



JUST WRITE!



Quarterly Newsletter of the University Writing Center at UCF



NEWS & FEATURES

Directors Write
PAGE 1

Writers Write
PAGE 2

Tutors Write
PAGE 3

Inquiry Spotlight
PAGE 4

Steps2Success
PAGE 5

Common Projects
PAGE 6

Horoscopes
PAGE 7

Flash Fiction
PAGE 8

Events & Links
PAGE 10

JUST WRITE!



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS:

We welcome you to the latest edition of Just Write!, a newsletter sponsored by the University Writing Center. This edition was created and edited by Anastasia Ehling, Madison Fernandes, Sadie Hughey, and Mckenzie McElroy. We want to thank our fellow peer tutors and the Directors of the UWC, Professor Weaver and Professor Bryan, for their continued support of this newsletter. With their help, we are able to fulfill our purpose of creating 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 we hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter.

In this edition, we are proud to present the winner of the fourth 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, MADISON FERNANDES, SADIE HUGHEY,
AND MEKENZIE MCELROY**



**ANASTASIA
EHLING**



**MADISON
FERNANDES**



**SADIE
HUGHEY**



**MEKENZIE
MCELROY**



DIRECTORS WRITE

By Professor Debbie Weaver
Director of the UWC

Under the emails, assignments, Google docs, and things-to-do list lives a writer who tries to find a quiet morning before work or an evening with no Netflix binging to do what they love best. To tell a story. For years, I couched these stories in fictional characters feeling that was safer and less vulnerable. I worried too much about hurting or exposing the secrets my family fiercely guarded.

Then, I wrote a memoir with the purpose of helping others who might also be coping with an illness. The genre required me to stick to the facts and report conversations and events as truthfully as possible, and I found the actual truth was easier to write about than the imaginary truth I had been creating in fictional characters.

I still had concerns about the people I might hurt or the events someone else might remember differently than me. To minimize this anxiety, I focused on the specific details capturing the colors, smells, and reactions of the people around me. Memory can be difficult, especially if some parts are painful, but I found comfort in reminding myself that truth is a matter of perspective. At the same I shifted to non-fiction writing, I realized that the stories I enjoyed reading the most were the writers who exposed a conflict, character, or event that others were uncomfortable talking about. I wanted to be brave, to tell the truth that wanted to be told, not the sugar-coated version that protected me.

The past two years I have concentrated on flash non-fiction pieces, essays less than 1,000 words. This has presented a challenge for a woman who takes ten minutes to get to the point, but that challenge is one I have embraced. Writing flash requires me to stay focused and discretionary about the details of an event. It requires precision and concision on the line level, an attention to the craft that I had not previously focused as much on, because I was too busy getting the story on the page. I enjoy writing flash because I can create and revise one in a week, which leaves me feeling productive when I do not have the time to spend on a larger piece. It is a genre I never would have considered ten years ago. I labeled myself as a fiction writer early on and other than in required courses (one hundred years ago), I did not explore other genres.

My purpose here is not to convince you to write flash non-fiction but to encourage you to experiment writing in other genres in the hopes of discovering truths you might not have known existed. Who knows, I still have time to become a poet.

WRITERS WRITE

By Zach White



I am a senior Aerospace Engineering student. Although engineering students have a reputation for only doing math, they encounter various writing assignments throughout their degrees. I have attended sessions at the University Writing Center many times and worked with several tutors as a UCF student. I have brought papers across disciplines ranging from American politics to rocket propulsion, and the writing center helped improve my understanding of every assignment regardless of writing style.

I scheduled my first writing center appointment in my sophomore year after my aerodynamics professor assigned a literature review focusing on winglets. Even though I had previously written a literature review for ENC 1102, I was unsure how engineering literature reviews differed. The session involved reviewing resources on literature reviews, and my tutor and I determined that literature reviews are very similar across disciplines.

Almost a year later, I scheduled a session to outline another literature review, this time for my Honors Undergraduate Thesis. I was nervous about attending because I had not started writing anything. However, my tutor was very understanding about my situation. Although they had no prior understanding of my thesis topic, my tutor helped guide me through the process of outlining my literature review. I ended up scheduling many more appointments with that same tutor, slowly working toward a final product. The staff encouraged me through the writing process and made me feel much less stressed about drafting my long proposal.

University Writing Center

I have also attended writing center appointments for seemingly simpler papers. Last summer, I scheduled sessions for two essays in my American National Government class. Even though my professor didn't grade my assignments harshly, I hadn't written a humanities paper for over three years. The writing center helped refamiliarize me with the conventions of social studies reports, and I received very good grades on both assignments.

While the writing center certainly made me a better writer, one aspect that students may overlook is the social aspect of consultations. I am often very anxious about my writing, especially with strict deadlines. The staff has always understood the personal situations that may impact how long it takes me to complete a paper. As a student who doesn't engage with writing very often in my classes, the writing center has been an excellent resource throughout my undergraduate career. My consultations helped strengthen my writing ability and made my writing process less stressful.



TUTORS WRITE

Reflecting on Chaotic Writing Processes

By Daniel Manrique



I graduated from the Writing & Rhetoric program just last December after what was an eventful and tumultuous four-year cycle that consisted of career switches, important choices, and life-altering experiences which changed the course of my writing and future. By the end of the fall semester, continuing with the Rhetoric and Composition MA was a clear choice, one that I felt passionate about for the first time in my life.

Coming back from an eight-month sabbatical, I've enjoyed seeing some familiar faces and getting to meet completely new people while picking up my academic progress from where I left off. With graduate school, the academic expectations have changed drastically. The workload is more intense, the writing is more complex, and the amount of reading per week is much bigger than before. Adapting to an academic environment that is relatively different from my undergrad hasn't necessarily been difficult, but it has definitely put a lot of my writing habits and processes into perspective.

If there is one word that could describe my writing process, it would definitely be chaotic. I've found myself working through my own writing with some unique circumstances, especially when it comes to assignments. I tend to write under pressure and sometimes close to a due date, multitask by doing other activities or having something else playing in the background, and I even tend to work on the go with whatever tool I have at my disposal. For example, my twenty-page research paper in my freshman year was written entirely on my phone on the way to campus. I feel at my most productive around three in the morning without any explanation why. Even now, in my first semester of grad school, I've resorted to writing two big essays on my iPad because my laptop kicked the bucket without warning, one of which was finished well into the early morning hours.

Recently, I have thought a lot about whether my writing process is efficient or disorganized. Little habits and situations such as these show me that my writing process has not changed in all these years, so I wonder if I'm really adjusting to grad school appropriately. Part of the experience of growing as writers is recognizing our thought processes and being aware of what kind of writers we are. But it does make me wonder, at what point does a writer need to reevaluate themselves for them to grow? Is that merely related just to the writing process, or does it go any deeper beyond that?

Writing is an exercise in comprehending and reflection. Considering our first assignments, I have yet to see how they compare to my previous work. Moving forward, this will probably be the struggle I will face within my first year as a grad student, which, granted, is leagues above the identity crisis from years past. My only hope is to avoid stagnation and change the process if I need to, both for the sake of my writing and for myself. Being in tune with your writing process and your identity is such a vital part of the actual pieces we create.



INQUIRY SPOTLIGHT

Navigating Emotional Responses in Writers

by Arielle Fedee

Within the writing center, we have learned that emotional dependency is a large portion of our sessions. There are sessions that weigh heavily on both the writer and the tutor. Often, we focus on aiding the needs of the writer within the session. As tutors, we saw that there was a gap within the emotional care for tutors specifically.

Three different types of emotions can be involved in a session: generative, disruptive, and circumstantial. Generative emotions are present in a session when a student enjoys their writing process and professor and starts early, ending up with a well-developed paper. We, as tutors, sometimes consider sessions good when these emotions are present. We believe that because everything is smooth sailing, it means we had a productive session. Another type of emotion that often presents itself in sessions is disruptive emotions. We often see this when a student dislikes the course or instructor and delays engaging in a writing process. The students usually arrive at the writing center two hours before the paper is due with a skeleton of a draft. During these sessions, tutors find themselves stressed out alongside the writer. Personally, I feel like I need to pour everything into the session in order for the session and the writer to be productive. This is not the case. There needs to be a balance of power and emotions in a session for it to be fully productive. The last type of emotion is circumstantial. This emotion is present in a session when the frustrated student who can't find sources for a paper may come to the writing center and has a productive session, reduces the frustration, and ends up producing a good quality paper.

The discussion of these emotions in our spring inquiry discussions led us to talk about what constitutes a “good” or “bad” session. What we consider good may be progress in a paper or relationship building. Sometimes we forget that our emotional and mental health play a huge role in how we view a successful session. Seeing what makes a good or bad session brought our group to the conversation of how we cope with these good or bad sessions. There are three different types of coping mechanisms: active coping, internal coping, and avoidant coping. Active coping can be considered social sharing and modifying tutoring situations. Another coping strategy is internal coping. This may include cognitive restructuring and self-practice. The last coping strategy that we discussed was avoidant coping. This type of coping is dangerous in the environment that we work in. We must actively work through our emotions to be the best tutors and people for our writers and ourselves.





STEPS 2 SUCCESS

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Writing in a major that consists of three disciplines of your choice can differ. One person may find themselves writing lab reports, and the next literary analyses or essays. No matter the specifics, every student in IDS may benefit from flexibility and great attention to the conventions of their disciplines.

Because you may find yourself juggling different writing structures, it can be hugely helpful to take the time to read peer and class writing samples and put a true effort into integrating the feedback you are given. This writing will be in fields you have chosen because you are passionate about them - it can only benefit you to invest time into mastering them.

So long as you are attentive, determined, and passionate, you will be able to master any writing format the major asks of you and will become a more well-rounded writer and individual for doing so.

-ISABELLE GALAN

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Countless lesson plans, at least that's what the grapevine says. In the Elementary Education program, I haven't done much writing. I've written observation reports and many discussion posts. I'm only a sophomore and I know going forward there will be a lot more opportunity for writing.

To that, I highlight the importance of the ability to explain yourself through writing. It's much harder than you think. Lesson plans can leave no room for confusion. This writing must be clear and, for the sake of everyone, concise. We also are tasked with writing in our teacher certification exams. This manner of writing juxtaposes writing lesson plans because it is more essay format than an explanation based on children's actions that someone else will read.

Writing in this field is very analytical and explanatory. We must decipher what doesn't work, then explain why and how we can improve.

-ELISE SUTTER

COMPUTER SCIENCE

This is a field that will ask a lot of technical writing from you, especially in later classes.

Notably, you'll have to write project plans, several forms of software documentation, and instructions. It is important to be concise and definite. If your writing is wishy-washy or your project plan is not clear, you are not efficiently communicating your ideas well enough for your future projects to be approved.

Concise writing does not mean oversimplified writing, but your target audience may not always understand technical computer science terms. Jargon may be necessary for software documentation and team communication to accelerate project productivity. However, when proposing projects to companies, the reader will oftentimes have a different specialization. Always keep in mind whom you're writing for when you're providing a plan to meet their requirements.

-COURTNEY MCCRACKEN



COMMON PROJECTS

Literature Review

BY MADISON FERNANDES

A literature review can seem like a challenging task. It can be difficult to untangle exactly what the writer is supposed to do or what makes the “lit review” different than any other portion of a paper. Literature reviews can be part of a research project, Honors Undergraduate Thesis, or dissertation. They should tell the reader what work others have already done in a field and what people do or do not know about relevant subjects. A lit review gives its reader an overview of existing research about a topic by drawing connections between ideas.

Before writing a lit review, writers typically research a specific subject. During this process, pay attention to the relationships between the pieces. Where do the scholars agree or disagree? Are there any oversights, elements the authors do not talk about, or specific things you wish there was more information about? Looking for themes while reading will help inform the writing process.

Writing a lit review involves synthesizing the sources, rather than summarizing them. Synthesis analyzes the research, comparing the ideas in the pieces. Summary simply recounts what the writers said in each document. A common error with lit reviews is explaining what happened in each piece separately, rather than focusing on the relationships between the materials. One way of working towards synthesis, instead of summary, is identifying topics that two or more of the pieces addressed. Then, compare what the scholars have to say about those ideas, rather than explaining the sources individually. The reader should come away with an awareness of a few concepts that are often discussed in the field and an understanding of what scholars think about them.

There are some tips and tricks that can help when writing lit reviews. One option is looking at examples. See what other people have written and consider what kind of information you learned about that person’s topic while reading. Another method is to look at informational resources. The UWC’s website has materials about common assignments, including lit reviews. An exercise to try is considering what you would say to quickly tell a friend a few concepts that were important in the research. A final tip is to schedule an appointment at the UWC to talk about any part of the writing process with a peer tutor.

Overall, the point of a lit review is for a reader to gain an understanding of what scholars are thinking about a specific subject. A key difference between a lit review and other portions of a paper is that lit reviews explain the existing work, which gives context to any following writing, like opinions or original research. Lit reviews can seem difficult at first, but they do not have to be. You have the expertise in the topic- help get your reader up to speed.

HOROSCOPE PROMPTS

In need of some writing inspiration?

by SADIE HUGHEY

Aries

Oh my Martian friends, you must be having so much fun right now! This larger-than-life personality requires you to write something glorious. Write your own epic. Have the main character resemble the essence of your core self.

Taurus

Hi, little bulls! There's a life changing experience coming your way. It's so exciting, isn't it? A curious, new adventure awaits you. Write about what you hope to accomplish by going down this new path.

Gemini

Oh Gemini, you're always here to keep us entertained. You're so bold and bright right now, lets keep this up. Write a self-interview. Get deep and ask yourself the questions you've been dying to answer.

Cancer

Moon babies, I love your sensitivity. No one is capable of it in the same way you are. Write about soft, fluffy animals wandering happily in a bright green forest.

Leo

You are powerful Leos! You have the mindset to manifest anything right now. Write out a list of your top ten biggest wants in life currently.

Virgo

Virgos! You're on par mentally with Sherlock Holmes right now. The mystery you're about to get to the bottom of, keep up the good investigative work. After you finish up this part of your life, write a reflection. Anything goes.

Libra

How are you doing with the perspective shift, Venusians? It's a good thing you don't have all the details right now. Write down a manifestation for an outcome you're in need of.

Scorpio

My secretive Scorpio loves, get out of your evil lair and breathe in some fresh air! I know right now you're feeling an intense energy from the deep transitions occurring in your life right now, but it will be okay! Lets write a list of positive traits and behaviors you have.

Sagittarius

Hello Sagittarius besties! There's not much going on for you right now in the sky, but that's not an issue. Let's stir up some trouble... write a Tweet about your current hottest, hot take.

Capricorn

There's intensity in your writing right now Capricorns. This heightened level of emotion will reveal your true thoughts and beliefs about your current situation at play. Write a weekly journal to keep track of the events.

Aquarius

There's a rush of energy available for you to tap into right now Aquarians. How about we write something original? Write about your favorite philosophy or create your own.

Pisces

Pisceans, it's time to write a love letter. It can be to yourself or someone else, just don't think about it too much. Write with your heart.

As we approached the community park blaring chutney music, the realization that this was our first Phagwah celebration in three years hit me like a brick.

It also hit me like a fistful of orange abir powder hurled at my eyes. My sister attempted to hide behind me, but there was no escape from this year's celebrations.

"Yuh need some color on you!" the anonymous culprit chortled playfully, dipping his hand in a bag for pink powder. I had never seen this man before in my life. His once white shirt had been stained in most notably orange, green, and red powder, and a pink handprint had also been slapped on his shiny brown bald head.

"Happy Holi!" he exclaimed, smearing pink on my sister's neck and then wiping the remnants on my shirt.

The man, definitely drunk, then stumbled away to look for others in clean white attire to attack. We had been here for less than five minutes, and our white shirts already resembled that of a messy summer sunset. My parents and older brother lumbered behind us, carrying bags of ammo and attempting to avoid the chaos.

On Phagwah, more commonly known to non-Guyanese folks as Holi, you always had the crowd who tried (and failed) to stay clean. I never understood why. Phagwah was supposed to symbolize the arrival of spring, and celebrate the beautiful nature accompanying it. That meant the soft pink cherry blossoms, the emerald green tree leaves, and the rapidly aging bright yellow dandelions that sprouted unannounced nearly everywhere. Phagwah was an informal homage made to all natural color, and the vitality of the new season.

Why would you ever try to avoid it?

Scraping some orange powder from my shirt, I approached my mother nonchalantly and commented on the brisk March climate before subtly patting her back.

"You're not slick, you know," she said, rolling her eyes.

I dropped my jaw in mock surprise. "What do you mean?" I replied, absolutely appalled. She chuckled and reached into her purse for a bag of green abir.

"For you and your sister to share. Try to surprise your grandparents."

My sister and I swiftly exchanged mischievous glances before hurriedly nodding. I stashed the bag away safely in my jean pocket. We had a whole park to explore, endless opportunities to cause trouble, and three years of unexpressed gratitude for spring. For too long we had participated in colorless Phagwahs, dreary days where it was observed solely by a mere "happy Phagwah" or by dousing family members in plain baby powder.

COVID-19 had tremendously restricted our ability to commemorate it the proper way: outside, surrounded by family, both blood-related and not. Now that we were here, lungs filled with the scent of freshly cooked pholourie and a faint breeze rustling our clothes, it felt surreal. Even the sky seemed to rejoice, a brilliant clear blue adorned with scattered white clouds. A sky that occasionally inhaled pink and orange clouds of powder too, one that welcomed this community equally under its loving arms.

My sister and I didn't get to wander too far into the park before we were ambushed by a dozen enthusiastic tiny demons. Giggling like a savage pack of hyenas, the children were unrecognizable, and now resembled splotches of paint more than actual humans. Within moments, we were covered in dye from head to toe.

It was no use escaping. For where there were children on Phagwah, the most mischievous crowd followed not too far behind. The crowd who instead opted for tall buckets of intensely dyed water as their primary source of ammo, and who arrived with hoses for constant refills. Without warning, a man with muscles larger than my head suddenly lifted one of the buckets and emptied its contents over my sister and I.

"What the heck?" I shrieked; the water was freezing! Liquid sloshed around in my once pristine sneakers, and my sleek black hair was now soaked and matted against my face.

Blinking my shock away and shivering, I turned to face my sister and burst out laughing.

Any color we were decorated with earlier was instantly eradicated. They were all now overpowered by a deep, saturated purple. Even our skin was no longer a caramel brown.

No, our torso and legs and cheeks and eyebrows and palms, and engraved extensively within our nails, were all purple: a sweet, warm, vibrant purple, one that felt good to be submerged in again, one that we welcomed with loving arms.

Raiya Shaw

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

Writer Bio:

Raiya Shaw is a freshman at UCF hoping to major in Creative Writing and Journalism. She loves warm cups of coffee, solving jigsaw puzzles, and seasoning anything with basil. When she isn't writing, you'll find her studying last minute or taking the rare opportunity to nap.

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 Opportunities

Flash Fiction column

Our Flash Fiction contest is a running column of *Just Write!* The contest is held each semester. Our next element is **BLUE**. Open submissions will run through March 10, 2023. To submit visit this link or scan the QR code:
<https://tinyurl.com/S23TCFFC>



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.



JUST WRITE!

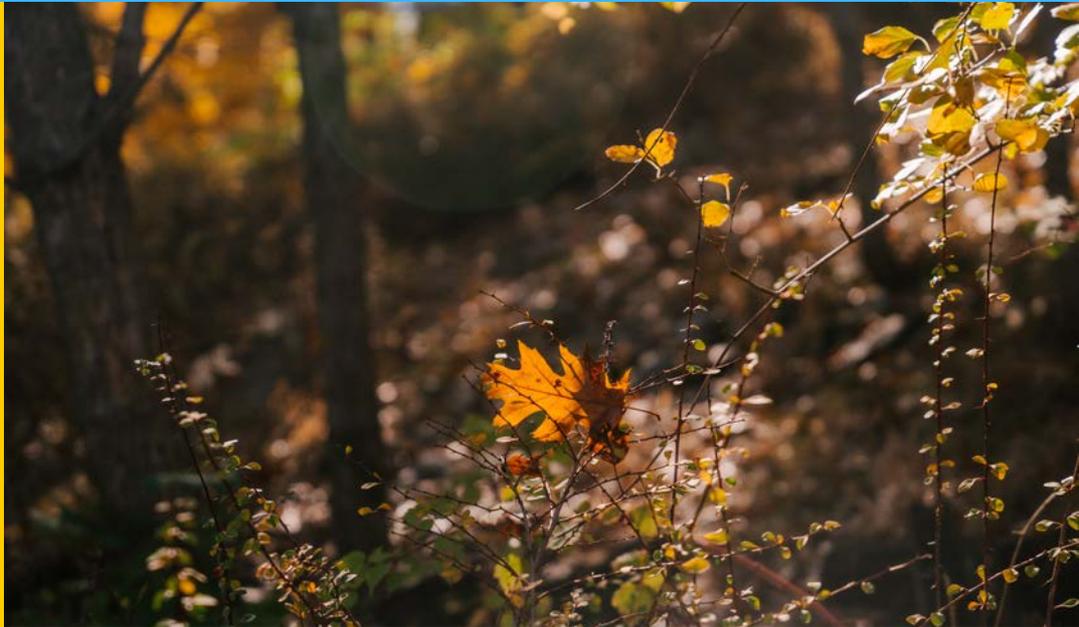


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RESOURCES FOR WRITERS

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.

- 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.

- 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:

- Check out [@ucfuwc](https://www.instagram.com/ucfuwc) on Instagram for more updates about upcoming events, or visit our website for more details
<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.