Global response (higher order) entails responding to the writing as a whole and the elements that effect the overall communication of the writer’s ideas. That is, global comments reflect elements such as organization, audience, purpose, tone, transitions, and idea development and support.

Local response (lower order) entails responding the details of the writing, such as sentence structure, paragraph coherency, and diction. This entails examining writing for general grammatical and mechanical errors such punctuation and spelling.

Proofreading and Line-editing are the final steps a writer takes before presenting his or her work to the audience. This entails examining writing for general grammatical and mechanical errors such punctuation and spelling. These are sentence level rhetorical approaches used by writers after accomplishing the final stages of content revision.

The Conversational Model

Directive vs. Non-directive, or Informative- vs, Inquiry-based Tutoring

- Instructional: The tutor identifies errors in the student’s paper and fixes them for the student with little explanation for the choices in revision that are made.
- Minimalist: Entails very little interaction between the tutor and the actual paper that she is working with. Instead, the tutor answers student questions and concerns about writing while providing minimal textual input.
- Socratic: involves a tutor that neither directly addresses the students’ papers nor directly answers the students’ questions. Instead, the tutor constructs leading questions to guide students to their own recognition of the weaknesses in their writing and how best to remedy those weaknesses.
- Conversational: Prompts the tutor to use a combination of all of these methods, focusing on cultivating the conversation with the student in order to facilitate her writing. Avoiding purely directive instruction, although implementing a directive method when necessary, the conversational model of tutoring is a less formulaic and more organic approach to tutoring. This method relies on the tutor to determine the appropriate level of directive and non-directive techniques to serve individual student’s needs.

Tensions and Contentions

- Content Based tutoring vs. Generalist Tutoring
- Remedial Space and/or Editing Service vs. Teaching Space
- Power and Authority afforded to a Peer Tutor
- The Writing Center as Training for Teachers
- Differentiating Writing Center’s contribution to writing instruction and academic culture

The mission of the Georgia State Writing Studio is to enhance undergraduate and graduate student writing by encouraging all writers to participate in regular conversation about the writing process and their academic work. We believe that talking about ideas and the art of writing with knowledgeable readers creates the ideal learning environment for practicing personal expression, persuasion, and critical thinking, all of which are vital to succeeding in the arts of academic and professional writing and communication. We support a community where writers, readers, and teachers all learn from each other, by responding to each other’s texts with engaged conversation.
Connecting Writing Center Pedagogy to the Classroom

Conferencing Strategies

- Focus on learning rather than on product. Your goal is to improve their writing/thinking, not just the single paper discussed in the conference.
- Pick your battles. Don’t try to discuss every problem in a paper as students will only become overwhelmed and frustrated. Focus on a skill that you wanted them to acquire through completing the assignment and on patterns of error.
- Empower the student. Give them the pen. Encourage them to lead the discussion (asking them to bring a list of questions to the conference sometimes helps).
- If you read papers during the conferences, read them aloud or have the students read them to you.
- Have the student construct a plan for revision. You can either have them jot down a few notes informally during the conference, or you can have them turn in a formal plan at your next class meeting.
- Use the first person—“I couldn’t quite follow the idea here” rather than “You are unclear.”
- Remember to give yourself breaks in between conferences for your own sanity and in case of late arrivals.
- Hold students accountable for missing conferences, which will increase the significance of these conferences in the minds of your students.
- Keep the conferences to a reasonable time, again, for your own sanity. Fifteen to thirty minutes is a reasonable amount of time to spend in a conference.
- Be aware of body posture. Try to sit next to them or at a corner rather than across from them. When you sit across from them, you place yourself in a position of power.

Teaching Peer Review

- Encouraging students to understand the difference between responding as a reader rather than an expert
- Giving students the confidence to give constructive feedback to their peers
- Teaching students the difference between evaluation, alteration, clarification, and suggestion

Syllabus Blurb

The purpose of the Writing Studio is to enhance the writing instruction by providing undergraduate and graduate students with an experienced reader who engages them in conversation about their writing assignments and ideas, and familiarizes them with audience expectations and academic genre conventions. We focus on the rhetorical aspects of texts, and provide one-on-one, student-centered teaching that corresponds to each writer’s composing process. Although we are not a line-editing or proofreading service, we are happy to discuss grammar concerns with students from a holistic perspective. Tutors will be alert listeners and will ask questions, and will not judge or evaluate the work in progress. We offer 30 minute sessions (for undergraduate students) and 60 minute sessions (for graduate students) for face-to-face tutoring. Through Write/Chat, our online tutoring service, we offer 15-minute sessions that address short, brief concerns. In addition, the GSU Writing Studio will sponsor workshops, led by faculty and staff, on various topics dealing with academic writing. Please visit the Writing Studio in GCB 976 or at www.writingstudio.gsu.edu for more information. We look forward to seeing you.
Sending students to the Writing Studio

The Writing Studio tutors work with students at all stages and levels of writing, as we are not just a remediation clinic. As such, we can address a wide range of issues with students. So, before sending students to the Writing Studio, it is important to clarify with them why you are suggesting they go. Students can come to us for help brainstorming possible essay topics, clarifying thesis statement, or organizing their essay.

Sharing these kinds of details with students allows them to the opportunity to think critically about writing and thus encourages improvement for future writing projects. In addition, since we do not want to work at cross-purposes with your expectations regarding a particular assignment, please encourage your students to bring their assignment sheets with them to their sessions.

Finally, while we understand that requiring students to come to the Writing Studio is meant to encourage the students to spend more time on their writing, we’ve noticed that it often has the opposite effect and makes it logistically difficult for the Studio to work with all of the students who’ve been required to come. So, please do not make Writing Studio visits mandatory. If you would like to check on whether one of your students as seen a tutor in the Writing Studio, please free to call or stop by and ask our friendly desk staff.

The Writing Studio and Graduate Students

What we can do for you

Our Writing Studio consists of tutors whose areas of study include Rhetoric and Composition, Literary Studies, and Creative Writing. This means there are tutors available in our space who potentially work with the same professors, take the same classes, attend the same conferences, and even focus on the same areas of scholarship you do. While it is possible that you have a community of fellow graduate students outside of the Studio who will read your papers and provide you with feedback on your writing, this community is often working within the same deadlines, and finding the time to help each other during “crunch time” may be difficult. The Writing Studio provides you with the opportunity to talk with a peer about your work in a space that is already accounted for in our graduate students’ schedules and therefore is not an additional burden.

What you can do for us

A great deal of our tutors’ motivation to work in the Writing Studio comes from the opportunity to learn from their tutorial sessions. This learning can happen in various areas, including how to relate to students, how to construct successful assignments and assignment feedback, and how to reconfigure their own writing process and strategies to communicate more effectively. Therefore, our tutors would greatly benefit from the opportunity to learn from you based on the concerns you have while developing your scholarship.
Bibliography