirsten Jamieson, Director of the Center for Writing, University of Minnesota
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA and Academic Staff

"My years at the UW-Madison Writing Center were, without question, the most valuable and formative ones in my entire career as a teacher/writer/mentoring program administrator. From my experiences consulting with students one-to-one, sharing my own writing with supportive peers, collaborating with instructors across the curriculum, and participating in an always reflective and rigorous professional learning community, I grew both personally and professionally. The Madison Writing Center continues to be a model for my own work directing a university writing center, and its leaders a source of inspiration, support, and joyful collaboration."

Rhea Lathan, Assistant Professor of English, Florida State University
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA

"The Writing Center fostered my desire to be a bridge between the larger community and the university. Through my experience as a Writing Center instructor I was able to see how all aspects of my scholarship and activism could come together."

John Duffy, Director of the Writing Program, University of Wisconsin-Dame
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA

"I never realized just how unfulfilled I was cleaning the penguin tank at the Madison Zoo until I became a writing center tutor and... or... or... "Working as a tutor in the UW Writing Center opened my mind (and heart) to a new kind of teaching, one that forever changed my ideas about learning and redirected the course of my career."

Julie Nelson Christoph, Associate Professor of English, University of Puget Sound; Fulbright Visiting Scholar, University of Zanzibar, 2009-10
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA

"Teaching in the Writing Center prepared me not only to teach writing but also to be comfortable doing committee work and working with grants as a liberal arts professor. Thanks to the mentoring and training I received while working with faculty and graduate students in other disciplines at the Writing Center, I emerged from graduate school with an understanding of professional expectations in other disciplines that I would otherwise have had to develop through trial and error in my first academic position." or... or... "Having taught at Madison's Writing Center is like having learned to cook in Julia Child's kitchen."

Eric Pritchard, Assistant Professor of English, University of Texas-Austin
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA

"As a past instructor in the UW-Madison Community Writing Assistance Program, I remain grateful to have had the opportunity to bridge my commitments to literacy education with social justice and community organizing. The program demonstrates how writing helps transform the too often real fissures between universities and communities into a mutually invested and mutually beneficial partnership."

Rebecca Entel, Assistant Professor of English, Cornell College
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA, Former Assistant Director of the Writing Fellows Program

"My time with the Writing Center, Online Writing Center, and the Writing Fellows has inspired me always to embrace ambitious, innovative ways of working with students."

Bonnie Smith, Associate Professor of English, Director of the Writing Center, Belmont University
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA, Former Assistant Director of Writing Across the Curriculum at UW

"My time at the UW Writing Center taught me that all we really need to make a writing center are two simple ingredients: a welcoming space and a kind listener. But working in each tutorial session was also a powerful testimony of this very moment in a writer's life—not the writer's past or the writer's future but of all that is possible in the precious time of a session."

Alice Robison, Assistant Professor of English, Arizona State University
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA, Former Assistant Director of Writing Across the Curriculum at UW

"The UW-Madison Writing Center taught me more about writing in academic disciplines than I could have ever imagined. It made me work harder to clarify my expectations for my own students in a way that helped them better succeed in my own writing classes."

Matthew Capdevielle, Director of the Writing Center, University of Notre Dame
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA

"The time I spent immersed in the culture of mentorship and collaboration at the UW Writing Center revolutionized my teaching and inspired me to work on building a genuine and generous community wherever I find myself teaching writing with others."

Catherine Prendergast, Professor of English, Director, First-Year Composition, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA

"What I remember most about working for the Writing Center at the University of Wisconsin is that I was both respected for my skills, and challenged to grow. I think reference the Writing Center as the standard for professional development."

Dennis Britton, Assistant Professor of English, University of New Hampshire
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA

"Working at the Writing Center taught me that many of the issues that writers face are universal. I often ask myself the same questions about my writing that I might have asked a first-year student writing a paper for a biology class."

Bryan Trabold, Assistant Professor of English, Suffolk University
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA

"The Writing Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison offered several services and programs—one-on-one tutoring, the Writing Fellows, classes on a wide range of topics—all of which were infused with a spirit that somehow managed to be open, welcoming, accessible, and highly professional at the same time. It was, without question, where some of the most important teaching and learning within the university took place."

Alice Robison, Assistant Professor of English, Arizona State University
UW-Madison Ph.D., Former Writing Center TA, Former Assistant Director of Writing Across the Curriculum at UW

"The UW-Madison Writing Center is a people-centered and inclusive place—a home for all: the signs are on the walls. Pictures of consultants reflecting diversity and family; students' graffiti showing flexibility and ownership; the Kenne cloth on the noticeboard showing multiculturals."

Michele Eodic, Director of Learning, Teaching, and Writing, University of Oklahoma
Current President, International Writing Centers Association

"Excellence in writing centers everywhere can often be traced back to the Writing Center at UW-Madison."

Neal Lerner, Director of Training in Communication
Instruction, MIT; Former editor of The Writing Center Journal

"In honor of your 40th birthday, I celebrate the University of Wisconsin Madison Writing Center, From Your Writing Fellows, to your Writing Center Tutors, to your colleagues, to your series, to your remarkable online resources, you have been an invaluable resource and model, not merely to the lucky students, staff, and faculty at UW-Madison, but to us all in the wider circle of writing studies."

Jeanne Simpson, Director of the Writing Centers, Arizona State University
Former President, International Writing Centers Association

"For the whole writing center community, the center at UW-Madison is the ‘go to’ source for best practices and innovative ideas. Congratulations to the whole writing center gang at UW-Madison!"

Naomi Silver, Associate Director, Sweetland Writing Center
University of Michigan

"Learning about the Writing Center's exciting new podcasting project at the 2008 Summer Institute galvanized me to think of ways to incorporate new media into our own promotions and outreach—and fed into what became a wildly successful set of courses in new media writing. The Center's incorporation of new media into the very fabric of writing center work—from tutor training to promotion to scholarship to community outreach—is a real inspiration."

Paula Gillespie, Associate Professor of English, Director of the Center for Excellence in Writing, Florida International University
Former President of the International Writing Centers Association

"The UW-Madison Writing Center is the gold standard for the care and creation of tutors, from its outreach into the community, from its services to students, from its services to faculty, from its stellar Web site—there’s a gestalt of excellence in all it does."

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"The Writing Center at the University of Wisconsin Madison is the gold standard for professional development."

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