E-Consultation Revelations

Mary, Kevin, Lindsey, and Kimber discuss their takeaways from the article, "Using What Works" by Beth Hewett and how to apply these points by e-mail.

“The placement of global comments helps to increase the effectiveness of local comments. While the issues addressed in global comments may often be more significant to the paper as a whole, the issues addressed in local comments are still absolutely worthy of attention in the revision process.” — Mary

“Hewett suggests narrowing the subjects addressed in online conferences to prevent fatigue from happening (if you try to comment on everything in a draft, your brain will become mush, as well as your fingers).”— Kevin

“...We are acknowledging to the student that we don't know everything, which makes us real, but we are also pointing out possible errors, meaning we are being honest with them...This is something that I was reminded of in this session that I think is important when dealing with unknown subject matter. ” — Kimber

Presentation Anticipation

Heidi analyzes data collected in the Writing Center for her upcoming presentation.

All of our research will finally see the light of day. At the upcoming writing center conference at the University of Texas at Austin, Heidi and Tim will be presenting methods and theories on evidence-based research in day-to-day writing center practice.

Heidi’s research interest includes analyzing the relationship between personality and consulting style, applying her psychology major to our work here in the WC.

Tim’s presentation will detail the process of conducting research in the writing center through recordings and transcription.

Taylor, who graduated last semester, is on the panel as well and will be discussing writing center theory.

Dr. Zepernick, Lynn, and Morgan will also be presenting on their own panel.

The conference takes place on February 22-24 in Austin, TX.

Transcription Addiction

As many of you remember, the major focus at the beginning of the semester was on transcribing our recorded sessions.

We’d just like to take a second to compare the numbers from the past semesters and tell you all to keep up the good work!

From fall 2011 to spring 2012, we had 53 total recorded sessions but we only completed 18 full transcriptions.

Compare that to our 88 (and growing) total from fall 2012 to spring 2013 where we already have 22 completed so far!

The Office of Continuing and Graduate Studies awarded Tim and Heidi $500 each from the Undergraduate Research Support Student Travel fund for the conference presentations.

The Writing Center awarded them $150 each for WC student travel funding.
“My session went great and Heidi answered all my questions! Very helpful and wonderful!!!”

“Thank you, Hannah, for your help. She was awesome in helping with my reflection. Hope to be able to work with her in the future.”

Kimber: “Good teacher! Quite patient and nice!”

“Kevin is fantastic. He gave me great feedback and seemed to sincerely want to help me.”

“Michael was very patient and kind when he found the need to offer alternative ideas to my writing. He was easy to understand and I felt as if he was understanding what I was trying to achieve with my paper.”

“Mary really helps me a lot!!! She is awesome!!!”

“Mandi is very kind and really helps my assignment! Hope to meet her again!!”

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Remember that sometimes we need to explain how a consultation works to clients, making sure they understand the difference between proofreading a paper and looking for patterns in the paper that lead to teaching moments. This makes our time together more valuable, even if it means we can’t make it through the entire paper. Also, check in with them frequently to make sure they’re satisfied with the direction in which the consultation is going.

Coaching Tip

Heidi weighs in on the article, “Should Writers Use They Own English?” by Vernashawn Ashanti Young.

“The problem is, homogenization filters diversity in content. It does this by telling us who’s good and who’s not. Who deserves to be listened to. I mean, it just does. Not only that, but it filters diversity in audience. How many minority groups who have no formal education are reading the articles we’re reading now? How many more might read this kind of socio-culturally-relevant thought-provoking stuff if it was presented to them like their best friend was telling them about it?

I’m maybe looking at this a bit differently than Young does in “Should Writers Use They Own English?” but I do think that code-meshing is a really awesome way to connect not only writers to readers, but writers to cultures. Saying, as a part of the academic community, “Do it our way or you’re doing it wrong,” suddenly makes higher education and expression of ideas about appearances.

Is that really what we, as supposedly “educated” people, care about? How a word is presented on a page rather than what it means? Of course, some standard rules should be adopted, but making use of wiggle room is just going to increase diversity…If intelligent, creative people have to pretend to be something they’re not in order to be heard, then there’s probably something wrong.”

Diversity in the University

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Saying Goodbye, So Come Apply

The Writing Center is in dire need of recommendations for future consultants.

We are sad to see the spring commencement rapidly approaching, as we have to say goodbye to several of our current consultants.

As a result of one-third of the staff leaving, we will need to find eager, new workers to welcome to the Writing Center team.

If you know anyone who may be a good fit and is interested in what we do here, encourage them to apply.

The application can be found on our website.

Dr. Zepernick uses safety goggles to scope out new recruits!