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Solutions and Trade-offs in Writing Center Administration

*Muriel Harris*

Writing center administration, a highly complex task as is, has an added complication in that so many new directors plunge in with an almost total lack of preparation. Undertaking their new responsibilities with the best of intentions but with high levels of anxiety, they normally begin by seeking out the books, journals, and conferences that will help them, and they journey to other writing centers to take notes and ask questions. They inquire about all kinds of specifics on the size of the budget, ways to select staff, methods of evaluation, types of computers and other materials that should be purchased, and so on. All of this is apparently useful as hundreds of thriving writing centers around the country have directors who followed that route. And they have learned from those who traveled the same roads before them.

All of this is comforting. We share our knowledge, our experience, and our handouts with newcomers, but we may also inadvertently be passing along a message we don’t intend to distribute—that there is a “right” way to structure a writing center. “Here’s how I do it” can too easily be heard as “Here’s how it’s done.” In our rush to help we don’t sufficiently warn newcomers that writing centers cannot all function in similar ways or adopt rigid policies and approaches and that writing centers aren’t for those who crave absolute answers. Even the guidelines worked out every week by more experienced writing center administrators cannot be removed from a variety of contexts and compromises that influence writing center practice. In our quest to find answers for all those matters that keep our heads swirling all day,
every day, this lack of simple absolutes to fall back on is disconcerting. We are perpetually too busy to treat every matter that arises as something to ponder for awhile. Besides, many newcomers, flailing around to understand what writing centers are all about, would prefer to think that there are well-articulated guidelines and formulas. Once those are learned, writing lab administration will be a fairly easy matter—they hope. It doesn’t help much to find that as one gets more experienced in writing centers, the complexities increase. Thus, there are a lot of rationales for wanting quick, obvious, repeatable, easy-to-fall-back-on guidelines.

To see how human this desire is, consider another group in our writing centers who also come in wanting obvious, simple, inflexible, always-true answers—new tutors. Unlike this set of novices, we know that a fundamental assumption of tutoring is that when done well, tutoring is so individualized, so contextualized by the student, the situations, and the tutor, that no one can set a predetermined path for how a tutorial should progress. If we look at that assumption for a moment to see how we struggle to keep tutors-in-training away from easy answers, we can then come back to our own struggle with administrative decisions, to see how they too constantly have to be contextualized. My ultimate purpose in this paper is to offer some mental bending and stretching exercises in the kind of weighing of possibilities that writing center directors need to do.

In our tutor training, we are clearly succeeding in conveying the message that there are no simple answers to complicated questions. Yet those of us who direct writing centers have an uncomfortably similar tendency to turn around and sound as if we too are seeking absolute answers for our own administrative concerns. If those tutors-in-training want specifics today, we want them yesterday. However, it is reassuring to hear that we follow our own principles to the extent that we listen to a variety of solutions and answers and then take them home to see how we can apply them to our particular situation.

And it is this aspect, listening to possibilities, that is truly useful because when writing center directors reach out to each other, asking how others solve problems and handle situations, we are demonstrating our commitment to two underlying principles of writing center theory and pedagogy: individualization and collaboration. Individualization means attending to individual differences and using what is appropriate to the particular situation. It means the flexibility to adapt and denies the rigidity of absolutes. Collaboration is the process of working together, building together from what each can contribute. Directors can and should share solutions and offer each other
advice, collaborating in the act of figuring out how to cope with the crisis management that is called “writing lab administration.” Thus, in our approaches to administration we incorporate the approaches we advocate in tutoring. As long as we too keep in mind that there are no simple answers, we will remember to file away what we hear as we think about whether it will work for us, in the context of our own centers.

As an exercise in this kind of thinking—and to remind us that there are no right answers or absolute rules in writing center administration—I offer in the following pages a list of situations that come up frequently in writing centers and some solutions that might work, along with some trade-offs for each solution. For part of the lack of simple answers is that every solution has a flip side, a possible disadvantage or limitation that, when recognized, keeps us from leaping to that solution as the only right answer. Instead, we look at different sides, consider the various situation-related issues, and make a more informed decision, just as we expect our tutors to weigh all the factors that are generally relevant and that are operating in any specific setting and come out with a reasonable answer. Thus, it is not likely that any two readers reading through the following lists will come to total agreement about the best solution, and it is also not likely that any reader will even choose the same solution all the time. It is even more probable that different readers will think of other solutions and other trade-offs. But it is the practice in this kind of thinking that helps us maintain our perspective on how we go about writing center administration. I also offer the following situation/solution list as a starter kit for others to use in staff discussions. There is nothing more healthy than sitting around collaboratively and considering how we should handle the various needs, requests, and problems that continually crop up. Like bending and stretching exercises, such discussions limber up our perspectives and keep us from seizing on rigid policies.

**Situation 1**

An instructor from another department with only the vaguest sense of what constitutes good writing is sending her students to the center for help. She has given you a copy of one student paper that she thinks is well written and one on which she has made some very general comments about writing problems and has noted a few grammar errors. She seems intent on having the tutors help the students turn in the kind of paper that she has indicated is acceptable. The students from her class are starting to come to the center, but it is clear that they don’t know what kind of help they should ask for. And you and your tutors don’t know quite what the instructor wants.
Possible solutions and trade-offs:

- Resign yourself to some lengthy meetings with the instructor (if she'll agree) and help her to see what constitutes effective writing and good assignments. This seems workable, but she may not automatically give up her criteria for yours. She may expect the papers to follow her standards, not yours. She may be working with standards appropriate to her field, but it may also be the case that she is less aware than she should be of what constitutes good writing in her discipline. Another consideration here is whether she will continue to teach this course. You may find yourself making extensive efforts only to have it all discontinued as she moves on to teaching other courses where there is little opportunity to write. But you may or may not have made a friend who sometime in the future will rekindle her interest in her students’ writing.

- Rely on your tutors’ own sense of what each paper needs. This may result in papers that are even better than the teacher originally expected, or she may feel that her standards are being ignored. If she is suggesting criteria appropriate in her field that are not apparent to the tutors, they may be offering inappropriate assistance. Then again, by seeing papers that embody the principles your tutors are helping their students to learn, the teacher may gain new insight into what good writing is.

- Analyze the papers that the teacher said were good, and try to help students produce similar papers. This may work, but if the criteria are not what normally constitute good writing, the students’ writing ability has not improved. In addition, the teacher may persist in her expectations.

Situation 2

This week you noticed an increasing number of students coming in with papers due later that day. You know that all that is possible at this stage (and that what the students are asking for) is some quick clean-up proofreading.

Possible solutions and trade-offs:

- Issue a public policy statement that students cannot appear with papers due the same day. This may work, but it may also drive
away students who could have been educated to coming in earlier after seeing the problem of coming in at the last minute.

• Explain that your center does not offer proofreading help. This may help students learn what the center is about, but you may be turning away students who could learn a bit about proofreading or students who use the word “proofreading” when they aren’t quite sure what kind of help they want.

• Take a step back and see if you are treating the real problem—procrastination or nervousness. When students come in with papers that are due, try to talk with them about causes instead of lecturing them about not proofreading. This may turn some students away who want help with the paper and feel frustrated that no direct, specific assistance was offered. But you may have reached some students in very important ways.

• Show the students some proofreading techniques by looking only at the first page of the paper. Then explain that they can finish the job of proofreading themselves. This is a frequent solution, but some students then continue to think of the writing center as the proofreading place and return with the next paper thirty minutes before that one is to be handed in. (On the other hand, one clever student at our university managed to beat the system by coming in five or six different times in one morning, each time asking the tutor only to look at a particular page or paragraph. As we later figured out, she managed to have the whole paper read through and must have enjoyed listening quietly to each of us explain that we don’t proofread whole papers.)

• Adopt a policy of seeing students only if they sign up for several appointments. Some students can quickly spot the way around this bit of bureaucracy by signing up and showing up only for the proofreading session. But, you may also get some conscientious students who thereby learn how valuable on-going tutoring is.

Situation 3

One of your peer tutors has alienated a teacher by writing a note which seems to indicate that the tutor and student did some work which the
instructor deems counterproductive to the approach he takes in his classroom.

Possible solutions and trade-offs:

• In the future, monitor all notes that the tutors send out by reading them before they are mailed. This may cure the problem, but it announces a lack of trust in the tutors' ability to know what most teachers want. It is also a kind of policing policy that you may not want to have pervade your center.

• Explain to the teacher that the note was somewhat inaccurate and that the tutor and student did follow his approach to writing. This undermines the tutor's authority and doesn't lead to any clearer understanding by the tutor of the differences noticed by the teacher. The tutor may also have merely used an inappropriate or misleading word, and you are thus assuming that the tutor is guilty when in fact she may not be.

• Let it pass. This teacher may be someone who exhibits other symptoms of feeling that peer tutors are not competent to work with his students. This may be the case, but you are losing an opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the teacher about peer tutors and what they can offer. Also, if there is no response to the teacher, he may become more adamant about his students not coming to the writing center. Then again, if you have a huge teaching staff, you may want to think about how much energy and time you can expend stomping out every brush fire, especially if there is the possibility that the teacher may simply forget about the incident.

• Ask the tutor to talk with the teacher about the situation. This may result in greater understanding between that particular tutor and teacher, but it may also make the rest of the tutoring staff paranoid about those notes they have to write. You'll have to decide whether the teacher will engage in useful conversation with a peer tutor.

Situation 4

Your center has hired a non-native student as a tutor, and several students have asked not to work with that tutor. Your assumption as to the cause of
the problem is that they think the tutor is not sufficiently competent in English.

**Possible solutions and trade-offs:**

- **Encourage these students to try working with this tutor.** You may help to educate them, but you may also cause some to leave and not return because they are indeed having trouble understanding the tutor. (Some students do have more trouble than others in comprehending an accent slightly different from their own.) The tutor may also feel some pressure to be more competent than the other tutors because she perceives herself as being on trial.

- **Having noticed how disturbed your non-native tutor is by these rejections, you re-think your policy of hiring non-native tutors in the future.** This is, of course, a solution, but you are not confronting students' prejudices and may be losing out on some excellent tutors simply because they were not born into English-speaking families.

- **Let it pass.** These students can simply work with someone else. This confirms a general policy that students should choose whom they want to work with, not be assigned. But again, this offers no opportunities for the students to learn that they might be wrong. The non-native tutor may also feel relegated to second-class citizen status as she is not being given the opportunity to prove herself.

- **Assign this tutor to work primarily with non-native students who come to the center.** Again, this announces that the students' perception of the tutor may have some truth to it. Moreover, other non-native students may or may not welcome the opportunity to work with such a tutor because they see the native students as more knowledgeable about English grammar. On the other hand, a non-native tutor is particularly sensitive to the needs of other ESL students and is often more likely to diagnose writing needs based on his or her own experience. Particularly when cultural conflicts with assignments and/or rhetorical values of English come into play, a non-native tutor is going to be able to spot the difficulty much more quickly than a native speaker who may be oblivious to, for example, an Oriental student's reluctance...
to criticize American values or a Hispanic student's tendency to transfer to English the Spanish preference for very lengthy sentences.

**Situation 5**

The administration has offered to give your center some funds for computers, but you are not sure that you want to change the emphasis from a collaborative environment of writers working together to a high tech center where each student sits alone in front of his or her own terminal.

*Possible solutions and trade-offs:*

- Accept the computers but make it clear that the tutors are not going to be replaced by machinery. This may work, but you may also find that the computers soon begin to overwhelm the center. More and more students may be coming in for the computers; you may find that you need consultants to assist with maintenance and student problems with hardware, and teachers may begin to refer students to computer programs on grammar and editing.

- Ask the administrators to define the uses they have in mind for the computers, and consider whether these goals do indeed overlap with the writing center's present responsibilities and goals. Try to bargain for using the computers in ways that are more appropriate for your center. You may then have a more well-defined situation, but you will need to spend time educating students and instructors about how to use those computers in the ways you would like them used.

- Accept the computers only on condition that they are in a room adjacent to yours so that the separation is clear. This may mean that someone else will have to oversee that computer lab which may then develop in ways you may not always be comfortable with.

- Turn down the offer so that you can maintain your emphasis on tutoring. This obviously keeps your collaboratively oriented center on track, but you may be losing the opportunity to work with students who are going elsewhere to seek those computers they want to use. Teachers interested in adding computers to classroom writing will also bypass your center, and you are in
danger of being left out of the word-processing revolution. You also are denying the potential benefits of computers to handicapped or writers with learning disabilities who might have come to the center. On the other hand, you don’t have to face administration pressures to reduce the number of tutors by turning to self-instruction grammar programs. (Administrators have an uncanny knack of instantly recognizing the savings of one-time software purchases over the on-going expenses of tutors’ salaries.)

• Accept the computers and move the tutors close to the computers. Help them learn how to set up collaborative sessions while sitting with students while they word process. Talk with tutors about integrating the computers into tutorials, using on-screen methods for planning together, revising, and so on. This can become highly effective, but may take some training, some rethinking about the nature of tutorials, and some analysis of when tutors need to withdraw so that students can write. You’ll need to educate any teachers who see this collaboration as the kind of assistance with writing that creates unfair advantages for students whose “tutors helped them write the papers.” Other teachers will get suspicious about the use of editing programs that “clean up” the students’ prose for them. In short, be prepared to educate your tutors, the students, and the teaching staff about your new approaches.

**Situation 6**

You, as director, are being reviewed for promotion and tenure by people who don’t particularly value or understand what writing centers are all about.

**Possible solutions and trade-offs:**

• Face up to the fact that you will have to do an extensive amount of educating as your only hope is to have these people become better acquainted with what you really do. This will take a great deal of time and emotional energy as you find materials for them to read, meet with them, and engage in endless discussions. You may also need to call on outside sources, evaluators in the field, who can come to campus or write to the people on your campus engaged in the review. There is a very real possibility that you will come out of this feeling drained, unhappy, and unable to regain
your sense of dedication. But you may have helped to educate people who need to be enlightened. You may also find that your efforts were unsuccessful, and the consequences of this attempt may be that you have to move on to a position elsewhere. Another very real trade-off is that the process of educating your peers is so time-consuming that you find yourself neglecting your work in your center. As a result, the center may suffer temporarily.

- Ask for a review committee that is more aware of the real nature of your work. This may mean asking for an outside review. The result may be that you can get a more honest review, but you may be seriously alienating people in your department or institution who see their authority and ability to judge as being usurped.

- Delay your review until you have had a year or two to lay the groundwork. Spend time developing a greater awareness of what you do, what your research and scholarly concerns are, and what the theoretical bases of your center’s teaching are. You may find people more open to thinking about all of this when they are not being pressured into conducting a review. On the other hand, they might be less inclined to listen as they see no immediate need to concern themselves with you or your work.

- Conduct a campaign that calls in support of your colleagues from other institutions. People in writing centers are inordinately helpful with this, writing letters of review and lending moral support to your work. Again, this might help to educate people, but it is also likely to alienate others who resist outside pressure or who are not likely to value any assessment by people in our field anyway.

- Accept the fact that you will not truly educate people and that it might be better to negotiate for a position that is non-tenured and not subject to faculty review. You may be freer to operate outside some constraints this way, and you may even find yourself in an administrative setting where money flows more freely, budgets are more realistic, and your services are better integrated with other student services on campus. You do, however, remove yourself from voicing your position and views in faculty meetings and have to work against any kind of second-class status for yourself and
your center. You might also find your center more likely to be physically removed from the buildings where composition courses are taught.

- Accept the fact that any scholarship in writing centers is not likely to be viewed favorably. Instead, switch to researching and publishing in areas more likely to be considered truly acceptable academic work. This will help you during the review process but will create a dichotomy in your life as you spend your days in the center concerned with tutorial instruction and your nights at your desk reading and writing about completely different matters. Some people have succeeded in this and find themselves happier with broader interests; others find that the questions they find truly interesting are those that they confront all day in the center. They must therefore sidestep intellectually engaging issues and a source for thinking about and researching them. The field, too, suffers as you are perpetuating the myth that writing center theory and practice is not truly scholarly. If you have graduate students working in the center, you are also missing opportunities to train others in the field in writing center research.

**Situation 7**

A faculty member is sending students to the writing center but won’t let them bring any papers along because she thinks the tutors will write the papers for the students.

**Possible solutions and trade-offs:**

- Talk to the teacher and try to convince her that tutors do not write the students’ papers. This may be an opportunity for her to learn what tutorial collaboration can offer, but you might also alienate her if she doesn’t listen or want to accept what you say. She might simply stop sending students to the center.

- Advise your tutors of this teacher’s policy and suggest ways that tutors can work with these students without actually seeing any written work before it is handed in. Tutors can work on planning, have students talk about how a paper is progressing, or ask for sample paragraphs or past papers that have been graded to see if there are any discernible surface errors in grammar and mechanics to work on.
• Ask the teacher to be sure to fill out referral forms indicating what each student should work on. This will, of course, give the tutors clues as to the general area, but without samples of the students’ writing, the tutorial is likely to be too general also. It will be harder to motivate the students since their preference will be to work with papers in progress before they are graded.

• Explain to the teacher the value of working with writing-in-progress. If the teacher cannot accept this, then you may find that this teacher no longer uses the writing center. On one hand, you have managed to maintain the general integrity of the center and have staved off other attempts to have teachers dictate what you can and cannot do. On the other hand, some teachers with rigid rules may be less effective than they could be in other matters of teaching writing. Thus, their students might be the ones most in need of tutorial assistance.

Situation 8

The administration wants to cut the lab’s budget because of general financial needs, and a good place to start, they think, is a student service like the writing center.

Possible solutions and trade-offs:

• Write reports, gather evidence, garner student support, and in general, make the strongest case you can for the need for the writing center. This can work, but administrators have a way of ignoring evidence that suggests courses of action other than what they have determined they want to do.

• Find out what the administration values and emphasize your service in that area. For example, if retention is a major concern, research the writing center’s role in retention; if teacher overload is a troubling problem, show the center’s role in assisting teachers in meeting the needs of their students; if being a large, impersonal institution hinders recruitment, stress the center’s role in providing personal attention; if maintaining high standards of admission is crucial, note the writing center’s emphasis on working with students of all abilities, especially those in honors classes and projects; if community outreach is an institutional goal, highlight
your grammar hotline help, add short courses for clerical help or evening classes for the community, and so on. The danger, of course, is that like teaching to the test, you are letting the administration dictate the goals of your center, and you may find that you are shifting the emphasis to areas that are of less concern to your students and the composition faculty.

- Add credit-generating courses to your center; integrate it more with classes so that it is not as easily perceived as a peripheral service; assess fees for community use of the center; note the value of peer tutor training classes to the education majors. These solutions again stress areas that might cause the administration to change its perception of the center, but again, you may be diverting resources and energy in directions that take you further from your announced goals and responsibilities.

- Attempt to educate the faculty and the administration about the need for individualized instruction in writing to accompany classroom instruction and about the need to provide tutorial assistance with writing in other disciplines. This keeps you on track in emphasizing what you may see as the real value of a writing center, but you are in danger of presenting arguments that are either not understood or not accepted. If you stress the teaching function of the center, you will also have to downplay the headcount and visibility arguments which might be seen as diminishing the center’s emphasis on being a teaching facility. Large numbers certainly prove the notion of heavy use, but as one administrator was heard to comment, “Our recreational gym is the most heavily used student facility on campus, but that doesn’t prove that it is part of our college’s mission.”

- Find one sympathetic administrator and focus your attention on her. She may become your ally and help present your case to the rest of the administration. One trade-off, however, is that when this administrator moves on (as she might), you are back to ground zero. You may also find that the center is the victim of shifting power lines higher up or that you get caught in power struggles or battles you are not even aware of.
Situation 9

You’ve been asked by some faculty in other departments to offer tutoring help to students in their courses, and you find that you are launching into a mini-writing-across-the-curriculum program without adequate compensation, resources, or planning.

Possible solutions and trade-offs:

• Continue to let these services continue in the hope that as they grow you will be able to make a case for more tutors and other resources. The danger, though, is that you can become overwhelmed by the enormity of this responsibility as you find that word-of-mouth causes you to be invited to more and more faculty meetings, committee meetings, and instructor offices. The more you do, the more people expect of you, and a potential problem is that soon your job is mentally redefined to include all the new responsibilities that you have taken on.

• Be more cautious initially and respond by noting some assistance you will need in return. If the faculty in one department want some workshops in structuring assignments, ask for compensation for your time. If a faculty member asks if all seventy-five of his students can stop in with drafts of their final reports, ask for tutorial pay for extra hours. The advantage is that you have the needed resources as you grow. The trade-off is that you will lose some potential users who don’t want to make any investments or engage in any real projects without some trial runs to see if it’s all worth it. Some faculty back off because they don’t see how they can ask their departments for funds for your center before they too are convinced of the need.

• Set some realistic goals about how much additional writing-across-the-curriculum service you can offer. Don’t take on everything that is asked of you, but don’t turn everyone away either. You can move more gradually here and begin to develop sound programs of assistance which could grow and become institutionalized. Eventually, you might then find administrators amenable to adding either an assistant director or another person to take charge of this aspect of your services. You might, however,
also become enmeshed in territorial conflicts if others see writing across the curriculum as a program they want to see expanded but not as an offshoot of the writing center.

**Situation 10**

The writing center, despite all your memos, posters, and notes to teachers, is perceived as a grammar fix-it place by some teachers. When they refer students to the center, they note only grammar problems as needing attention.

**Possible solutions and trade-offs:**

- Encourage your tutors to work with all aspects of the paper that need attention and hope that this first-hand experience with tutorial collaboration will first change students’ perceptions and then eventually filter back to the teachers. You may, though, initially confuse students who come in anxious for the very real help in grammar and mechanics that they think they need. The notes back to the teachers may cause the teachers to complain that the center is overriding their requests and make them less sympathetic to your attempts to educate them about better uses of tutorial help.

- Continue to send memos to the teachers who persist in sending students only for band-aid kinds of grammar help. This kind of effort may go unnoticed as teachers dump your memos in the circular file or read too quickly to gain any useful information from the memo. A general memo also does not address specific concerns of various teachers. You may find that a better solution is personal conversation, a time-consuming but perhaps more effective means of changing perceptions. You may also meet up with adamant teachers or teachers who nod in agreement and continue to use the center in the previous way.

- Hold workshops on topics such as planning strategies, audience awareness, persuasion, revision, coherence, and so on. This announces publicly what the center can do to help writers, and such workshops also draw students who will come back for tutorials. But such workshops are not going to get all the students whom you would like to bring in, so you are still going to miss a
portion of the student population whom you could be serving. Moreover, you will have to make these workshops a permanent part of your services as the need to educate each new group of students continues. Such services, while useful, will necessarily subtract time available for tutoring. You are also shifting to group work with this service and away from an announced emphasis on individualized help.

- Enlist the student newspaper to do in-depth articles about the center. You can use this public forum to discuss tutorial instruction in ways that can be enlightening for teachers as well as students. Unfortunately, no student newspaper reaches everyone, and your job is not complete through this route. You will also have to keep doing this every year and will need the cooperation of the student newspaper which doesn’t want to repeat features that they have already done last year.

- Attend to the request for help with grammar and mechanics and then go on to work with the whole paper. You have, thus, initially satisfied the student’s request as well as the teacher’s while hoping to engage the student in broader conversation about the focus, organization, and so on. This means, however, that the tutorial is in danger of either being too long as you try to cover too much or too disjointed as you switch from one topic to another.

- Write off some teachers. You may find that there are some instructors whom you simply have to give up on in the name of making better use of your time. It may also be that in their classrooms or conferences they are attending to more major writing concerns, even though you think your tutors could help, especially in engaging students in collaborative conversation. The trade-off, of course, is that these students might also be missing out on the advantages of tutorials. Also, when they go on to other writing classes or have other writing projects, they may continue to ignore the writing center as a place for effective assistance.

The list of situations, possible solutions, and trade-offs for each of the solutions can clearly be extended—and needs to be—so that constraints and characteristics of your particular setting are factored in. But the above list should provide some suggestions for you and your staff as you engage in the
kind of collaborative discussion which allows you to select options for your writing center. Like a truly effective tutorial dialogue, a staff discussion about solutions includes all voices that are participating in the discussion as each has something to contribute. And like any good tutorial planning session, everyone participating needs to be encouraged to turn off the editors in our brain which cause us to start judging and rejecting options before we give them a chance to be examined. Collaborative, flexible, individualized solutions to our administrative concerns are bound to produce worthwhile results, just as our collaborative, flexible, individualized tutorials with students do.

Muriel Harris is Director of the Writing Lab and Professor of English at Purdue University. She edits the Writing Lab Newsletter, is the author of Teaching One-to-One: The Writing Conference, and several textbooks, including the Prentice Hall Reference Guide to Grammar and Usage (1991). Her conference publications, articles (published in College English, College Composition and Communication, Journal of Basic Writing, The Writing Center Journal, English Journal, Written Communication, and so on), and book chapters focus on the theory and practice of individualized tutorial instruction in writing. She is the recipient of two awards from the National Writing Centers Association: the Extraordinary Service to Writing Centers Award and the Outstanding Publication for 1987 Award. She acknowledges being hooked on tutoring and is convinced that writing centers are the best environment in which writers can develop their writing skills.