



Writing Tutor Guide to Professionalism and Policies

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Revised March 2013

CONTENTS

Mission.....	1
Honor Code for Writing Tutors.....	1
Code of Ethics.....	2
Communication.....	3
Payroll.....	4
Policies.....	4
<i>Professionalism in the Writing Center</i>	4
Job Descriptions	8
Position Title: Writing Tutor, Level 1.....	9
Description of Duties	9
Job Qualifications	9
Position Title: Writing Tutor, Level 2	9
Description of Duties	9
Job Qualifications	10
Position Title: Writing Tutor, Level 3	10
Description of Duties	10
Job Qualifications	10
OWL History	11
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	11

EOU WRITING CENTER

TUTOR GUIDE

TO

PROFESSIONALISM AND POLICIES

VISION

To provide a place — physical or virtual — where every EOU writer can find an interested, responsive reader.

MISSION

The mission of the EOU Writing Center is to promote students' confidence in their practice of writing processes and critical thinking, and to support faculty across the university in teaching writing in their disciplines. To fulfill this mission, the Writing Center:

- *Trains students to collaborate as peer writing tutors*
- *Manages schedules and communication to facilitate student/tutor collaboration*
- *Provides ongoing tutor development and professionalization opportunities for on-campus, online, and on-site students*
- *Supports faculty in designing and assessing writing assignments and curricula*
- *Maintains an archive of resources and research on disciplinary writing*

HONOR CODE FOR WRITING TUTORS

The EOU Writing Center values and supports academic integrity as promoted in the *Student Handbook* (2011). You are encouraged to become familiar with guidelines at http://www.eou.edu/saffairs/files/2012/08/Student-Handbook_2011_web1.pdf, particularly with sections titled “Academic Integrity” and “Plagiarism.”

An excerpt from the “Student Pledge of Academic Integrity” has direct bearing on how tutors conceive their role in tutoring peers:

Beginning Fall term 2005, Eastern Oregon University initiated an Honor Code based on personal integrity, which is presumed to be a sufficient assurance that in academic matters, one's work is original and performed honestly. The policies and procedures of the Honor Code apply to all full and part-time students. A component vital to the Honor Code is the inclusion of the Honor Pledge:

“I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid on any academic work nor will I represent the work or ideas of another as my own.” (Kansas State, 2003) (*Student Handbook* 27)

As a writing tutor, you are also bound by the Honor Pledge—but with a twist. Your life and educational experiences are different from anyone else’s. Be cautious when working with a student so that you will not inadvertently provide ideas or writing that the student may represent as her or his own. The pledge above might be adapted to serve as an Honor Pledge for Writing Tutors:

“I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid on any academic work nor will I [enable others] to represent [my] work or ideas [as their own].” (Kansas State, 2003)

What are your suggestions for an original Honor Pledge for Writing Tutors?

CODE OF ETHICS

The EOU Writing Center supports writers throughout the university, including students, faculty, and staff. An important element of providing this service is trust between tutor and client. In order to build trust, writing tutors and administrators respect and maintain confidentiality regarding their collaborative sessions with clients. Following are guidelines for practicing these tenets, based on George Mason University’s own “Code of Ethics”:

- What happens in a student tutorial or faculty consultation stays between tutor or administrator and writer. Exceptions include:
 - Tutors enter notes about student sessions into Client Reports. These reports may be used for program review and to provide background for other tutors with whom the student may later work.
 - Upon student request, tutors will provide an electronic or printed Blue Slip for the student to deliver to the instructor.
 - Notes from tutorials/consultations, with client names removed, may be used for institutional review.
 - For research that may be presented and/or published, written permission is required in advance. Some studies will require IRB approval before data collection.
- If a professor asks about a student’s attendance and progress, the tutor or administrator will courteously explain that information cannot be given unless the student has given explicit permission to do so *and* this permission has been recorded in the Client Record. If a record of student permission is not available, professors should be asked to contact the student.
- Tutors do not comment on grading or suggest the grade a paper might receive. Tutors do help students interpret and respond to professors’ comments.
- All tutoring is free. Tutors are not permitted to receive any money from Writing Center clients.

- All on-campus tutoring should be conducted in the Writing Center, Loso Hall 234, unless authorized by the Writing Center Director.
- Tutors are responsible for safeguarding tutoring-related materials that may be stored on her/his own computer and access to her/his online tutoring schedule. Examples include setting an administrative password to sign on and creating secure passwords.
- Writing tutors should consult with the Director when uncertain about how to respond to ethical issues not listed here that arise in the course of their Writing Center work.

COMMUNICATION

The Writing Center operates more efficiently when the mode of communication is appropriate to the situation. The purpose is to show consideration for other people's time.

Each active Writing Tutor is a member of the group mailing list. If you have not received any messages from this group email, contact the Director.

Expectations for each Writing Tutor include:

SCHEDULE CHANGES

- Notify the Director **at the beginning of the term** when attendance required at a college-related activity such as Ars Poetica, music concerts or recitals, or other events will conflict with your regularly posted Drop-In or scheduled tutoring hours.
- Notify the Director as soon as possible when a scheduled activity or absence will interfere with the posted tutoring schedule(s).
- **Request a substitute** for Drop-In Tutoring in advance by sending an email to the Writing Tutor Group mail address. If no substitute is available or a substitute is needed on short notice, contact the Director or another Full Administrator.
- Notify the Writing Center by calling 541-962-3663 and leaving a message when the tutor cannot make it to an appointment on short notice.
- **If you have an emergency, notify the Writing Center at 541-962-3663, and email the student.** Do this as soon as possible.

Send information about needed schedule changes to the Director (devans@eou.edu) and Kathryn Shorts (kshorts@eou.edu), and Cc to Brenda Atwood (atwoodbs@eou.edu) and Taryn Lewis (lewistm@eou.edu).

EMAIL

- Check individual email inbox each morning.
- Reply to messages sent by the Director in a timely manner, particularly those marked "Reply Requested," "RSVP," or "Urgent" in the subject line.
- Use the Writing Tutor Group email address, writing-tutor-group@eou.edu, to communicate with all tutors.

MEETINGS

- **When you cannot attend a tutor orientation, workshop, or staff meeting**, notify the Director and schedule a time to meet and discuss what was missed.

PAYROLL

New on-campus tutors must take their **photo IDs** and **Social Security cards** to Inlow 205 to complete payroll paperwork. The Payroll office is open 8-5 Monday through Friday. Payroll paperwork needs to be completed before you begin working for the Writing Center. If you want to have your pay directly deposited in your bank account, you also need to take a **voided check** with you.

Acceptable ID's include Drivers License, State Issued Identification Card, and Student ID. You must have either your Social Security card or a receipt from the Social Security Administration Office stating you have ordered a new card.

If you are a Writing Tutor located away from campus or have questions about payroll, please contact Kathryn Shorts at 541-962-3281.

MONTHLY PAPERWORK

Tutors must maintain accurate student attendance rosters. Keep these forms in your personal folder next to the whiteboard. Attendance sheets are color-coded for different Writing Center programs:

- Yellow: on-campus tutorials
- Salmon: evening drop-in tutorials
- Lime: SOT-Writing

Attendance rosters are processed for payroll on or by the 14th of each month.

POLICIES

Professionalism in the Writing Center

WHEN TUTORS ARRIVE AT THE WRITING CENTER

To make the space of the Writing Center more conducive to learning, please do the following:

- Hang coats and store backpacks and/or computers in designated storage areas. Keep tables cleared for tutoring. Remember that this space is shared with tutors from other disciplines.
- Be respectful of ongoing tutoring in the Writing Center. Any conversations between tutors should be quiet exchanges about writing and tutoring.
- Encourage other tutors to adopt these practices through modeling.
- Writing Tutors are encouraged to use the English/Writing Student Lounge in Loso Hall 122 for breaks, eating, and study before, after, and between tutorials.

- **If you choose to remain in the Writing Center when you are not scheduled to tutor and a replacement tutor is needed, you will be asked to do tutor.**

STANDBY TUTORING

The number of no-shows (student writers who do not show up for scheduled tutorials) has decreased since moving to online scheduling. However, no-shows continue to frustrate Writing Center tutors, staff, and students, who would like to meet with a tutor but find the schedule full. One of the strategies in place to help resolve some of these issues is called “Standby Tutoring.”

Standby Tutoring is available to a student who does not have an appointment but is willing to wait and take the chance that a tutor might become available due to a no-show.* Here is how it works:

If a student does not show up for a tutorial, the tutor will have two options:

1. Wait for 15 minutes, and if the student has not arrived, the tutor can record the no-show on the online schedule, be paid for 15 minutes, and leave the Writing Center.
2. Wait for 15 minutes, record the no-show on the online schedule, and wait for or work with a student standing by, waiting for an available tutor. The standby tutor will notify the Student Desk that she/he is available on standby for tutoring a walk-in student. The tutor will move to the conversation area (couch and chairs near the door) and devote waiting time (after the initial 15 minutes) to reading articles or books on tutoring writing, or contribute to Writing Center operation in some manner approved by the Writing Center Director. A standby tutor will be paid for the full 30 minutes originally scheduled if the time is devoted to tutoring or engaging in writing center-related professional development.

*Writers are urged to schedule an appointment in advance. Standby tutors will only be available if another student writer fails to attend a scheduled appointment. This may become less common with online scheduling. If you work with a student on standby, please take the time to help the student register online and schedule an appointment.

TIME MANAGMENT

Working as a writing tutor requires that you develop professional work habits, including time management and attendance. Record the days and times of classes, tutorials, extracurricular activities, and other work or personal appointments on a calendar of your choice (Google Calendar works well and will send reminders via SMS text.) Review your calendar weekly for conflicts, and review it each day to remind you of your schedule. This will help you become aware of a potential conflict in advance and allow you to plan accordingly.

Drop-In Hours

At the beginning of each quarter, Writing Tutors may request to work Drop-In Hours. Every attempt will be made to distribute these hours fairly, but with student writers' and the Writing Center's needs taking priority.

When demand for drop-in tutoring rises, making it difficult to meet with all writers, please inform the Director by leaving a note with at the Student Desk as you leave. The following morning, the Director will decide whether an additional tutor will be scheduled or hours will be extended, or both.

1. A student writer may cycle through the Drop-In tutoring line *no more than two times per day*.
2. Tutorials are limited to no more than 15 minutes when a waiting line forms.
3. A student must work with a tutor at least 15 minutes in order to receive a Blue Slip and can receive **no more than one (1) Blue Slip per day during Drop-In Tutoring**.

BLUE SLIP POLICY (TUTORIAL REPORT FORM)

On Campus

Blue Slips are meant to be a way to communicate with a professor about what a student and a tutor were able to cover in one session, with the understanding that since sessions are just one-half hour long, not all areas of a paper will be covered. Not all professors require Blue Slips be submitted with drafts; however, Blue Slips are required for all WR 115 students.

Any student who works with a writing tutor in the Writing Center can request a Blue Slip. The Blue Slip can be given to a professor to show that they have worked with a writing tutor.

Below are some guidelines to make the system run smoothly:

- 1) Students are in charge of asking tutors for Blue Slips. It is not the writing tutor's responsibility to offer them.
- 2) Students must ask for a Blue Slip at the end of each session. Tutors will not give out Blue Slips all at once at the end of the term if a student has forgotten to ask for them.
- 3) Tutors may complete only one form per tutoring session.
- 4) If students bring several papers to a session, they will not receive a Blue Slip for each paper, but rather one per half-hour session.
- 5) Students can receive Blue Slips at Drop-In Hours if a tutor has time to meet with a student for at least 15 minutes. This will depend upon the number of students in line for tutoring at any one drop-in session.
- 6) A tutor can refuse to give a Blue Slip to a student who is not actively participating in a session.

Blue Slips are kept at the Student Desk. At the end of a session in which a student requests a Blue Slip, ask the Lab Aide who is present for one copy, fill it out, and give it to the student.

See the preceding section for the policy on Blue Slips during Drop-In Hours.

Online

Because asynchronous online tutoring has shifted from the OWL to eTutoring, Blue Slips are no longer available. However, students who submit a paper to eTutoring can request a letter of verification from the Writing Center (writingcenter@eou.edu). **Verification letters will not include a list of global and local issues covered.**

SOT-Writing tutors may email a copy of the completed Client Report directly from the scheduler to the student. List global and local issues discussed in the tutorial.

Important: Students are responsible for forwarding Verification Letters or emailed Client Reports (SOT-Writing) to the professor.

CLIENT REPORTS

Following face-to-face or SOT-Writing session, tutors will enter a brief report of main issues covered in the session as an online Consultant Report.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development opportunities benefit tutors, the writers they work with, and the Writing Center's function as a whole. Attendance is expected at scheduled orientations, workshops, and staff meetings unless the event conflicts with a class or mandatory college activity. Tutors will be compensated for their time. Participation in professional development opportunities is one factor contributing toward increases in pay level.

The schedule of workshops and staff meetings may vary from term to term.

LOCATION OF TUTORING SESSIONS

Tutorials will be held in Writing Center unless otherwise approved by the Director. The Writing Center provides an environment conducive to learning and a safe space for both tutor and student.

MISSED APPOINTMENTS

Missed appointments waste the Writing Center's human, time, and financial resources. Encourage students with whom you work to cancel appointments in advance if they cannot attend tutorials. Tutors should maintain a reliable time management record either online or on paper to insure their own attendance.

Student Missed

If a student misses a scheduled appointment, the tutor will open the online appointment form and check the “missed” box at the bottom.

Tutor Missed

If you (the tutor) miss a scheduled appointment, the following procedure should be followed:

- Contact the Student Desk at 962-3663 as soon as you realize you have missed the appointment.
- Email the student you were scheduled to tutor. Extend a brief but sincere apology, and ask if the student would like assistance in rescheduling.
- Report your absence to the Director by either email or in person.

Tutors who establish a pattern of missing or being more than five minutes late to appointments will be asked to meet with the Director.

SCHEDULE MANAGEMENT

On campus tutorials and SOT-Writing appointments are made online at eou.mywconline.com/. Tutors are responsible for logging into the schedule each morning before the earliest hour offered on that tutor’s schedule for that day.

RESPONDING TO DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Seldom do tutorials develop into situations that require assistance from someone else. However, if a student becomes verbally abusive or threatening, you should announce that the session is over. If the student refuses to leave, ask the Director (if present) or Kathryn Shorts for assistance, or ask the Lab Aide at the Student Desk to call Security.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If a medical emergency arises and an ambulance or emergency support is needed, call 9-1-1, then call Campus Security or ask the Lab Aide to do so. Keep the area near the affected person clear and maintain a calm, quiet composure. Do not attempt procedures with which you are not familiar unless you are medically trained. Reassure the person that help is on the way.

Emergency (ambulance, fire, dangerous situation): 911

Campus Security: 541-962-3911

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

BECOMING A WRITING TUTOR

The EOU Writing Center and Synchronous Online Tutoring-Writing (SOT-Writing) are staffed by EOU students who are trained as peer writing tutors. Our writing tutors have satisfactorily

completed or are currently enrolled in Writing 220 Methods of Tutoring (offered on-campus Fall, Winter, and Spring, and online in Spring). On campus students participate in an informal interview with the Director at the end of the term. After grades are released, students with strong interpersonal skills, tutoring potential, and good to excellent writing skills may be invited to write a letter of application that demonstrates interest in working as a tutor.

Occasionally a transfer student from another college or university will enter EOU with substantial training or experience as a writing tutor. Such students may schedule an interview with the Director, present certifications or other proof of professional development, a recommendation letter from their former administrator, and a letter of application.

WORKING AS A WRITING TUTOR

The Writing Center lists three pay levels for Writing Tutors. Advancement depends on length of service, commitment to professional development opportunities, and quality tutoring. These descriptions are reviewed periodically, and pay rates correspond with EOU standards.

POSITION TITLE: WRITING TUTOR, LEVEL 1

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Provide writing assistance to students in 30-minute scheduled sessions throughout the term. Writing Tutors will schedule the amount and times of sessions according to their course schedules. Writing Tutors are expected to help students at all stages of the writing process, applying the theory and practice studied in their Methods of Tutoring course. Writing Tutors are expected to adhere to “Writing Tutor Guide to Professionalism and Policies,” maintain rosters, attend pre-term orientations and regular staff meetings, participate in “Best Practices” evaluations, participate in outreach activities, and attend professional development workshops.

JOB QUALIFICATIONS

Writing Tutors must have successfully passed WR 220 Methods of Tutoring. Writing Tutors are recommended by faculty to take this course, or take the course as part of their teacher training. Students who work as tutors must maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.00 and a G.P.A. of 3.00 in their majors.

Level 1 writing tutors are those who have successfully completed WR 220 Methods of Tutoring, and have practiced applying writing theory and tutoring methods in the Writing Center while enrolled in the course. To become a Level 1 Writing Tutor, students must be recommended by the WR 220 instructor.

POSITION TITLE: WRITING TUTOR, LEVEL 2

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Provide writing assistance to students in 30-minute scheduled sessions throughout the term. Writing tutors will schedule the amount and times of sessions according to their course schedules. Writing Tutors are expected to help students at all stages of the writing process, applying the theory and practice studied in their Methods of Tutoring course. Writing Tutors are expected to adhere to “Writing Tutor Guide to Professionalism and Policies,” maintain rosters, attend pre-term orientations and regular staff meetings, participate in “Best Practices” evaluations, participate in outreach activities, and attend professional development workshops. In addition, Level 2 Writing Tutors are expected to serve as mentors to Level 1 tutors, observing Level 1 tutors, using “Best Practices” guidelines. Level 2 Writing Tutors are expected to participate in an Online Writing Lab (OWL) workshop and then to respond to drafts submitted to the Online Writing Lab.

JOB QUALIFICATIONS

Writing tutors must have successfully passed WR 220 Methods of Tutoring. Writing Tutors are recommended by faculty to take this course, or take the course as part of their teacher training. Students who work as tutors must maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.00 and a G.P.A. of 3.00 in their majors.

In addition, Level 2 writing tutors must have tutored at least two terms after successfully after completing WR220 Methods of Tutoring. Level 2 Writing Tutors also must have participated in at least one professional development workshop, participated in one outreach activity, and completed two “Best Practices” evaluations with the Writing Center Director.

POSITION TITLE: WRITING TUTOR, LEVEL 3

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Provide writing assistance to students in 30-minute scheduled sessions throughout the term. Writing Tutors will schedule the amount and times of sessions according to their course schedules. Writing Tutors are expected to help students at all stages of the writing process, applying the theory and practice studied in their Methods of Tutoring course. Writing Tutors are expected to adhere to “Writing Tutor Guide to Professionalism and Policies,” to maintain rosters, attend pre-term orientations and regular staff meetings, participate in “Best Practices” evaluations, participate in outreach activities, attend professional development workshops, and work as Online Writing Lab tutors. In addition, Level 3 Writing Tutors are expected to serve as mentors to Level 1 and 2 tutors, observing Level 1 and Level 2 tutors, using “Best Practices” guidelines. Level 3 Writing Tutors must, with the help of the Writing Lab Director, create and facilitate one professional development workshop.

JOB QUALIFICATIONS

Writing Tutors must have successfully passed WR 220 Methods of Tutoring. Writing Tutors are recommended by faculty to take this course, or take the course as part of their teacher training.

Students who work as tutors must maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.00 and a G.P.A. of 3.00 in their majors.

In addition, Level 3 writing tutors must have tutored at least 3 terms after successfully completing WR220 Methods of Tutoring. Level 3 writing tutors also must have participated in at least two professional development workshops, participated in two outreach activities, and completed three “Best Practices” evaluations with the Writing Center Director.

OWL HISTORY

At the end of the Winter 2013 term, Eastern Oregon University’s Online Writing Lab (OWL) ceased to exist when its host server was decommissioned. The OWL, designed and coordinated by Professor Susan Whitelock, served EOU’s online and on-site student writers for approximately twelve years, during which time hundreds of students found writing support. The description that follows has been retained in this document as a testament to the OWL’s history and Professor Whitelock’s dedication to students and tutoring.

The Eastern Oregon University Online Writing Lab (OWL) was created to meet the growing population of Division of Distance Education (DDE) students who could not access the on-campus Writing Center. The service is free for EOU students, and is available only to EOU students enrolled in EOU's online courses.

There are many kinds of OWLs provided by universities and colleges. Some give only one-paragraph responses to drafts, or respond only to specific questions. EOU has chosen to create a format that allows tutors to be very thorough in their responses while at the same time not trying to serve as editors. In our practice, tutors work very hard to set priorities for an online response, finding a focus for a response, and providing tools that student can use in future essays (thus trying to make better writers, not just better papers, as Stephen North urges us to do). Yet we also agree with Shamon and Burns about the importance of modeling and providing examples, sometimes being directive in our tutoring. We recognize that good writing tutor practice is a balance of directive and non-directive tutoring.

To the degree that it is possible online, we try to create active and participatory writers from the start of the process. On the OWL "Submit a Draft Online" form we ask students to complete several questions to give tutors important background information so that tutors can respond effectively. The form itself teaches the writer something about writing-to look closely at the assignment, to consider that writing is a process, that an essay has a focus, that the writer needs to let the tutor know what he/she as the writer would like to work on.

Miscellaneous

Writing Center Website: <http://www.eou.edu/writing-center/>

Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Eastern-Oregon-University-Writing-Center/209639865754570>

Writing Center Email: writingcenter@eou.edu