



JUST WRITE!



Quarterly Newsletter of the University Writing Center at UCF



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JUST WRITE!



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS:

We welcome you to the second volume of *Just Write!*, a newsletter sponsored by the University Writing Center. This edition was created and edited by Anastasia Ehling, Sadie Hughey, Mekenzie McElroy, Jarrett Webster, and Lindsey Wright. We want to thank our fellow peer tutors and the Directors of the University Writing Center, Professor Weaver and Professor Bryan, for their continued support. Our purpose is to create a sustainable dialogue about writing for all students at UCF. Thank you for being a part of our community at the UWC.

We strongly believe that everyone has the aptitude to write. This newsletter supports writers and students in our community at UCF and eagerly promotes writing-related events. We proudly promote collaboration as a community and we are grateful for the opportunity to create, write, read, and dream.

We are so proud to be working with the Writing Center and are incredibly grateful for the chance to write to our fellow students here at UCF. We know that this is a changing time for many of us, so we appreciate our writers and readers who take the time to write, read, and create in our community. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to work with and publish writing and promote writing-related events, and we hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter.

In this edition, we are proud to present the winner of the third Tutor's Choice Flash Fiction Contest. This outstanding submission was evaluated by a panel of tutor judges through a series of several reads to ensure the fairness and legitimacy of this contest.

Thank you to all of the wonderful submissions we hope that you write for us again! Please review the next submission deadline at the end of this issue. There is more to come.

FROM THE EDITORS:

**ANASTASIA EHLING, SADIE HUGHEY, MEKENZIE MCELROY,
JARRETT WEBSTER, AND LINDSEY WRIGHT**



**ANASTASIA
EHLING**



**MEKENZIE
MCELROY**



**LINDSEY
WRIGHT**



**SADIE
HUGHEY**



**JARRETT
WEBSTER**



DIRECTORS WRITE



By Professor Matt Bryan
Assistant Director of the UWC

The coming of spring marks, for me, the time of year when I begin to realize the full extent of the gap between my plans for a given academic year and what I'll be able to finish. One of the joys of working at a place like UCF is getting to stick—at least in part—to the rhythms of the same academic calendar that organized my months between the ages of 5 and 24. I do enjoy this rhythm, with its built-in resets and opportunities to meet new groups of people. But it also tends to make me hyper-aware of time, or the lack thereof. The end of another academic year means that soon I'll need to count up my accomplishments to see what goes into the 2021-22 box. And so it is I find myself sitting outside on perhaps the most beautiful day of this year so far—just the second of spring—ruminating about all of the writing I have yet to do.

I used to be a “one thing at a time” kind of writer. This got me through school (somehow), and I sometimes miss those hours spent thinking about an image, letting it wind and unwind itself in my mind as I built the lines with which to describe it. This was a pleasurable way to write, albeit an inefficient one. Without the rigid structure of high-stakes, course-based deadlines and grades, I couldn't sustain it, leading to years where I found I was unable to finish a single project, despite having a degree in writing.

During those years of writing-but-not-finish, I turned to all sorts of advice for writers, of which there is no shortage. Most of this wisdom either did not resonate or simply did not work for me. Over time, though, I eventually cobbled together some ideas that did. This included two main tenets.

First, write as frequently as you can, and ideally every single day. Second, keep at least one project in each stage of the process—specifically, research/development, drafting, revising, and submitted for publication—and move between them. This ensures you're continuing to move writing towards publication (assuming that's the end goal), with the added benefit of being able to shift between different kinds of work as time allows and mood dictates. Don't have time or don't feel like drafting that section of an article? Work on revising this draft instead, or find five places where you might send that essay.

I keep a quote above my computer in my office that I like, but am also not sure I fully believe or understand, which only makes me like it even more. It's from Wendy Laura Belcher's *Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing*. Belcher writes, “[Y]ou are not too busy to write, you are busy because you do not write. Busy-ness is what you do to explain your not writing.” For me, this quote is a reminder that at the end of the day—or week or month or year or decade, for that matter—all of the minutes and hours will be used up, one way or another. Might as well spend some of them writing. I don't always follow all of this advice, but I will say this: when time is tight, and I force myself to sit and write, even when it feels like there are a million other things I could be doing, I am almost always grateful, for in writing, in my experience, a moment tends to enlarge, and there's suddenly more time than you think. There's time to sort out the idea, to find the words, to order and reorder them, and in so doing to find new meanings in their possibilities.

WRITERS WRITE

By Anastasia Ehling

When I came to UCF, I figured that I would have time to pursue my creative writing passions in addition to the coursework for my two majors. My two majors are Writing & Rhetoric and Clinical Psychology, which entails many academic readings and essays. However, I soon discovered that I wasn't designating the time for personal or creative writing outside of the classroom. I tried to create a routine of getting up early or staying up late to write for an hour each day, but I was often already drained from my courses. It is much easier to stop a practice before it has the chance to become a habit when there is no one to hold you accountable.



I was fortunate enough to find a friend through a UCF event who has many of the same interests as me, including writing creatively in the same genres as I do. Together we formed a little duo writing group between ourselves, and while we've invited our other writer friends, it has primarily remained the two of us sitting at the UCF Library on Wednesday nights for a couple of hours straight. We're just two writers getting hooked on our caffeine, frantically typing and looking crazy as we plot out our storylines – and I love every minute of it!

What makes it interesting is that my writer friend and I are working on novels that we began writing for NaNoWriMo, a challenge for writers to write a novel in the month of November for National Novel Writing Month. Of course, neither of us finished this challenge, but it got us further than we had ever been in long-term writing projects. Oddly enough, we're writing in a similar genre, yet it is both of our first times writing in this field. It makes the experience so much more enjoyable being able to do this with a friend, and it's incredible to see how our writing and ideas have developed and changed since the beginning of our projects last semester.

We are both writing these novels with the aim to one day have these published. Both of our stories are inspired by real-life events, so we've brainstormed together about coming up with changes to keep the fictional aspect – and there have been many laughs at our sillier attempts. There have been many times where we've been stuck on the plot or character development, and we talk through our ideas to get unstuck. Having a writing partner that knows the background of your story and can help you in the moment has been so incredibly helpful. I can't believe I've never had this before, and I can't see myself working on a major creative writing project like this on my own. I am so incredibly grateful that UCF provided the space for us to meet and created an environment for us to continue to be creative together.



TUTORS WRITE

GIRLBOSS WRITES: GIRLBOSS REVIEWS

By Mekenzie McElroy



I would venture to say that the majority of the writing I do in my life is academic. Prior to picking up Writing and Rhetoric as a second major, most of my writing was in my Psychology courses where I'm writing about diagnoses and other psychological concepts. I have an interest in these topics, so I enjoy writing about them, but they were always serious and I never had the opportunity to have fun with writing. This semester, I'm more involved in Writing and Rhetoric courses, and I've been provided some creative freedom that I've had absolutely no idea what to do with. While completing these assignments, I've started to learn that my writing doesn't have to be serious.

For those not involved in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric, or if you just haven't heard about Monday Messages, our Undergraduate Program Director, Dr. Stephanie K. Wheeler, sends out any important program updates, deadlines, and events via email. Writing and Rhetoric majors receive these emails weekly, while minors receive them on the first Monday of the month. During a conversation in her office hours, Dr. Wheeler mentioned to me and a fellow tutor, Lindsey Wright, that she wished she received student feedback on Monday Messages.

Of course, we took it upon ourselves to provide that feedback. Each week, we craft an edition of what we titled *Girlboss Reviews*. We read Monday Messages and collaborate on a detailed review of the information provided by Dr. Wheeler. Most of the feedback is just about how much we love what she did and how it was presented, but there have been a few times where we suggested some revisions for future editions that have been implemented.

The format of *Girlboss Reviews* is my favorite thing. Created as a Google Doc, the page is a perfect, light shade of pink and we chose to use 13-point Comic Sans as our font to emphasize the comedic nature of the writing. Creating these each week has introduced me to the world of how writing can be fun, especially when I have very few creative bones in my body.

Despite *Girlboss Reviews*' origin as a fun way to tell Dr. Wheeler we appreciate the work she puts into Monday Messages, Lindsey and I had the opportunity to incorporate *Girlboss Reviews* into our coursework. For Dr. Wheeler's Rhetorical Traditions course, we have Unit Checkpoints that have the purpose of getting us to engage with the texts we read throughout the semester. For our second Unit Checkpoint, Lindsey and I completed an edition of *Girlboss Reviews* that focused on the six rhetoricians we studied over the unit in place of our usual review of Monday Messages. It was my favorite assignment I've ever submitted, even outranking the paper I wrote about Fleetwood Mac's album *Rumours* for Professor Bryan's Writing and Rhetoric Foundations course. Having fun while writing is something I'm still discovering, but I couldn't be more excited for the journey ahead of me.



INQUIRY SPOTLIGHT

Space and Self-Efficacy in the Writing Center

BY MADISON FERNANDES

What does a writing center look like? For some, images of a classroom, library, or living room might come to mind. One thing is for sure. The design of a space has a significant impact on how people feel when they are there. It's also fair to say that the layout of a room communicates expectations about the kinds of work done there. My inquiry group wanted to study our space in the UWC, and consider those interactions. We also hope to identify potential areas of design improvement. Ultimately, we wanted to improve the relationship between the physical space of the center and our values.

While researching the connection between learning and space, a strong recurring theme was the importance of a room's atmosphere. Things like lighting, perceived location on campus, windows, arrangement of furniture, and color can make a difference in the feel of an educational space. We encountered scholarship about how designing a writing center to feel like a home can be alienating to some writers, as there is not one style of home which reflects that of every tutor and writer. After learning that classrooms can create anxiety for students, we also did not want the center to feel too similar in design to a classroom.

The first potential change we discussed was the arrangement of the furniture, which has been the same for this school year. Additionally, the space could potentially be flexible for individual sessions, since our furniture is on wheels, but we do not make use of that function very often. Another idea was to bring more color into the center, to break up the neutral color palette.

My group proposed changes to our fellow tutors about the ways the space in the center could evolve. We got their input about the layout by asking them to actively experiment in the space with new arrangements. Changing the layout of the center, whether for this update or a session, allows the space to take on varied roles; the arrangement might look different for consultations, individual writers, small groups, or seminars. Another proposal was adding plants to the UWC. A recent study found that plants helped undergraduates bounce back after intellectually and emotionally demanding activities. Incorporating plants into our center could benefit fatigued writers, add color, and create a comfortable feel which does not overlap too closely with living spaces or classrooms.

These practical changes relate to many of our values in the Writing Center. For example, arranging the space to fit the needs of an activity or a writer demonstrates the value of adaptability. Creating a space that feels welcoming for everyone, rather than homey for some, relates to the value of diversity & inclusion. We want to create a space where the function and atmosphere honors writers' experiences, processes, and identities. Our focus is not merely to improve the design of the center now, but also to build a perspective of continually examining how our space aligns with our values. Going forward, fostering greater unity between our values and the space of the center will require continued reflection and change.

STEPS 2 SUCCESS



NURSING

So far I haven't had to write much within my major, but when I do, it's mostly research papers.

These research papers mostly deal with typical secondary sources, APA style, and are 6-10 pages. My major is centered around sciences, so science-based research papers are very common. Understanding how to find these papers by using research engines is a good idea as it makes the process of ultimately writing a research paper easier.

As you advance in the major, learning the terminology used in these papers can help you succeed within nursing as well.

-KIARRA CROUCH

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

While the College of Business places a large emphasis on in-person communication, writing plays an essential role in both academic and professional settings. In the classroom, being able to clearly communicate is absolutely necessary, especially when doing group presentations or sending emails to professors.

In professional settings, such as entrepreneurial proposals or interviews, having a well-formatted resume and a thorough written proposal or contract can be the difference between striking a deal or being shown the door.

-ALEX CLAURE

PSYCHOLOGY

Paraphrasing is the standard in psychology. This field encourages you to use direct quotes sparingly, if at all. If you're used to a more equal mix of paraphrasing and quoting, writing in psychology may seem like a daunting task. However, paraphrasing is an essential skill because it helps demonstrate your understanding of psychological concepts and research. That's why my best tip is to, while reading, ask yourself questions and try to make connections among your resources.

Adopting this habit will help you better grasp the material, which makes it easier to paraphrase. The transition to almost exclusively paraphrasing information intimidated me at first, but it ultimately made me feel more empowered in my writing.

Through utilizing your own words, you'll also be able to confidently approach common assignments, including literature reviews and research papers, like a professional.

-MAKENNA CONNOLLY



COMMON PROJECTS

Honors Undergraduate Thesis

LINDSEY WRIGHT

Completing a thesis can seem like a daunting task, especially as an undergraduate. It's likely to be the largest, most in-depth project you'll ever have completed and that can be scary to consider. However, undergraduate theses are a great way to dive deeper into a topic you're passionate about and to even possibly bring in your outside interests to your academic studies. I completed my undergraduate thesis on audios and hashtag use TikTok, and it was really cool to apply what I've learned in my rhetoric classes to a social media app I use almost daily.



The HUT program consists of 1-2 semesters of Directed Readings, where you create your research proposal, and 1-2 semesters of Thesis, where you conduct any primary research and write the thesis itself. The research proposal typically consists of an introduction to the topic, a literature review summarizing the scholarship in the field, your proposed methods, and why this research matters. However, the proposals and theses look different depending on what field you're in, so be sure to consult your thesis chair and previous undergraduate theses in your discipline to get an idea of the genres. Additionally, be sure to refer to the guidelines provided by the Office of Honors Research to make sure your thesis hits all the general requirements.

Completing a thesis is essentially doing an independent study under the supervision of your thesis chair and possibly the other members of your thesis committee. Nina Lopez, who is currently completing an HUT in English, says, "My biggest advice is setting deadlines and communicating with your thesis chair." It's up to you to communicate with your thesis chair about what kind of support you need in terms of deadlines and check-ins. The research proposal is a sizeable paper that requires reading a lot of scholarship beforehand; additionally, while reading the scholarship in the field you may find yourself rethinking what you want to focus on in your thesis. For this reason, it's important to work on your project throughout the semester and not procrastinate until the last minute. Of course, this is easier said than done, which is why it's important to communicate honestly with your committee about how they can help hold you accountable.

Many people who complete undergraduate theses are in STEM fields, and they may not consider themselves to be the strongest of writers. However, being able to communicate your work is an important part of doing research; what use is discovering something new and important if you can't share it with the world? If you find yourself struggling with writing your thesis, visit the University Writing Center for help! Even if you have nothing on the page, we can help you work through the process from start to finish. Doing a thesis may be daunting, but it's exciting to get to contribute scholarship to your field.



HOROSCOPE PROMPTS

In need of some writing inspiration?

SADIE HUGHEY

Aries

The Sun, Moon, and Mercury all have their eyes on you. Isn't it a coincidence the theme of the newsletter is green and that the Sun, Moon, and Mercury all rule over the color green and vision itself? Write about the first green thing you ever saw.

Taurus

It's time to put that new quirky and imaginative energy you have to use Taureans. Write about something you're boycotting right now. And don't write about not writing! Extra points if there are magnets, pendulums, or fireworks involved.

Gemini

Mercurials, it's time to step out of the box. Write in a style, language, font, or format you've never written in before. If you're questioning what color to dye your hair after writing, the answer is dark red.

Cancer

Sweet Cancerians, how are you feeling? Don't feel upset by the uncomfortable feeling of having to rearrange certain aspects of your life. Write out how you usually deal with change.

Leo

Don't be so sad little Leos that your fire sign sibling is hogging all the planets right now. The current Mars transits might have you questioning your motives. Write an apology letter you wish you had received.

Virgo

You're the other half to the Mercurial team Virgos. Write about how you wish things will work out. Then, at the end of the month write how things concluded. Write a third letter on what you learned.

Libra

Hello Venusians! It's time to give in to your romantic side with the recent 7th house transits. Write about the drama that revolved around a public relationship you once had. If you never have had one, have a little fun and make one up.

Scorpio

I have a soft spot for you Plutonians. Do you have any new admirers lately? Write them a love letter if they're worth it.

Sagittarius

Calling out for all Sagittarius royalty! I task you all with writing about your favorite part of your identity.

Capricorn

Pluto is not done yet with you Capricorn baddies. I want you to write a creative story about a clairvoyant astronaut navigating a virus outbreak on a spaceship.

Aquarius

Faced any hardships recently? Saturn and Venus are making up right now to only break up again in a few weeks. Writing about the blockages in your personal life might bring catharsis. For an alternate writing topic, try writing an autobiography.

Pisces

Jupiter's influence might allow you to find value in writing about your goals, plans for success, or about animals (specifically furry ones).

RECOMMENDED LITERATURE

Beginner: *Astro Poets: Your Guides to the Zodiac* by Alex Dimitrov and Dorothea Lasky

Advanced: *The Rulership Book* by Rex E. Bills

My dress is green. Satin, floor-length, the color of cadmium. It matches the dresses of the three other bridesmaids, though mine is more detailed. It must be; I'm the maid of honor. A beautiful opportunity, and a wonderful showing of support for my best friend. She's getting married to the love of her life. He treats her well, gives her everything she could ever need, supports her dreams. He's a great man, really, and I've grown to love him as well. I shouldn't be so envious, but I can't help it. Always a bridesmaid, never a bride. That doesn't matter, though, because the only person I'd want to spend the rest of my life with is getting married today.

And she looks so beautiful in white.

She wanted a green wedding. It's her favorite color, after all. When we met, her favorite color was pink. Throughout high school it was blue, and as she matured and entered adulthood, she settled on green. Her nails were green, her favorite clothes were green, her eyes were green. A spectacular green, bright and shining, with flecks of brown and gold interspersed in sage. Green walls in her apartment would watch as we made dinner together. Green bedsheets and blankets would keep us warm as we slept in winter. From under those blankets, I would look across at her sleeping face and imagine how easy it would be to place a kiss on her delicate features. How easy it would be to be with her forever.

She was green this morning, riddled with nerves. I held her hand in the bathroom as she calmed down. She had nothing to be afraid of, the wedding went off without a hitch. She looked gorgeous, and her husband looked ecstatic the whole ceremony. Now we sit at the reception, as I'm anxiously counting down the seconds until my speech. I hear my name called, and I stand up. My palms are sweaty where they grip my emerald skirts, my knees feel wobbly as they carry me up the stairs to the stage. I can hear my heartbeat exploding in my ears. I think I'm having a panic attack. I can't stop it, and I can't run away. She'd be devastated. I grab my note cards and attempt to steady my voice. It feels like my vocal cords will jump out of my throat.

"We met when we were 15. We clicked immediately, and you became the most important person in my life within months."

I fell in love with you in less than a year.

"We both played on the volleyball team. You used to make me carry you home when you tweaked your knee during practice. You'd have me teach you math lessons because you would fall asleep in class. You called me when you had your heart broken the first time."

I've always been by your side.

"I've been waiting for you to fall in love with someone who deserves you, and you found him."

I just wish it had been me.

"I knew something was different when you met him. I had never seen you open yourself up so completely. He brings out the real you, and he's incredibly lucky to know the real you so well."

I'm green with envy.

"I know you both will be so happy, and you deserve nothing less than that happiness. I can't wait to see how your future will unfold."

I need time to stop. I need time to reverse, I need to start all over.

I turn to face her and look into her eyes. "I love you. To the happy couple!" I raise my glass and finally let go with a watery smile.

Goodbye.

I'm sure the guests think the tears running down my face are a result of happiness. I wish I could say I'm crying from joy, but I'm too selfish for that. I'm crying because I have really and truly lost her. I mourn for the one thing I've ever wanted in my life. I weep for my love, shriveling and curling up inside of me. I cry for the future that will never come: We'll never move into a green house, with perfect green bushes, and a cat with a green collar. And I weep because I'm such an awful, selfish person that I can't even feel happy for the love of my life.

But I'll stay by her side, because that's what you do for love. Isn't it?



Rebecca Williams

C O N T E S T W I N N E R

Honorary Mentions

- "The Monarch of the Sonoran Desert"
- "Records From Eons"
- "A Girl in the Greenery"
- "A Green Home"
- "Spring Renaissance"
- "Do You Want to Know What the Ocean is Like?"

Writers' Gala

Previous and Future winners of writing/ open mic contests will be invited to read or submit a written work for the upcoming Writers' Gala in the Fall of 2022!

Writers Write?

Each semester we select one writer that visits the writing center regularly. The column is a dialogue about the writing process. If you would like to write for our Writers Write column, contact us at uwc@ucf.edu with a small sample of your writing.

Writer Bio:

Rebecca Williams is a freshman studying Early Childhood Education, enthusiastic about early literacy. She started reading very young, inspired by her mother, and never stopped picking up books. Her writing is derived from her life experiences, and she aims to evoke new empathetic emotions within her readers.

Upcoming Contest

What we're looking for:

- Original Flash Fiction in 750 words or less.
- The poignant and meaningful use of our next element: **BLUE**
- You are free to explore any theme you wish!

What we're NOT looking for:

- Fanfiction
- Excessive or over-reliance on profanity.
- Gory, sexual and/or graphic imagery.
- Writing that promotes racism, sexism, and/or other forms of discrimination.

Submission Details

Flash Fiction column

Our Flash Fiction contest is a new running column of *Just Write !* The contest is held each semester Fall, Spring, and Summer. Our next element is **BLUE**. Open submissions will run through July 20th of 2022. To submit visit this link or scan the QR code:

<https://tinyurl.com/Summer22JustWriteFF>



Questions about your submission and our adjudication process? Feel free to email uwc@ucf.edu.



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[@ucfuwc](https://www.instagram.com/ucfuwc)



RESOURCES FOR WRITERS

Publication Opportunities:

Convergence Rhetoric: A peer-reviewed online journal for upper-division undergraduate writing in the Humanities!

- <https://convergence-rhetoric.net/>

Cypress Dome: Publishes an annual literary magazine of student work and hosts a variety of events.

- Early Bird submissions (including feedback from editors) from October 1st-31st.
- Open submissions are November 1st-December 31st.
- cypressdome.org

Stylus: A journal for the exemplary writing and research produced by students in ENC 1101 and 1102.

- Submissions for the current issue are due August 26, 2022.
- Check with your ENC 1101 or 1102 professor.
- writingandrhetoric.cah.ucf.edu/stylus/

IMPRINT: A UCF student magazine supported by the Department of Writing and Rhetoric.

- writingandrhetoric.cah.ucf.edu/imprint

Florida Review: A UCF literary magazine published twice yearly.

- Open submissions all year!
- floridareview.cah.ucf.edu/



Future Events:

UWC:

- April 12: Top 20 Common Errors Workshop (4 pm - 5:30 pm)
- April 18: Resumes and Cover Letters (2 pm-3 pm)
- Check out the events page for information on our upcoming workshops, writing groups, and more!
- <https://uwc.cah.ucf.edu/events/>

Cypress Dome:

- Check out [@cypressdome](https://www.instagram.com/cypressdome) on Instagram for information about monthly open mic nights!
- Follow [@writersinthesun](https://www.instagram.com/writersinthesun) on Instagram to see what nationally-acclaimed authors will be visiting UCF.