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Mending the Damaged Path: How to Avoid Conflict of Expectation When Setting up a Writing Center

Karen Rodis

In an article entitled “Talking to the Boss,” which appeared in the Fall/Winter 1988 *Writing Center Journal*, Diana George makes a valiant attempt to “mend the damaged path between the English department and the writing center.” George rightly sees this damaged path as the result of poor communication between writing centers and English departments—of misunderstandings held by English departments as to what goes on in writing centers, how it goes on, and why. Her method of mending the damaged path is to talk: to tell our colleagues in English departments (and perhaps in colleges and universities at large) what we do.

She talks well, isolating two basic inequities that she feels are the cause of the damaged path: inequities of purpose and inequities of staff. To mend the broken path, George implies, is to mend those inequities: first, it is essential that the “writing center’s philosophy of composition . . . should reflect [the department’s] philosophy of composition”—in other words, the philosophies of teaching writing held by the department should mirror or equal those of the writing center; second, it is essential that the staff of the writing center be perceived by the department and by the college or university at large as equal partners in the teaching of composition.

Talking with the boss, however, is perhaps not the most effective way to eliminate these inequities. We have been talking for many years now, and misperceptions persist. Moreover, to believe that enlightening the boss will bring an end to these inequities implies that the responsibility for these inequities, as well as the power to correct them, lies primarily with the boss. This implication is dangerous to writing centers in that it renders us power-

less: the responsibility and the power lie elsewhere; the best we can do is to convince the powers that be to shine on us. In fact, it is empowering to writing centers and to those who work there to realize that much of the fault for these inequities—and, therefore, much of the power to remedy them—lies with us.

The inequities that George speaks of result from what I call Expectation Conflict—that is, the many conflicting expectations that a tutor at a writing center encounters each and every time she tutors a student. Conflict of expectation usually begins with the English department, whose members are often vague as to what they expect of their writing center. “We want to provide our students with a place where they can get help with their writing” is a common enough expectation, but when pressed as to exactly how it is that students are to be helped, department members will often shrug their shoulders and say something about grammar drills and other remedial aids. The instructors of composition, even when they are not members of the department, will often echo these sentiments: writing centers provide a place to send students who have serious syntactical and grammatical problems with their writing. The students who use the writing center often come because an instructor told them to get help with these remedial issues, and so they often expect that these are the only issues which the tutor ought to address. After all, the tutor may say a lot of fine things about the process of writing, but it is the professor who gives the grade. Finally, there are the expectations of the tutors themselves, who above all seek to assist the student in the very complex process of writing by addressing issues of content, structure, logic, and style.

These conflicting expectations are not simply the fault of our bosses and colleagues. Yes, these people often misperceive what it is we can do at our writing centers. And yes, that misperception is sometimes annoying, if not crippling. However, it is perhaps time to examine our own part in Expectation Conflict, to see precisely how much of the responsibility lies with us. This paper is based on research which indicates that much of the responsibility for Expectation Conflict is in fact our own. The degree and kind of conflict vary from institution to institution but seem to be firmly rooted within the very structure, the very set-up, of many of our writing centers. Changing the structure of our centers could lead to centers that run more effectively, freed from the burdens of Expectation Conflict.

Let’s examine the matter more closely.

Methods

In order to understand Expectation Conflict better, I undertook in the winter of 1988 an informal study of three Cleveland area universities:

Cleveland State University (where I served that year as director), Case Western Reserve University, and Baldwin-Wallace College. Other than being geographically near one another, the three schools are very different: Cleveland State is a public university in an urban environment, open to any student who wishes to attend; Case Western Reserve University is a prestigious private university known for its engineering school, its medical school, and its programs in the sciences; Baldwin-Wallace is a small, liberal arts college with strong programs in business, education, and music, as well as the humanities. Accordingly, the writing centers at these institutions differ in the kinds of students served, as well as in the kinds of problems which the centers routinely encounter. The centers also differ in size—that is, the number of students served and the number of tutors serving them. However, the three centers share the important objective of helping students to improve their writing. And, because I had been employed at all three centers at one time or another in my early academic career, I knew that they were all in one way or another sharing the problem of Expectation Conflict. In studying these institutions, then, my objectives were three-fold:

1. To map the course of Expectation Conflict as it develops within the composition system of three universities;
2. To determine how this course varies from institution to institution;
3. To clarify what relationship exists between the structure and organization of a writing center and the particular degree and kind of Expectation Conflict from which it suffers.

My method was to distribute three separate questionnaires. The first went to the instructors of composition at all three schools, including professors, adjunct lecturers, and graduate teaching assistants—in short, anyone who was then teaching composition. This questionnaire asked instructors what they expected of writing centers and how these expectations differed from what they themselves taught in their own composition classrooms. Not all instructors responded to the study, but the number of those who did respond was approximately the same at all three schools: 9 from Cleveland State, 8 from Case Western, and 10 from Baldwin-Wallace. A second questionnaire went to the tutors of the three writing centers, questioning them as to what they had expected from their positions as tutors as well as what they felt was expected from them. Because the writing centers vary in size, the number of tutor responses varied: 8 tutors responded from Cleveland State, 2 from Case Western, and 4 from Baldwin-Wallace. A third questionnaire went to the students who used the writing centers at these universities. Students were asked what they expected from writing centers and what they thought they actually accomplished by going to the

writing center. Again, the number of responses varied considerably: 100 students responded from Cleveland State, 20 from Case Western, and 60 from Baldwin-Wallace. The responses might surprise you.

Cleveland State University

In order to examine Expectation Conflict at these three schools, it was important to consider 1) how each writing center was conceived; 2) who staffs each writing center; and 3) who attends each writing center and why. As I said earlier, Cleveland State University is an urban commuter school with an open admissions enrollment policy. In other words, anyone who wishes to attend Cleveland State University may attend. Accordingly, some students at Cleveland State are less prepared for college-level thinking and writing than are their contemporaries at Case Western Reserve or Baldwin-Wallace. The Writing Center at Cleveland State was set up in order to assist some of these poorly-prepared students: it was, in other words, conceived of as a remedial service to be staffed by graduate assistants and attended almost exclusively by students of freshman composition who are required or strongly urged to come.

When I arrived at Cleveland State in the fall of 1987 as the Director of the Writing Center, the center had been running smoothly for many years. I was impressed with the operation: eight tutors (five “on-call” each quarter) serviced as many as two hundred students per quarter, with each student required to come to the center for six visits. The staff was excellent—so excellent, in fact, that I did not at first perceive that Expectation Conflict existed. However, after a few weeks, the grumblings began to occur. The tutors were finding it hard to fulfill the expectations of the instructors and the students—never mind their own expectations—within the confines of the half hour tutorial. The general gripe was with the instructors: “All they think we can do here is grammar,” said one tutor. “The paper is a mess, and I’m supposed to work on commas. What good does it do to put all the commas in place when the sentence is absolutely devoid of sense or significance?” What did the instructors *really* expect?

In fact, according to my study, two thirds of the nine instructors of composition at Cleveland State University who responded to my survey expected a writing center to be a place for students to get remedial help for writing problems such as grammar, usage, syntax, or punctuation. Even though most of these instructors pay lip service to the idea of writing centers being a place for students to learn how to write, and even though all of these instructors stated that the most important aspects of good writing were content, development, and structure, two thirds of the instructors who responded said that the proper role for writing centers is remedial. “Quite

frankly,” reported one instructor, “working through the idea is my domain. It’s what I do in class. What I don’t have time to do in class, or even in conference, is to go through endless sentence fragment drills and comma splice exercises. They can get that at the Writing Center.”

The attitude implicit in this instructor’s remarks is that the writing center tutor is not considered a fellow teacher of the writing process; rather, the tutor is regarded as merely an assistant to the instructor, someone who will address the “lesser” issues of grammar, syntax, punctuation. Lest you think this conclusion unfounded, consider the following statistics from the study: six of the nine instructors stated clearly that it was the role of the Writing Center to assist the instructor by addressing remedial issues; two felt that the tutor should function as a kind of cheerleader, helping students become more confident and enthusiastic about their own writing. Only one of the instructors felt that the tutors were partners in the teaching of writing. This perception is made even more striking by the fact that some of the instructors at Cleveland State are themselves graduate students at other institutions and have little more training in composition theory and practice than do the tutors there.

The tutors at Cleveland State felt trapped by the instructors’ perceptions. The trap was certainly not one that they expected. My study asked tutors what they expected their roles to be within the total composition system. The questionnaire provided several possible answers, including the expectation that they were assistants to the student whose goal it was to become more confident and skilled in the writing process. Most tutors (six of the eight polled) had expected to be teachers of the writing process; the other two had expected to be assistants to students who sought to understand their writing processes. Not one had expected that he or she would be serving as assistants to the instructors of composition. When asked, however, what they perceived their actual role to be according to the expectations of the department at large, they replied unanimously that they were expected to assist the instructors of composition by taking care of those remedial problems which they did not have the time or the desire to address in class. Still, they continued to teach the writing process, even when it meant putting remedial errors aside in favor of initiating a dialogue about the student’s ideas. It was often tough going. The tutors found themselves again and again faced with the dilemma of Expectation Conflict.

When questioned as to why this kind of Expectation Conflict existed, tutors replied that it was a matter of the perceived status of writing centers. Not one tutor at Cleveland State perceived his or her status as equal to that of the instructor of composition. One tutor complained that she was at the “bottom of the food chain” in the composition hierarchy. Another tutor

said, “Because this Writing Center was initially set up as a remedial service, professors continue to see us exclusively as a place for comma help. Because we provide that sort of remedial help, we are defined as remedial human beings ourselves. In other words, because we are not trusted with important compositional issues, we must not be able to deal with those issues. And so we aren’t trusted with those issues. It’s the proverbial vicious circle.” Added another tutor, “I think that the fact that we’re graduate students has something to do with the expectation problem. Even though several of our teaching staff are actually Ph.D. students at other institutions, the premise is that because they’ve recently earned an M.A.—and we’re still working on ours—they’re better teachers of composition. However, my M.A. will be in Composition and Rhetoric; their dissertations are on Milton. Who do you think is more fit to teach composition?”

Such poor job perception can have only negative effects. When tutors were asked which position they would prefer, rank and salary being equal, a tutor at the writing center, an instructor of composition, or a lecturer of British or American literature or film, none of the Cleveland State tutors stated that being a tutor would be their position of choice. Neither did any of the lecturers there.

Of course, these negative perceptions are felt by the Cleveland State students as well. Several students at Cleveland State referred to the Writing Center tutorials as “bonehead English”; more than a few expressed—at least initially—tremendous anger about having to come. What’s even more interesting is that their expectations concerning the Writing Center in some ways mirrored those of their instructors. When asked what they expected of the Writing Center, 53 of the 100 students polled said they expected better grades; 37 said they expected help with grammar; only 10 said they expected to become better writers by going to the Writing Center. However, perhaps because the Cleveland State tutors assumed the role of teacher of writing, students’ expectations changed. At the quarter’s end, all students who came repeatedly to the Writing Center came because they expected Writing Center tutors to teach them to write.

Moreover—and this will perhaps come as a blow to those of us who teach composition—the students said, by an overwhelming margin, that they learned more about writing from the Writing Center tutors than they did from their composition instructors. Specifically, students were asked from whom they learned more about writing—their tutor, their instructor, or their own efforts. At Cleveland State University, 44 said they learned more from the tutors. Only 29 said that they learned more about writing from their instructors; 27 said that their own efforts were more fruitful than anything they learned in class. Clearly these results were not what instructors of composition would have expected. Nonetheless, they indicate what

writing centers could and should be if they were places at which real teaching and learning of writing could occur.

Case Western Reserve University

The situation at Case Western Reserve is somewhat different than it is at Cleveland State. Case Western Reserve is a private university; it accepts only those students who have proven themselves to be well prepared for an academic career. However, its Writing Center, like Cleveland State's, is also conceived of as primarily a remedial service: students who receive a "D" in Freshman Composition are required in the next semester to take a one- or two-hour tutorial at the Writing Center in order to fulfill their composition requirement. Other students who wish to improve their writing can also enroll for a writing center tutorial; still others simply drop in for occasional help. The Writing Center is staffed and directed by graduate students; most of the composition instructors are also graduate students; though the pay is the same, instructorships are generally thought of as more prestigious and, therefore, more desirable than is the position of tutor in the Writing Center.

Even though the instructors and tutors at Case Western Reserve are more clearly equal in status, the same Expectation Conflict exists as that found at Cleveland State. While all eight of the instructors who responded to the survey felt that the priorities of the composition classroom ought to be content, critical thinking, and structure, six felt that the proper concerns of the Writing Center ought to be syntax, usage, and punctuation. Again, even though their status in terms of degree and salary is equal, seven of the eight instructors who responded—a full 86%—felt that it is the job of the tutors to assist them in the teaching of composition. Even at Cleveland State, where some inequity in status exists, this percentage was only 58%. When questioned on this point, one instructor remarked, "Teaching grammar is dull. Why bring it into the classroom when some kids don't need it, and most kids don't want to hear about it? The Writing Center can teach it. I'm helped out; the student is helped out. Everybody's happy, aren't they?" Another instructor commented, "Somebody's got to teach grammar. Isn't that what writing centers are for?"

It is perhaps time to mention that those of us who work at writing centers are *not averse to teaching grammar*. Somebody *does* have to do it, and more often than not it is the writing center. However, we ask, why not let us do more when we are equipped to do more? Certainly tutors at Case Western, like their peers at Cleveland State, expected to do more. Both of the tutors from Case Western who responded expected to teach students the entire writing process. Like their peers at Cleveland State, when asked what they perceived their actual role to be according to the expectations of the

department at large, they replied that they were expected to assist the instructor of composition by taking care of those remedial problems which the instructor did not have the time to address in class. They also declared that they had at one time or another felt hampered in the tutoring session by this conflict in expectation.

What's curious about the tutors at Case Western, however, is that their perception of their job is still very positive, despite these status issues. One of the two, in fact, stated that she prefers her position as tutor to an economically comparable position teaching composition or literature or film. Something certainly must be gratifying about her job. Perhaps it has something to do with the students. In fact, though most students came to Case Western Reserve Writing Center either to fulfill a composition requirement or for help with editing a paper, a full 100% of them declared that they learned more about writing from the tutors at the Writing Center than they'd learned from their instructors or from their own efforts. Therefore, even though tutors report feeling frustrated, Expectation Conflict does not seem to interfere with the effectiveness of the Writing Center. However, it should be noted that in other ways Expectation Conflict keeps this center from reaching its full potential: it services far fewer students than do Cleveland State's or Baldwin-Wallace's writing centers. 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.

Baldwin-Wallace College

We've yet to consider Baldwin-Wallace's Writing Lab. Of course, if the degree and kind of Expectation Conflict at Baldwin-Wallace were similar to that experienced at Cleveland State and Case Western, then perhaps there would be little left to say. However, this is not the case. In fact, Baldwin-Wallace suffers very little from Expectation Conflict. A look at its initial set-up may tell us why.

Baldwin-Wallace is a small, private, liberal arts college. Its students have more than an average preparation for their academic careers. Its Writing Lab was founded and is still directed by a full professor, who was very careful to follow three important premises:

1. Instead of opening the lab as a remedial center, stress that the lab can service students campus-wide with all sorts of compositional needs;
2. Staff the lab with primarily professional (i.e., M.A.-degreed) personnel (although peer tutors would be used as well);
3. Insist that attendance at the lab be voluntary.

First of all, by refusing to *conceive* of the lab as a remedial service, the director avoided its being *perceived* by the instructors of composition as a remedial service. In fact, when Baldwin-Wallace instructors were surveyed as to the expected and appropriate priorities of writing centers, six of the eight who responded to this question (two instructors for one reason or another did not respond) said that writing centers should chiefly concern themselves with matters of content, organization, and logic—the same priorities with which they themselves were concerned in class. Compare this 77% with 34% at Cleveland State and 25% at Case Western Reserve, and you'll see the enormous difference with regards to Expectation Conflict at Baldwin-Wallace. Moreover, only three of the instructors at Baldwin-Wallace (30% here as opposed to 58% at Cleveland State and 86% at Case Western Reserve) felt that the Writing Lab exists in order to help them by addressing remedial issues; the other seven felt that the Writing Lab's chief task is to teach writing. Period.

This sentiment is echoed by the professional tutors themselves, all of whom feel that they are treated as partners in the teaching of writing. I suspect that this feeling of partnership is due to the fact that these tutors are professionals. They were hired as writing specialists, expecting to teach writing. And teaching writing is clearly what they do. Moreover, the status of the director of the Writing Lab reinforces the lab's reputation as a teaching rather than a remedial service: the director is a full professor—a status not shared by the directors at Case Western Reserve, where the Writing Center is directed by a graduate student, or at Cleveland State, where the Writing Center is directed by a recent Ph.D. whose position is only part time and carries no vote in the department. The difference in status seems significant. With our equals we share hopes; we coordinate goals. We do not force our equals to meet our agenda, to fulfill our expectations. We allow them to fulfill their own.

Student expectation also seems to be met better at Baldwin-Wallace's Writing Lab. Perhaps this is because the students who use the Writing Lab *come* to the lab with expectations that match our own: an overwhelming 43 out of 60 students come for writing instruction; nine come in hopes of a better grade; six come because professors have recommended it—not required it; and two come to have their papers proofread—a hope of which they are quickly disillusioned. These expectations indicate a very different attitude toward the Writing Lab than is typical of Case Western Reserve or Cleveland State.

It seems to me that this difference in attitude can be accounted for by the fact that attendance at the Writing Lab is voluntary. Students come because

they want to learn to write, not because they have to fulfill a requirement. Moreover, as one tutor remarked, “Instructors are not permitted to require students to attend, so the instructors’ wishes and priorities don’t get in the way during the tutoring session as much as they might otherwise.” In these ways, voluntary attendance produces tutorials which are more effective, more efficient, and more satisfying for the student and tutor as well.

Implications

One could perhaps argue on the basis of these findings that writing centers simply work better at small liberal arts colleges than they do at public and private universities. But this conclusion would only dismay those who work at university writing centers. I am far more convinced by the argument that the way a writing center is set up can and does determine the kind of Expectation Conflict it will experience. Common sense argues that a writing center initially conceived of and justified as a remedial service will continue to be perceived as a remedial service, even when it can do and be much more. As we all know, writing centers, when expected to do great things, can do great things. They can function as writing-across-the-curriculum centers; they can become English-as-a-second-language centers; they can be centers for graduate school applications, resumes, and cover letters; they can even be centers that professors use to get feedback on their own scholarship. The Baldwin-Wallace Writing Lab was used in these ways primarily because it was conceived of as being used in these ways. And yes, it did offer some remedial help—because it was conceived of as including that, too.

Often, however, those of us who are attempting to set up writing centers find that the only way we can sell our idea to the administration is to call it remedial: after all, instructors do need help teaching these issues, and students need help learning them. Most administrators will admit to remedial needs, even when they won’t admit to others. In this way many a writing center was born. However, promoting our writing centers as remedial to the administration eventually necessitates promoting them as remedial to faculty and to students as well. As a consequence, the writing center handles issues that are chiefly remedial. The potential benefits of the writing center therefore go unrealized.

Such a view of writing centers is of course anachronistic. The wide success of such places in recent years calls for a readjustment of these narrow attitudes. Most writing center directors, aware of their center’s remedial or limited image, turn to public relations as a way to change department and campus perceptions. In fact, the directors of the three writing centers in this study all make use of newsletters, quarterly reports, flyers, even campus

radio and newspaper advertisements. This study makes clear, however, that these public relations efforts are not enough. Changes in perception are slow in coming. It is my opinion that the desired changes can be more swiftly made by restructuring a writing center, specifically with regard to attendance policy and staffing.

Making attendance voluntary makes good common sense in terms of avoiding Expectation Conflict. Often directors insist on mandatory attendance at their writing centers because they are afraid of not attracting clientele. In order to justify the cost of running a writing center, a director must be able to point to significant numbers of students who are making use of the facility. If not, the center is in realistic danger of closing. There are, however, other ways of attracting students—namely, public relations and word of mouth. While newsletters and commercials seem to do very little to change departmental perceptions of writing centers, they are very effective in attracting students. Moreover, testimonials from satisfied customers are perhaps the best form of public relations. If a center is used by students who want to be there, chances are their experience of the center will be good. Students are therefore more likely to recommend the center to their friends. Given time, any good writing center should be able to flourish, even with voluntary attendance, as does Baldwin-Wallace's.

Finally, it also makes sense that a professional staff would be able to diffuse Expectation Conflict. Respect commands trust, and trust seems to lessen conflict of expectation. However, it is not always financially feasible to hire a staff of professionals. After all, schools with graduate students will find it more economical to use graduate student tutors; undergraduate institutions will be able to employ peer tutors at little cost. Still, even a small staff of professional tutors—people who can run workshops, provide faculty education, etc.—can make an enormous difference to a writing center. Consider once again Baldwin-Wallace's Writing Lab. At Baldwin-Wallace, peer tutors and professionals work side by side. The peer tutors are not alone in their attempt to command the respect and trust of the faculty. Rather, the respect and trust are initially won by the professional staff; the peers' task is then to reinforce this respect and trust through competence. If a center absolutely cannot afford a professional staff, the director should be a tenured professor, someone with at least a vote in the department. If the director is a graduate student or other part-time employee, a tenured professor can function as an advisor to the director. The advisor's job should be to see that the writing center is represented departmentally, that it has the ear and voice of someone whose status commands respect campus-wide. In this way, not only will Expectation Conflict be diffused, but many political problems can be avoided.

Conclusion

If anything is to be learned from this study, it is that the perception of the writing center—both the perception of its purpose as well as the perception of its staff—often needs to be changed. Communication within the English department and within the institution at large can help effect such changes. However, one can diffuse the potentially explosive dilemma of Expectation Conflict by carefully considering the way one’s writing center is structured. In setting up a writing center, one should not promote it as a remedial center, should make attendance voluntary, and, if at all possible, should hire at least a small professional staff. In restructuring an existing writing center, one should rethink the attendance policy and consider the option of a professional staff. Writing centers can then get off the damaged path, put the matter of Expectation Conflict behind them, and move on to the important matters which face us all, teacher and student alike—the matters of teaching and learning good writing.

Relevant Questions and Responses From the Study on Expectation Conflict

Questions for Instructors [Number of Responses]	CSU [9]		CWRU [8]		B-W [10]	
	%	#	%	#	%	#
What constitutes good writing:						
* Mastery of content, logic, structure	100	[9]	100	[8]	100	[10]
* Mastery of paragraphs, syntax, grammar						
What is the proper compositional domain of the writing center?						
* Content Logic Structure	33	[3]	25	[2]	77	[6]
* Paragraph Syntax Grammar	67	[6]	75	[6]	23	[2]
* No Response						[2]
What is the primary purpose of the writing center?						
* To assist instructors in the teaching of composition	67	[6]	86	[7]	30	[3]
* To encourage students to work at & enjoy writing	23	[2]	14	[1]	0	[0]
* To teach composition	10	[1]	0	[0]	70	[7]

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Questions for Tutors [Number of Responses]	CSU [8]		CWRU [2]		B-W [4]	
	%	#	%	#	%	#
What were your initial expectations as a writing center tutor?						
* To teach composition	75	[6]	100	[2]	100	[4]
* To encourage students	25	[2]	0	[0]	0	[0]
* To assist instructors	0	[0]	0	[0]	0	[0]
What do you perceive your role to be in the eyes of the department at large?						
* To teach composition	0	[0]	0	[0]	100	[4]
* To encourage students	0	[0]	0	[0]	0	[0]
* To assist instructors	100	[8]	100	[2]	0	[0]
What position would you prefer, rank and salary being equal?						
* Lecturer of literature or film	67	[4]	50	[1]	50	[2]
* Instructor of composition	33	[2]	0	[0]	25	[1]
* Writing center tutor	0	[0]	50	[1]	25	[1]
* No preference						
Questions for Students						
[Number of Responses]	CSU [100]		CWRU [20]		B-W [60]	
	%	#	%	#	%	#
With what expectations did you come to the writing center?						
* Better grades	53	[53]	45	[9]	15	[9]
* Help with grammar	37	[37]	35	[7]	10	[6]
* Improved writing	10	[10]	15	[3]	72	[43]
* Proofreading	0	[0]	5	[1]	3	[2]
What sort of help did you actually receive at the writing center?						
* Better grades	0	[0]	0	[0]	0	[0]
* Help with grammar	0	[0]	0	[0]	0	[0]
* Improved writing	100	[100]	100	[20]	100	[60]
* Proofreading	0	[0]	0	[0]	0	[0]
From whom did you learn the most?						
* Your tutor	44	[44]	100	[20]	54	[32]
* Your instructor	29	[29]	0	[0]	25	[15]
* Your own efforts	27	[27]	0	[0]	21	[13]

Karen Rodis spent a good deal of her life in Cleveland, Ohio, attending at one point or another in her educational career the three schools which appear in this survey: she began her undergraduate career at Cleveland State, finished it at Baldwin-Wallace, and did her graduate study at Case Western Reserve. Later she was employed by each of these three schools as both instructor of composition and writing center employee: at Case Western and Baldwin-Wallace, she tutored; at Cleveland State, she was director of the Writing Center. She received her Ph.D. from Case Western Reserve in 1987. In 1988, she came to Dartmouth College, where she has been serving as the Director of Composition.