Writing Center

Graduate Writing Tutor / Staff Assistant

Call for Applications

Position Description and Qualifications

The CWU Academic Success Center, University Writing Center, and School of Graduate Studies and Research invite applications for a Writing Center graduate tutor / staff assistant. Students in all disciplines are encouraged to apply. If you meet the qualifications, please fill out and return the attached application, along with two recent writing samples, to Jared Odd, Writing Center coordinator (Brooks Library room 190D or oddj@cwu.edu). Although interviews may be held via phone or video, this is an Ellensburg campus position requiring local residence.

Peer writing tutors play a vital role in academics across the disciplines. They enjoy reading, writing, and working with people; are active listeners and learners; and demonstrate successful, honest learning habits. Knowledge of the standards of American academic English is an advantage. At a minimum, the successful applicant will be a CWU graduate student in good academic standing, holding a BA or BS degree by the time of hire. Preferred qualifications include previous tutoring experience (ideally in a writing center), ability to consult on research and writing skills needed at the graduate level, experience working with diverse student populations, and a working knowledge of MS Office programs and student database management systems. Once hired, the GA will be trained in writing center theory and practice as well as Center procedures and technologies.

Responsibilities

The Graduate Writing Tutor / Staff Assistant’s main role is to provide writing consultation for graduate students in all disciplines. When not engaged in writing consulting, the GA may be asked to assist in other duties as outlined below. Working under general direction, the GA will independently plan and organize work assignments. Projects and specific tasks may be assigned by the supervisor either verbally or in writing. Work is reviewed periodically to ensure goals are being met.

- Provide feedback, one to one and in groups, to graduate writers in all subjects, at all points in their process
- Assist writers of various experience levels and backgrounds
- Study general and discipline-specific grammar and style conventions
- Develop and provide graduate workshops in consultation with the Graduate Student Association
- Develop materials to use in tutorials and tutor training
- Assist as needed in mentoring undergraduate tutors, including helping them develop skills, activities, and materials to use in tutorials
- Support the Academic Success Center staff in outreach, marketing, and program development
- Communicate with students, faculty, and staff about services provided
- Assist in recordkeeping as it relates to graduate students
- Develop and provide reports to track quality, participation and results of graduate courses
- Engage in research and evidence-based assessment
- Value and encourage a positive environment, diverse perspectives, academic inquiry, creativity, and teamwork
- Perform other duties as needed.
Benefits of this Work

Pay for this assistantship comes in the form of a stipend provided by Graduate Studies. This is a full stipend with tuition waiver. For the most current information, please see the School of Graduate Studies and Research Graduate Student Funding webpage. Beyond monetary benefits, you may enjoy the following:

- Develop knowledge of various disciplines, genres, and audiences
- Learn new ways to think about your own writing and writing process
- Collaborate with people from various cultures and perspectives
- Work in an academic environment with a relaxing atmosphere
- Gain valuable academic experience and professional preparation
- Associate with students and faculty across campus
- Benefit from the resources and camaraderie of a community of writers
- Walk to work, just across the way from your classes and your residence
- Arrange shifts around your class schedule
- Feel wonderful about how you earn money for school.

Mission of the CWU Writing Center

The University Writing Center engages students in a collaborative dialog about their writing for any assignment or other purpose. Peer writing tutors—trained in composition theory, rhetorical analysis, and feedback strategies—provide constructive responses to student writers at all skill levels and at any point in their writing process. Consultations last 30 to 50 minutes and offer writers a chance to discuss, develop, and revise their work in a supportive and encouraging environment as they engage in scholarly and other conversations within and across disciplines.
Writing Center Tutoring Best Practices

In keeping with our mission to engage students in a collaborative dialogue about their writing and help writers develop skills to participate in scholarly conversations, we have adopted the following core pedagogical and procedural best practices:

1. Peer writing tutors focus on the writer’s process as well as their product. Conversations over the process of writing can change the way writers see their habits and rituals; help them think critically about their goals, audiences, and rhetorical choices; and deter ethically questionable shortcuts. Because this critical awareness often develops over several conversations, peer writing tutors focus on the writer’s long-term goals, not just the success of a single project. Regarding grammar and punctuation standards, we work to uncover patterns of error, discuss the associated principles, and help the writer apply them in their texts, rather than edit writers’ papers for them.

2. The Writing Center helps writers consider their audiences and purposes. Students may sometimes relax their efforts under the assumption that college writing assignments offer no real purpose beyond the classroom, or that no one besides their professors will read their work. However, to prepare for writing beyond school, student writers should practice writing for purposes and audiences beyond the grade—namely, to instruct, inspire, entertain, transmit needed information, appeal, explore, resolve, complicate, impress, and so on. Peer writing tutors facilitate this practice by a) providing the experience of an interested, inquisitive peer reader and b) helping writers analyze audiences in their academic disciplines.

3. Writing tutors are trained to respond as peers. Writing center methods encourage writer agency. Through conversation and questions, rather than diagnosis and correction, peer tutors endeavor to establish a rapport with writers that respects their autonomy, promotes equity, and encourages them to own and value their work. Done effectively, these methods build trust between writer and audience and bolster the writer’s confidence.

4. Writing tutors respect and welcome all writers. Because writing for an audience means engaging them in an inclusionary relationship, the Writing Center commits to fostering engagement that is born of reverence for individuals and their sincere desires to produce their best work. All writers, with their unique worldviews, languages, voices, and experience with academic writing, are welcomed and respected in the Writing Center. Since each human being, regardless of identity or circumstances, has untold potential, we strive to reverence one another with that potential in mind. However, we recognize that an aspiration to engage with people under this presumption entails also a desire to reverence people if or when they do not hold the same aspiration. As such, we seek not to censor or eradicate offense but to meet disagreement and conflict when they do arise—as they inevitably will—with empathy and wisdom rather than indignation or fear. In doing so, we hope to learn from everyone and make experience our teacher.

5. The Writing Center assists writers from all disciplines. To add to our commitment to serve all writers, the Writing Center employs tutors from any major, and tutor training includes analysis of various discourse communities. A writer working with a tutor who has knowledge in the writer’s field can receive feedback within the context of that discipline, learn of specialized methods and resources, brainstorm for appropriate topics and content, and discuss discipline-specific genre conventions. The same writer, perhaps at a different point in the writing process, can work with a tutor who has little or no subject knowledge and can receive constructive feedback about their purpose and audience, logic and coherence, voice and tone, paragraph and sentence development, or punctuation. As such, all writers are invited to seek feedback from the Writing Center.
Writing Center Graduate Staff Assistant
Employment Application

Name: _______________________________ Date: ____________________

E-mail: _______________________________ Phone: ____________________

Graduate program, including specialties, certificates, etc. ____________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

Expected Graduation Date: __________________________ GPA: ________________

Please describe program requirements (internship, thesis, summer classes, etc.) that may affect your employment.
__________________________________________________________________________________________

List undergraduate- and graduate-level English or other writing-intensive courses for which you earned an A.

1. ________________________________ 2. ________________________________

3. ________________________________ 4. ________________________________

5. ________________________________ 6. ________________________________

How many Writing Center sessions have you had, at CWU or elsewhere? (circle one) 0 1 2 3 4+

Please list relevant previous work experience.

1. Position: ________________________________ Employer: ________________________________
   Supervisor: ________________________________ Phone or E-mail: ________________________________
   Essential duties: ________________________________

2. Position: ________________________________ Employer: ________________________________
   Supervisor: ________________________________ Phone or E-mail: ________________________________
   Essential duties: ________________________________

3. Position: ________________________________ Employer: ________________________________
   Supervisor: ________________________________ Phone or E-mail: ________________________________
   Essential duties: ________________________________
Please provide three references. At least two should be faculty members at CWU or a previous institution.

1. Name: ___________________________   Title: ___________________________
   Relation to applicant: _______________   Phone or e-mail: ___________________

2. Name: ___________________________   Title: ___________________________
   Relation to applicant: _______________   Phone or e-mail: ___________________

3. Name: ___________________________   Title: ___________________________
   Relation to applicant: _______________   Phone or e-mail: ___________________

Why would you like to work in the Writing Center?

What experience and interests (research, web development, leadership, workshop facilitation, outreach, etc.) might help you contribute to the Center's mission?
Available Hours

Please mark out the hours you cannot work weekly next term. Since you may not get all the hours you want, you should leave as many hours open as possible. This information will be used to finalize our work schedule.

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Comments, including work or other obligations you have:

Writing sample: Please attach two examples of your best recent writing. Your examples should represent a cross-sampling of your abilities and interests (e.g., creative/analytical genres).

I certify, under penalty of termination and/or prosecution, that this document and all associated information provided by the applicant to CWU entities is and will be accurate and free of any misrepresentation.

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________