

## The Newsletter of the



Fall 2014

October 14, 2014

Daniel Heffner, Editor

Greetings, NTWCA members! I think the change from summer to fall is my favorite time of the year. For those of us who live our lives in academic years, the fall semester is special; it is something of a new start. As the weather cools (although only slightly here in north Texas!) and the leaves start changing, new students arrive on campus eagerly embracing the changes before them. The fall semester is also a new start for all of us as we implement new ideas in our writing centers, often with a brand new crop of tutors, and we also implement changes in the classes we are teaching.

Personally, I have experienced a lot of change this fall semester. My son transitioned to middle school with all the social and academic changes this transition brings. My writing center has also changed. Due to space constraints, we are renovating the Write Site to include my office, and more and more we are using other spaces on campus for evening tutoring, supplemental instruction, and workshops. A little less than four years ago when I started managing the Write Site, I supervised five writing consultants. Although the change has been gradual, it's like I blinked, and all of a sudden, the Write Site now employs 14 writing consultants. Our growth is certainly changing not only the kind of training I conduct but also the daily operations of the Write Site. An exciting change for me this fall has been the beginning of my term as President of NTWCA.

With change foremost on my mind during these early days of fall, it seemed a sort of kismet when I checked our parent organization's website today for information about the annual conference. This year, the SCWCA's annual conference theme is "by changing writers, what do writing centers change?" In our moments of insecurity we may wonder if our writing centers are changing writers or just pieces of writing, but we do know that writing center professionals can be agents of change. We can change students' writing; we can even change the writing culture at our institutions. As our writing centers change to accommodate special programs and specific campus communities, our changes refract onto those programs and communities. Or course, constantly changing technology creates for us the never-ending quest of not only choosing and learning new technology but also understanding how to integrate new technology with writing center best practices.

Mother Teresa said, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples." Writing center professionals also create ripples, one writer at a time. As the leaves are changing this fall, I am wishing for only the best changes for all of you and your writing centers.

Jennifer Phillips-Denny  
President

***North Texas Writing Centers Association***

Fall 2014 Conference

October 17, 2014

Hosted by  
The University of Texas at Arlington  
E.H. Hereford University Center  
300 W. First St.  
Arlington, Texas

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**Program Schedule**

<b>11:00-11:30</b>	Arrival and Registration
<b>11:30-11:45</b>	Opening Remarks from UTA
<b>11:45-12:30</b>	Lunch
<b>12:30-12:45</b>	Business Meeting
<b>12:45-1:45</b>	<b>Member Presentations</b>  “Creative Writing MAs Wanted: Writers & Their Role in the Gaming Industry,” Abigail Manuel, Collin College  “Taking Tutor Training Online,” Daniel Heffner, The University of Texas at Dallas
<b>1:45-2:00</b>	Break
<b>2:00-3:00</b>	<b>Keynote: "Writing Center Grand Narratives and Peripheral Visions,"</b> Dr. Jackie Grutsch McKinney, Ball State University
<b>3:00</b>	Closing Remarks and Writing Center Tour

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**Campus Map**

<http://www.uta.edu/maps/?id=101>

**Parking Options**

<http://www.uta.edu/maps/?id=312>

<http://www.uta.edu/maps/?id=440>

[http://www3.dbu.edu/security/parking\\_permit.asp](http://www3.dbu.edu/security/parking_permit.asp)

## ***Presenters***



**Jackie Grutsch McKinney** is an associate professor of English at Ball State University, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in rhetoric and composition and has directed the writing center for eight years. She has written extensively about the work of writing centers including her recently published book, *Peripheral Visions for Writing Centers*. She lives on a five-acre farm in Indiana with her family, five chickens, dog, three cats, and bees.

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**Daniel Heffner** is the Writing Center Manager at the University of Texas at Dallas. He has been a volunteer reader for the American Literary Review, is proud to be the audio-video director for the Kraken Reading Series in Denton, TX, and writes poetry reviews for American Microreviews and Interviews. At the 2014 IWCA/NCPTW conference, he will present a paper titled “Imagining a Blended Writing Center: Virtual Game-Space, Real Play, and Real Writing.”



**Abigail Manuel** began tutoring in writing centers in 2004 as an undergraduate at Texas Christian. After receiving a BA in Radio-TV-Film, she pursued a multidisciplinary degree at UT Dallas, with an emphasis in creative writing. She is currently working on her dissertation at UT Dallas in Literature, which focuses on the works of Philip K. Dick and their adaptations in to film and computer games. She currently teaches writing and humanities at North

Central Texas College and is a writing center tutor at Collin College’s Central Park campus. Recently, her priorities have shifted back to creative writing after interning for two summers with Blizzard Entertainment as a game writer. She is currently considering an offer to work at NCSoft on their upcoming game Blade and Soul.

## ***News from the Region***



This year has been full of changes for the **Tarleton State University Writing Center**.

For starters, Ms. **Alice Newsome** is no longer serving as Director or Co-Director of the Center. Long-time members of the NTWCA certainly know of Alice's contributions to the TSU Writing Center and the development of the NTWCA. None of the current changes taking place in the TSU Writing Center would be possible without the years of

service and dedication Alice provided.

The TSU College of Liberal and Fine Arts just completed a renovation of the O. A. Grant building which includes an incredible new space for the University Writing Center. The Writing Center has moved from one small room with 6-dual monitored computer terminals, to a state-of-the-art space with includes 8 tutorial cubicles, 8 individual work spaces for students to apply tutor suggestions, and 4 private tutorial rooms to accommodate students who may benefit from such a work environment.

With Ms. Newsome's decision to step down as Co-Director of the UWC (to focus her efforts on new opportunities to serve the College), **Dr. Ben Sword** has been named the full-time Director. He is certainly excited to be a part of the transition to this new space and new level of visibility on the TSU campus.

Dr. Ben Sword earned his Ph.D. in Rhetoric from Texas Woman's University this summer.

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At **Collin College**, the **Center for Academic Assistance/CPC Writing Center** has started a new pilot program. It's called the "Absent Professor" Program. The Absent Professor Program is a resource available to CPC's professors that allows them to attend other professional obligations without having to cancel class. At the professor's request, a CPC Writing Center staff member will give an in-class presentation, take attendance, and adhere to professor instructions. They are currently working with Academic Affairs faculty and have had a great success so far. They have also begun a newsletter this semester!

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The **University of Texas at Dallas Writing Center** has grown over the past year, bringing on **Daniel Heffner** as manager and **Brian DiNuzzo** as a new, full time Learning Specialist. Learning Specialist **Thomasina Hickman** ran a very successful full-day seminar for graduate students working on their dissertation proposals. Daniel Heffner has focused on tutor training by creating an online nexus for tutors and working with his colleagues at the Student Success Center to develop tutor training that will meet College Reading and Learning Association standards. He has also introduced new programs, such

as a Wednesday Writing Hour for International Students and a tutorial in Associated Press Style that will be required for staff writers at The Mercury, UT Dallas' student newspaper.

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The staff of **Dallas Baptist University Writing Center** would like to congratulate **Carrie Hamilton**, our Student Coordinator, on the successful completion of her MA in Applied Linguistics, from the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics. Having spent eight years in the UWC, she is leaving and plans to use the knowledge she has acquired to serve in cross-cultural service with Pioneer Bible Translators. Though we will miss her tremendously, we also wish her Godspeed and every good thing as she undertakes this important work.

We would also like to congratulate **Elizabeth Adams, Austin Cook, Carolyn Hoy, and Ashley Knowles**, who each recently graduated with honors. These former Writing Consultants earned Bachelor Degrees and are now pursuing their particular interests outside the University.

Elizabeth is teaching English in China as she works toward a Masters through Wheaton College. Austin just spent a month exploring New York City and is currently considering his options for further study. Carolyn is interning at Southwest Airlines and planning her wedding which is slated for January. Ashley is teaching fourth-grade English, which she says is very different from conferencing with college students. We wish each of these former consultants great success in their future endeavors.

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**UT Arlington Writing Center** staff worked with the Psychology Department's graduate students and their mentor for a year to design an instrument to understand what happens in writing center tutoring sessions. The results offer a dramatic opportunity to gain input from tutors and professionals. Our Writing Center study attempts to collect information about the Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Characteristics of writing center staff. The executive staff of the English Writing Center at the University of Texas at Arlington is conducting the survey. The responses are anonymous and the collected data will be used only generally to determine if there are a set of valid and reliable skills and abilities associated with those who help others improve their writing at the collegiate level, and to help develop hiring and training instruments that will target and improve these skills and abilities. Finally, this will provide consultants and their supervisors concrete information to better articulate the KSAOs that consultants/tutors have when they leave our centers and begin their careers. The more respondents we have, the better data we will have to interpret.

The survey takes 10-15 minutes to complete. We would love to have you and your staff participate. Please use the following address to help us in this important research:  
[http://utamsmr.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_87iaZanVZGR6Fkp](http://utamsmr.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_87iaZanVZGR6Fkp).

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If you would like to have your writing center featured here, send updates at any time to the newsletter editor, Daniel Heffner, at [christopher.heffner@utdallas.edu](mailto:christopher.heffner@utdallas.edu).

### ***Invitation to Join the North Texas Writing Centers Association***

The North Texas Writing Centers Association serves writing centers of the region as a clearinghouse for exchanging information, as a forum for discussing important writing center issues, and as a means of promoting the professional status of writing center personnel.

Membership in the NTWCA includes directors and staff of writing centers and persons interested in writing centers. Membership can be either institutional (\$50 for a single campus institution, \$25 for each campus in a multiple campus institution), or individual (\$10). Institutional memberships include writing center staff and tutors at the institution.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Membership: \_\_\_\_\_ Institutional Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Please indicate your profile:

\_\_\_\_ I am a Writing Center Director.

\_\_\_\_ I am a Writing Center Staff Member (professional consultant, graduate tutor, or undergraduate peer tutor).

\_\_\_\_ I am interested in Writing Centers (past director, faculty member, student ...).

\_\_\_\_ Other:

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**Please Send Dues To:      TCC NE English Department  
Attn: Elizabeth Parrish  
828 W. Harwood Rd.  
Hurst, Texas 76054**

**CONSTITUTION OF THE NORTH TEXAS WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION**  
(REVISED SPRING 2007)

- I. The North Texas Writing Centers Association serves writing centers of the region as a clearinghouse for exchanging information, as a forum for discussing important writing center issues, and as a means of promoting the professional status of writing center personnel.
- II. Membership in the NTWCA includes directors and staff of writing centers and persons interested in writing centers. Membership can be multiple-campus institutions (\$25 per campus), single-campus institutions (\$50), or individual (\$10). Institutional memberships include writing center staff and tutors at the institution.
- III. NTWCA assesses dues annually at the fall meeting. Memberships run from September through August. Monies collected are used for communication, publication, and conference expenses.
- IV. The right to vote and to hold office extends to all individual and institutional members.
- V. The following elected officers serve a two-year term and may be elected for multiple, two-year terms:
  - a. President: The president chairs all meetings, facilitates the operations of the association, and serves as co-chair of the Membership Committee.
  - b. Vice-President: The vice-president functions as program chair and assumes the duties of the president in the president's absence.
  - c. Newsletter Editor: The newsletter editor gathers information, edits articles, publishes the newsletter, and handles mailings.
  - d. Secretary: The secretary takes minutes at meetings and reports at executive board meetings and conferences.
  - e. Treasurer: The treasurer collects dues, records memberships, reports finances and memberships at meetings, and serves as co-chair of the Membership Committee.
  - f. Immediate Past President: The immediate past president serves as an advisor and assists other officers in discharging their duties.
- VI. The president appoints the following officers for two-year terms:
  - a. Web Spinner: The web spinner maintains the NTWCA website page.
  - b. Archivist: The archivist serves as custodian of the organization's records.
- VII. The Membership Committee is co- chaired by the president and treasurer and consists of three volunteers from the organization membership. The membership committee promotes involvement by serving as the NTWCA's outreach liaisons, contacting potential members at colleges, universities, and secondary schools in the area, and conducting an annual membership drive.
- VIII. The Executive Board, consisting of the six elected officers and two appointees, meets at least twice per calendar year to plan meetings and conferences. When officers and

appointees are selected at the spring meeting, they immediately assume their duties and plan the schedule of events for the following year.

- IX. If an officer resigns, the Executive Board will appoint an interim officer to serve out the officer's term. If the resigning officer's term has more than one year remaining, the association will elect a new officer at the next regular meeting to serve out the remainder of the term.
- X. The NTWCA sponsors two conferences per calendar year.
- XI. This constitution may be amended or replaced by a majority vote of the executive board and membership at any business meeting.