Writing Center: Spring Semester 2015

Monday and Tuesday 9:00 AM—8:00 PM
Wednesday and Thursday 9:00 AM—5:00 PM
Friday 9:00 AM—12:00 PM

What happens in the academic support center’s writing center?
The writing center offers you time with a tutor to work intensively on your writing, giving you the opportunity to ask questions, request clarification, practice new skills, get instant feedback, and discuss any writing skills you want to improve. It should not be thought of as a replacement for going to class, however. Instead, think of tutoring services as a way for you to get support in addition to the classroom.

What do writing tutors do?
Although you may be anxious to improve a single piece of writing, tutors are just as concerned with your long-term success as a writer. They are sympathetic fellow writers who will read your work, offer observations and suggestions, help you learn to recognize your own road blocks in writing, and help you to better solve your own problems when there isn’t a tutor present. Remember, however, that tutors are in a sort of halfway position between your classmates and your instructors. They are not there to give you a grade or to offer opinions about a grade you may have received. And, although you can expect them to be sympathetic, they can’t negotiate problems between you and your professors.

How can writing tutors help?
If you are in the early stages of writing a paper, tutors can offer insight into which parts of your paper are most effective and which areas need more work. They can’t write the paper for you, but they can help you to strengthen it and to learn strategies for improving your writing. If you have a revised draft, a tutor won’t correct it for you; rather, he or she will help you find errors so that you can correct them on your own and will help you understand what kinds of errors you make most often. As you learn to focus specifically on those kinds of errors, you’ll be better able to check your work without having to remember every rule of grammar at any given moment. Writing tutors care about you and your writing, and, if you’re willing to work hard and be patient, they can help you to make noticeable, lasting progress.

Keep in mind that while working with a tutor will not necessarily guarantee you an A on your work, recent Ivy Tech statistics indicate that most students who consistently use the tutoring services through the Evansville Academic Support Center for Writing and Math see a marked improvement in their academic performance in these subject areas.
Think about what you need from the session and write down those thoughts.
What specific problems are you having with this paper? Has your professor made suggestions on previous writing you’ve done for the class? What general concerns do you have about writing? You’ve been writing for years and probably have a pretty good idea of where your personal pitfalls lie: Be ready to share them with the tutor. Tutors work hard on their own writing, too, and they know just what it’s like to have a problem that’s personally difficult to solve.

Be sure to bring a copy of your assignment and any related class notes.
Some professors distribute an assignment sheet or post assignments on a course Blackboard site; others give assignments verbally. Most will discuss assignments and take questions in class, so if the assignment is not clear to you, ask your professor to clarify before visiting the writing center. The more information you bring to the tutor, the more effectively he or she will be able to help you complete your assignment.

Bring any other writing you have completed relating to the assignment.
This might include drafts, free-writing, journal entries, peer review comments, or notes from group discussions. If the assignment involves research or material from a textbook or handout, bring those items to your session, too. Remember, the more tutors know about your thinking and writing process, the more precisely they’ll be able to focus your session and the more help they’ll be able to provide.

Be prepared to schedule follow-up sessions.
A single session is helpful, but don’t expect it to polish your writing to perfection — even professional writers have to work continually at improving their craft. You’ve spent a lifetime developing your writing habits, some good and some not-so good. Your tutor will help you to identify what you’re doing well and what you can do better on future assignments.

There are many resources that the writing center can provide you with in addition to our professionally trained and friendly tutors.

- In addition to desktop computers, we also have several laptops available for student use while in the Writing Center. Relax in one of our new comfortable chairs while reading a book or enjoy the conference area where you can work with several other students on a group project.

- We have many handouts and guidebooks on several different subjects such as organization, thesis statements, APA and MLA, avoiding plagiarism, summarizing, response writing, writing for a specific field or program of study, and much more!

- Running low on your school supplies budget and need some help with those “little things” that keep the semester running smoothly? Come check out our supplies corner where everything is free.

Handout adapted from *A Writer’s Reference, 6th ed.* by Diana Hacker. For more information about the Writing Center, please contact mstandage@ivytech.edu or 812-429-1421.