SELLING YOU ON FLEXIBILITY: TOWARD A FLEXIBLE FRAMEWORK FOR REFLEXIVE
ADMINISTRATION OF WRITING CENTERS

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to the ones I love.

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Acknowledgments seems like the wrong word for the page where I give you all the thanks. Like, I *acknowledge* the existence of mayonnaise. I don't profusely thank it for the dedication, guidance, and care that it has provided during the process of my dissertation. *Thank you*, instead, to the multitude of individuals who have made this dissertation possible.

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SELLING YOU ON FLEXIBILITY: TOWARD A FLEXIBLE FRAMEWORK FOR REFLEXIVE
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ABSTRACT

Training tutors has historically been and continues to be one of the most important, as well as the most labor- and time-intensive needs that directors of writing centers are called to address. As technological advancements have been made, those needs have continued to grow into online areas as well. The Writing Center at the University of Missouri, one of the longest running and earliest adopters of online asynchronous tutoring, has been meeting those new and particularly online needs since the early nineties. That history, alongside well-established tutor training methods allowed for a slightly smoother response to the pivot to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Using Institutional Ethnography as the primary methodology, this dissertation provides a historical view of the MU Writing Center's early adoption of online asynchronous tutoring via their Online Writery application, as well as a collection and evaluation of the pedagogical responses to 2020's COVID-19 pandemic in relation to the tutor training course offered each semester. As an outcome of those historical analyses of online needs, this dissertation presents a flexible framework for reflexive administration that can both respond to future local needs and provide transferable guidance for other program administrators.

Introduction

In the midst of the year before I would finish this project, a confluence of fairly terrible things occurred. I wrote this late in 2020 and early 2021, and while I'm admittedly not sure how much of this is important for readers to know, it seems like in a dissertation that's all about history and memory and flexibility and (potentially) human kindness, perhaps seeing all of these moments described physically next to each other on a page will make the document and the project as a whole more meaningful. This project, therefore, is necessarily about *both* the Writing Center at the University of Missouri and its historical responses to new needs in the center's educational history *and* the administrators who responded to those needs. As with any writing center-related and personal-related processes, it's a layered, tangled affair that I hope to unravel for future administrators, tutors, and teachers.

In February of 2020 I was in a car accident. My (favorite) car was totaled, but I escaped with very minimal injuries: a bruised hand and ribs, which were declared "fine" in the Emergency Department and then confirmed "ok" on March fifth. By the following week, the World Health Organization, Office of the President of the United States, and the Office of the Governor of Missouri would declare, respectively, a pandemic and national and state emergencies. The University of Missouri, responding to the pandemic of COVID-19, would ask students to not return to campus after spring break. Our students, staff, and faculty were told to pivot to remote learning for the rest of the semester. In my roles as both an instructor of an Honors course on tutoring writing and administrator of the MU Writing Center, I finished the semester from my home office.

Locally, the city of Columbia, Missouri issued a stay-at-home order on March 25th. That order to quarantine for any non-essential travel would last until the summer months.

During the following summer semester of 2020, still fully online, I administrated the University of Missouri's Writing Center from home while also starting physical therapy for some lingering pains in my hand from the accident at the beginning of the year. Looking back on that period, the idea of flexibility started showing up across all parts of my life. My physical therapy visits were all focused on bringing pliability back to bruised and damaged muscles. My administrative work was completely focused on both providing a flexibly scheduled service for students and my tutors and creating flexible educational plans for the following spring semester with my co-instructors and administrative colleagues.

I completed physical therapy for my hand in the first week of July. With the city still under a firm stay-at-home order, it occurred to both my wife and I that because all of the public gyms were closed for safety and health reasons, we had to find an exercise regimen that we could do at home. Serendipitously, she remembered that she had received a set of Real Appeal workout DVDs as part of a now-defunct Health and Wellness initiative from our University. We began, as one does such things, at Week 1 of the sixteen week Beginner workout plan. It was arduous, both physically and mentally. Not only were there ~30-minute daily alternating cardio and strength workouts, hosted by David Jack (DJ), the fitness expert that had been hired for the project, but there was at least one day each week where one or both of us didn't *want* to spend 30 minutes with DJ telling us to work out. We generally supported each other during those moments of

weakness: if one person *started* clearing the living room and putting in the video, the other joined in. In a time of quarantine which for many meant extended periods of solitude, we were *not* alone, and we were focusing on our own health and well-being together.

The workouts themselves were very positive in nature. While they were of course prerecorded, and published in 2015 with dated references and jokes, the overwhelming positive tone of the delivery was infectious. It was also holistic in a way that I had never experienced exercise and fitness before. Equal attention was paid to mindfulness, support, instruction, coaching, cheerleading, and flexibility. The more we did the workouts, which were occurring literally in the space I also used as my home office, the more those underlying thought processes made their way into how I thought about administering in my work-life. We started to structure our days, weeks, and finally months around these moments of physical activity. With a focus on flexibility, we created a structure that allowed us space to maneuver inside it.

Two moments of the workout resonated particularly with me with regard to the intersection between work and working out; both show up in the Flexibility 1 workout (Disc 6), where DJ says, “take this with you into your daily life” and “at some point, I don't have to sell you flexibility” (Jack). Some, if not all of these fitness-isms can seem like semi-extemporaneous lines, rehearsed and reused to spur folks on, as any fitness coach might do. As I continually train our tutors in the Writing Center to be kind and generous with their understandings of others’ words, it’s become clearer to me how those two “fitness” lines connect to administrative work, particularly in the current pandemic. The first

specifically calls attention to *my* daily life. During most days in my work as the director of the Writing Center, I'm flexibly switching between different kinds of task. Just like the tutors who report to me, I'm trying to see each task or interaction individually. For them, it's responding to individual students, utilizing the skills the Writing Center has trained them to use. For me, it might mean switching between teaching in the classroom, speaking to faculty, writing emails, and running usage and budgetary reports. In addition, one of the longstanding, multi-layered calls to duty for writing centers is to continue to be flexible, to continue to be reflexive, to continue to be mindful of what's happening around us, around our students, and what we can do to meet the needs of students (Harris 1982, 1991, Carino 2003, Hughes 2013, Bell 2020). In this dissertation, I situate this project in the midst of those layers by performing an institutional ethnography, looking back at both my history as an administrator and the history of the MU Writing Center's response to new needs. The outcomes of this study will be useful to both our local future and the broader writing tutoring community.

While this project began as a way to formalize our Center's history and actively create documents that would fulfill the need for institutional memory, it has become something more. As part of the research process, I looked back over writing center history, my own personal history with writing center work, and our local Center's specific history and *flexibility* continued to come to the fore. The focus of this dissertation narrowed to the tasks of documenting and connecting the instances of our local Center's responses to new needs. Those connections helped to generate a framework for responding to future developments. It should come as no surprise, because this is how

we train tutors, too: training and reminding them that *they* have overarching skills that can be flexibly applied to many different situations and experiences. That same flexibility that we say tutors need can help administrators navigate their positions as well.

The position of Writing Program Administrator (WPA), as with any multifaceted job, requires the flexibility to move from task to task across a hierarchy of potential needs. In my everyday administrative work at the Writing Center, I spend a great deal of time working for and on direct, in-the-moment needs of my tutors (move this appointment, put that tutor on hold, answer this question about tutoring). Some are larger, yet still time-sensitive requests (student emails, faculty emails, requests for data), and still others are repeated, yet further down the hierarchy, questions—“problems” even—or requests (how to revise lesson plans, which workshops to focus on, how to provide online tutoring for particular courses or departments). WPA’s days have been compared to plate twirlers’ (George) for many years. That metaphor was also the subject of one of the first advice sessions I received as a newly hired services coordinator. The admonition to “touch all your plates,” to always be actively monitoring ongoing tasks, isn’t quite the same as the idea of flexibility. Prior to knowing what and how to complete new tasks, the WPA has to have the value system, the mindset, and the institutional understanding to recognize the new need, evaluate it, and motivate the structures in place to meet it.

As of early 2021, I, my family, my colleagues, and most of our students have now spent almost a full year “working remotely.” This period in our education and personal lives has, unsurprisingly, changed the way many of us view the work we do, as well as

how we might do it moving forward. After “pivot,” my continued use of “essential” ranks very high among the words that I’ve grown tired of using. But determining what was essential became a foundational idea for re-imagining what our work in the Writing Center needed to do, as well as how we trained our tutors. “What are the essential skills they need to know?” “What are our essential programs?” “When is our physical presence essential, and when can we be remote?”

That last question became even more salient as I moved forward through the gathering of historical documents, interviewing prior Writing Center directors, and coding that data, while at the same time administrating a center and co-teaching a tutor training course during a pandemic. As my work moved more and more online, so did the themes of this project. As my personal thirty minutes per day of physical exercise started showing me changes—dynamic flexibility, strength, mindfulness—my full-time work’s themes started to interweave, whether I wanted them to or not. Flexibility became what *is* essential. Among other terms, all of which I highlight in chapter one, responsiveness and reflexivity became important ways to understand how I and the Writing Center have found ways to meet new needs—from both students and the environment.

Purpose of the Dissertation

This dissertation serves two purposes: prompted by the need to both codify institutional memory at our local site and the administrative goal to continually prepare our tutors for the changing needs of the students we serve, it seeks to document both the ways our Center has adapted to institutional changes and the pedagogical choices made by the administrators for training purposes. Using Institutional Ethnography as my

primary methodology, this project provides a historical view of the MU Writing Center's early adoption of online asynchronous tutoring as well as a collection and evaluation of our pedagogical responses to 2020's COVID-19 pandemic. As an outcome of those historical analyses, it presents a flexible framework for reflexive administration that can both respond to future local needs and provide transferable guidance for other program administrators.

Research Questions

Like any research project, I found myself refining the guiding questions that began this dissertation over time. My initial concerns were based in history. As part of my personal history, I have been part of the University of Missouri's Writing Center in several roles, but the service itself is literally the same age as me. Historically, I wanted to know what came before my time as a tutor and director. What could I learn from our history that could benefit us now? That question branched off into several topics, many of which connected to the training of tutors.

Training tutors has historically been one of the most important tasks that the directors of the MU Writing Center have been concerned with. It's also been the most labor-and time-intensive. I was therefore asking how older directors had trained tutors, how that compared to our current practices, and specifically how training practices had responded to new needs. Those new needs were initially wide-ranging as well. I was considering student needs, institutional needs, cultural, social, and academic concerns. In some cases, I found that our local needs were reflected at a global level for writing centers. In others, specifically when connected to asynchronous online tutoring, I found

that as a particularly early adopter of that technology, our Writing Center stands as one of the longest-running practitioners. More questions rose as I collected and coded historical training documents. How were tutors initially trained to work online? What were the pedagogical goals and learning outcomes, and how did the administrators of that time assess them? Moving forward to our present day, how had those goals changed and how do our current processes compare?

In the midst of these questions, it became clear that these topics—online work, tutor training, looking at historical progress to address future concerns—were supremely useful during the pandemic. I further narrowed my analytic questions to focus on what practical training methods had been used in the past, and what pedagogical changes we made in our current training processes to meet these newly occurring needs. The collection and analysis of those processes led me back to answering the larger question of how we as administrators of our local Center, and potentially how other administrators of their centers, can continue to flexibly rise to meet new needs as they occur in the future.

Organization of the Dissertation

In chapter 1, I start with a historical review of writing center literature of the call for flexibility to writing centers. The majority of that literature is focused on the flexibility of either the center as a whole or the way tutors work with the students they meet with. Connected to that body of work is the idea that centers and tutors must be responsive to those that they collaborate with. Following that, I define reflexivity in conjunction with being responsive and reflective.

Specific to the training and teaching of tutors, this chapter also provides brief reviews of writing center scholarship connected to the ways tutor training has been achieved historically, with particular attention paid to the historical development of online work in writing centers, beginning in the late 1990's and pressing forward until the present.

In the second half of chapter 1, I provide an abbreviated local history of the MU Writing Center. I focus specifically on the development of the Online Writery, the web-based, asynchronous tutoring program founded in 1994, and the evolution of the training course that prepares undergraduates to work as tutors, founded in 1995.

In chapter 2, referencing the call for scientific research on writing center issues, I define Institutional Ethnography and the connection of that methodology to this project. I describe the research methods I performed to collect and analyze the historical data, as well as the application of the terms defined in the prior chapter.

In chapter 3, I describe and analyze the MU Writing Center's early adoption of online asynchronous (and early synchronous) tutoring programs including the Online Writery, the historical response to those programs, and the tutor training changes associated with online work since the early 1990's. As part of the continued goal of a flexibility-based administrative framework, I draw attention to both the initial responsiveness of the Center to online options as well as the ongoing reflexive tutor training methods in current practice. This chapter in particular shows a long history of both the local/global divide in writing center work as well as the continued movement toward meeting burgeoning and changing needs of students and tutors alike.

In chapter 4, I detail a more current response to a new need, as a pandemic forced our regularly scheduled training course and daily writing center work into remote-only operations for the last part the spring 2020 semester. Further assessment of that semester's outcomes provides a more focused view of what responsive, as opposed to reflexive, administration looked like within an unforeseen need.

In chapter 5, I detail the reflexive process that the Writing Center's administrators used in conjunction with the outcomes from spring 2020 to revamp the tutor training course for fall 2020, focusing on both tutoring during a pandemic and tutor training details related to current practices. In order to highlight that reflexive nature, I utilize both pre- and post-evaluations of the course to provide experiential data as we move forward into spring 2021.

In chapter 6, I posit the personal and institutional knowledge and support needed to build a flexible framework for reflexive administration, with particular attention to an ongoing reflexive process of evaluation and assessment. I pose both questions and forward-looking guidance for my own further learning and for other centers and administrators as well.

CHAPTER 1: A Showcase of Sources

In this chapter, I present several historical reviews of the overarching topics of this dissertation. First, I describe the calls for flexibility in writing center work, which have varied depending on the focus of that call: for the service, a local site, or for individuals. Many of these calls use the same term to describe slightly different concerns. To showcase the ways that those definitions overlap, I opted to begin with the service itself, followed by what tutors do for that service, and end with the position that oversees that work. Even when these calls are connected by the same terminology, there is still a lack of literature where the administration of that flexibility is concerned. In order to connect those calls for flexibility to my process of building a framework for administration, I also define key terms that I have used to determine the kinds of administrative actions taken inside that framework. Those include responsiveness, responsivity, and reflection and the reflexive process. My later chapters provide three moments in time, one longitudinal across decades, the other two shorter, semester-based cases, that illustrate how that framework has worked in local writing center work at the University of Missouri.

Because chapters 3, 4, and 5 have a collective theme of online writing tutoring, I also provide some context for the addition of online tutoring to writing center work during the late 1990's and beyond. Finally, the local site of data collection for this dissertation was the Writing Center at the University of Missouri. I therefore also provide a history of the founding and subsequent major developments of that site, spanning from 1976 through 2020.

Flexibility of Terms and Usages in this Dissertation

Two major “naming” concerns are represented locally in writing tutoring literature. These concerns have existed in other locations as well, and therefore historical references throughout this chapter may be confusing. I detail the local concern here as an example of the global one. On the University of Missouri’s campus, the program that provided one-on-one writing tutoring was initially founded in 1976 as the Writing Lab. During the mid-2000’s, the name was changed to the Writing Center. Throughout this historical account, including literature related to other tutoring sites, I attempt to use the appropriate naming conventions in reference to the periods of time they were in use. Throughout the rest of this dissertation, I also use “writing center(s)” (without capitals) to reference *any* place where writing tutoring occurs and “the Writing Center/Lab” or “WC/WL” to refer only to the Writing Center/Lab at the University of Missouri-Columbia campus.

Related to that are the terms used to describe the service itself and the titles given to both the administrators and staff who have worked in the Writing Center. Throughout the literature, local historical documents and personal accounts, I encountered and therefore use the terms “student service,” “service,” “program,” “unit,” and “department” when referring to places where writing tutoring is offered. In all cases, I default to “writing center” when no information precludes that choice. While of course all of these terms have different connotations and institutional meanings, it’s beyond the scope of this dissertation to analyze those concerns. In most cases throughout this dissertation, I use them interchangeably. The only pertinent difference, which will be

made clear in the text, is when “program” is used to refer to a specific set of Writing Center-offered programming.

Institutional job titles have also changed many times over the course of the MU Writing Center’s history. Again, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to analyze the meaning or outcomes between the changes to the array of terms used to describe the position that oversees the Writing Center. While “coordinator” has often been part of the local Human Resources job title, the position has been typically referred to as “Director” in work materials and discourse. During some periods, “Co-Director” and “Assistant Director” have also been used. I apply the title that the particular person in that position used for the purposes of local history. Throughout the literature review, I use the terms used in that source if supplied, otherwise I also use Writing Program Administrator (WPA) interchangeably with Writing Center Director (WCD) when referring to the positions that manage the MU Writing Center.

The students who work for the Writing Center to provide writing support are traditionally referred to as tutors or consultants in our local historical documents. In all cases where I’m referring to either undergraduate, graduate, or professional staff who are providing direct writing support for the Writing Center, the word “tutor” will be used.

Finally, as my personal history has been interwoven with the Writing Center’s since 2003, first as a graduate tutor and later as Director, I refer to myself in the third person in the historical portion of this chapter. Elsewhere in this dissertation I use first person pronouns when the decisions or actions were made by me personally, or plural pronouns when decision-making involved my Co-Directors or other colleagues.

A History of (Quasi?)Flexibility in Writing Center Work

The call for flexibility as a guiding practice has been a hallmark of writing center scholarship and work since the late eighties. During that time period, Muriel Harris writes and publishes (1986) *Teaching One-to-One*, a self-described multi-audience work that specifically calls for flexibility in individual conferencing and tutoring. For Harris, flexibility refers to the “grab bag” of options that can be used in one-to-one teaching/tutoring/conferencing: “The teacher's flexibility in moving on and trying something different is a key factor in the success of conferences.” (105) In this work, the primary focus is on options, which she believes will generate “success.” (105) Harris would bring up flexibility in many of her publications throughout the 1980’s. Earlier in 1982, writing on the brief history of writing center development so far, she highlights that:

One strength, apparent from our origins, is our flexibility. Not having any molds to work from, we began by trying to fill the needs of each of our institutions.

Without credit or course structure, we are more adaptable. In the terminology of evaluation, we are always doing "formative evaluation," trying things out to see how they work and getting quick feedback, and we're quite willing to say always that there's probably a better way. (“Growing” 5)

Because most centers were still in very formative stages (she had founded the Purdue Writing Lab in 1976; the University of Missouri founded theirs that same year) there were as yet no set rules for the operation of those services. To her, flexibility was inherent to both the process of figuring out what writing tutoring was supposed to do as well as how

tutoring was to be accomplished. That doesn't mean that there aren't rules in particular local settings, though.

Her work highlights one of the beliefs that would become integral to the ways writing centers would assess their own work. The idea of a particularity to "each of our institutions" ("Growing" 5) refers to the common understanding that writing center services (and therefore the work they do) have to be focused on how they function at the specific institutions they serve. In this early era, "quick feedback" ("Growing" 5) becomes the primary assessment method for writing center work. What has been in many cases ignored from her statement is the ending. As time passed and tutors and administrators at writing centers across the nation did their work, a list of "best practices" evolved, but weren't always critically assessed at either the local or global level. Rather than continuing to be "willing to say always that there's probably a better way" ("Growing" 5), the discipline's initial goals of continued assessment were rarely met. Part of that lack of assessment is due to the passage of time; the discipline was building the mold that Harris writes about—a structure that might one day apply to other sites. As that structure was created and accepted, research in the field was pointed elsewhere. And while flexibility as both a need for the center as a whole and for tutor training hasn't been lost, it became surrounded by that structure of general writing center tenets.

That structure slowly ossified via published articles, handbooks, and tutor training manuals. While tutors were often still encouraged to be flexible, that flexibility was constrained. Some of the most salient tenets are still present in current tutor training manuals, including Murphy and Sherwood's *St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors*,

which the University of Missouri Writing Center still uses in 2020. A few of those beliefs, which writing center tutors and staff might refer to as foundational theories include:

- Tutor people, not (just) papers. (Ryan and Zimmerelli vii; North's "Idea" in Murphy and Sherwood 53; Gillespie and Lerner 5, 22)
- Writing tutors should be non-directive. (Murphy and Sherwood 20; Hocks; Gillespie and Lerner 27, 30)
- The student should hold the pen(cil)/control the paper and do the writing. (Ryan and Zimmerelli 12; Brooks' "Minimalist" in Murphy and Sherwood 128)
- The student (paper) should (be) read aloud. (Ryan and Zimmerelli 20; Gillespie and Lerner 5, 30)

In addition to Murphy and Sherwood's *Sourcebook*, the three texts cited in that list, Gillespie and Lerner's *Longman Guide to Peer Tutoring*, Ryan and Zimmerelli's *Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors*, and *The Writing Lab Handbook 2003-2004*, an internal publication from the University of Missouri, provide ample training information for potential tutors. I provide them here, somewhat out of context, to focus on a particular nuance to writing tutor training. In the three published handbooks, the authors and editors clearly state the need for flexibility on the part of the tutor. They each celebrate the vast opportunities that tutoring provides and the continuums of practice that tutoring requires. However, alongside that celebration and flexibility, sometimes literally adjacent to them on the page, those primary constraints still appear. A potential tutor is often prompted to embrace flexibility and move along a continuum but never write for

the student. This isn't to say that they aren't useful in terms of training. Rather, this history sets a precedent for flexibility *with* a built-in structure.

Flexibility alongside particular structures isn't therefore new to the field, and neither are contrasting views on some of those dogmatic "rules" of tutoring. Gillespie and Lerner use the pairing "control and flexibility" as a continuum (5) while Murphy and Sherwood choose to place foundational texts like Brooks' "Minimalist Tutoring" (128) essay in conversation with Shamoon and Burns' "Critique of Pure Tutoring" (133). While at a local level, or in the minds and mouths of tutors and staff, those dichotomies have often been ignored, there have often been global calls for re-evaluating. Scholars have called for more flexibility in tutor training (Carino "Power and Authority"), more explicit research to support or revise these lore-based tenets (Denton), and active reconsideration of foundational works, sometimes by the original writers (Brooks; North), but the discipline at large—that is, in daily practice—consistently responded with the ironic admonishment to be flexible: don't be directive! The unfortunate connection of a call for the *trait* of flexibility in tutoring to non-directive tutoring *methods* has been historically present for decades of face-to-face tutoring. As writing centers added online asynchronous modalities in order to embrace flexibility, however, those methods had to be reimagined or revised.

Particular to this dissertation's focus on online tutoring in asynchronous formats, in normal times as well as specifically during a pandemic, the mode of interaction offered by online options problematized (and in many ways flew in the face of) those earlier tenets. Meanwhile, two, three, and four decades after Harris' promotion of formative

evaluation as a hallmark of writing center work, we find ourselves in a very different atmosphere, where once again the call for flexibility (Bell “Rethinking”) asks writing center staff to reflect on their goals and how to achieve them.

Flexibility of the Center Itself

A subset of writing center scholarship has been particularly focused on the flexibility of the local center itself. While this body of literature isn’t at first glance aimed at the goals of this dissertation, I include it because I believe there are a) points of ideological overlap and b) arguments to be made for a reflexive framework of flexibility that can be applied to all levels of writing center work.

Sites for writing tutoring have generally been described to have a “localness” (Harris “Diverse” 1). That situated quality, while perhaps fraught for the purposes of generalizable research, has allowed for a particular center on a particular campus to have the flexibility to be what that campus needs. This application of flexibility is typically described in two distinct ways in the literature, either how the center is internally situated and funded or how the center works interdepartmentally with collaborators.

The flexible location of a center across different campuses allows different centers to meet local needs. That individuality of a particular center, the idea of “local variability” as “one of the distinguishing features of writing centers” (Griffin et al 4) or “[t]he special source of the writing center’s surprising institutional vitality... its flexible and nonthreatening setting” (Kail 89) attempts to define flexibility in this usage. I believe this kind of flexibility provides a sense of community across campuses: an umbrella for individual sites who achieve writing tutoring by different methods. A better term might

be “variability” (Griffin et al 4). Throughout their development as services, departments, programs, centers or labs (even the names have variability) these places where writing tutoring occurs have been housed in academic departments, centrally to the campus, within libraries, etc. In “Talking in the Middle,” Harris again praises the flexibility of the service. For her, “writing centers, by offering a haven for students where individual needs are met, are also integral to retention efforts, are good recruiting tools, provide a setting for computer facilities that integrate word processing with tutoring, are rich sites for research, and by their flexibility and ability to work outside of institutionalized programs are free to spawn new services and explore new writing environments” (27). The last portion of that statement, “to work outside of” but also perhaps with, other places on campus is deeply connected to the second way writing centers are catalogued as flexible.

Potentially more apt than describing where they’re housed is the flexibility of a writing center’s collaborations across a campus. In particular, the ways center directors can be funded (Griffin et al), engaged in service-related projects (Bergmann), and the way they can meet new, sometimes unforeseen, emergent needs (Hughes) are all due in part to their flexibility. In connection some local campuses, Bergmann specifies that a centers’ “collective knowledge” (174) also nods toward the flexible connections to other offices. That is, long-term centers have been fixtures on their campus for some time, and their (flexible) nature allows them to connect to and therefore interconnect other offices, programs, etc. Those same long-term centers can function as hubs and ‘go-to’ offices, as Hughes carefully notes in his “Flex Appeal” piece, if flexibly structured to accept and meet outside requests for collaboration. The flexibility of a particular center, within the

structure of a particular institution, allows for programs and collaborative processes that might not occur otherwise.

(Applied?) Flexibility for Writing Tutors

As presented primarily in tutor training publications, flexibility is most often used to describe a trait that tutors have or adopt. Because the terminology continues to be used with different meanings across the literature, I have separated this practical, applied flexibility from the prior location-based usage. In an effort to best connect the overlapping usages of the term, I opted to start with the institutional structure where the tutors work—the writing center itself—followed by the way flexibility applies to the work of tutoring.

Flexibility as a skill or trait for tutors is well-represented across the forty-plus years of writing center literature. Diana George, in her review of Harris' *Teaching One-on-One*, glosses Harris' main/only *rule* as:

...there is no one way, no clear set of rules which will carry us through every conference. If there is a rule at all for Harris, that rule seems to be, "Stay flexible"....Historically, tutors have had to be flexible in their dealings with both students and teachers. After all, tutors work with assignments they have not designed and with teaching strategies they may not embrace. Their job is to focus on the student: How might we help this one student sitting right here, right now?

(51)

The importance of the individual student's needs and a tutor's job/goal to understand them is always primary, if for different reasons, to writing center scholars (North "Idea";

Harris “Talking”; Carino “Power”; Denton). Carino specifically moves the “watchword” from “nondirective peership” to flexibility, offering one of the many arguments that “Tutors should learn to shift between directive and nondirective methods as needed, and develop some sense of a sliding scale” (110). Likewise, Denton connects flexibility to responsiveness—the tutor’s response to students’ individual needs (181)—and particularly in opposition to arguments for non-directive tutoring. She writes that, “[i]n practice, tutoring is more flexible and responsive to the moment and to student needs and has a practical basis not often reflected in the literature” (200). That lack of reflection is a key component in the continued need to assess tutor training methods. While training manuals continue to create a structure to house flexibility, it’s often been taken for granted that those structures appropriately reflect the work being done by tutors.

Some of the literature utilizes the term informed flexibility, recalling the formative evaluation processes that Harris described in her early work. Over a decade later in 1998, Blau, Hall, and Strauss perform a conversational analysis of tutoring sessions to explore the idea of what collaboration in tutoring sessions looks like. They too assert that tutors must be flexible in their assessment of each student’s individual needs, concluding that “An informed flexibility has always been the hallmark of good teaching and tutoring, and we advocate it as the most useful model for writing center practice” (38). Later studies (Mackiewicz and Thompson) would also invoke “informed flexibility” which directly connects to ideas of reflexivity discussed later in this chapter. As part of their findings, Blau, Hall, and Strauss would also state that it could be argued “...that tutors are learning how to walk the fine line between teacher and peer, hierarchy and collaboration,

creating a new, more flexible model for writing center tutoring” (38). That flexible model, while appearing in practice, did not receive the focus of writing center research until much later.

Several writing center scholars have continued to build a theoretical structure, a framework, to house the trait of tutoring flexibility. Building on Blau et al’s conversational study, Jo Mackiewicz and Isabelle Thompson’s works presented analyses of tutor talk, and further studies from their results (Bleakney and Pittock) have lent a framework to possibly answer Carino’s request for a “sliding scale” along a non-directive/directive continuum. In 2014, Mackiewicz and Thompson’s “Instruction, Cognitive Scaffolding, and Motivational Scaffolding in Writing Center Tutoring” provides three pillars, named in the title of the article, that tutors flexibly move between, potentially codifying the kinds of interactions that occur during most tutoring sessions. Those differentiations are useful for identifying the kinds of talk that occur in a flexible tutorial, but the process by which tutors decide to slide between them remains unclear. While a framework of this kind wouldn’t need to be completely prescriptive, it would need to provide tools or cues for the tutors.

More recently (2019), Bleakney and Peterson have used those pillars and the scaffolding framework to further explore how tutees make writing decisions based in part on the flexibility that their tutor displayed. Likewise, Summers looks at the role of the acquisition of “expertise-based tools” or expertise-building in a Graduate Writing Center at UCLA. Her toolkit metaphor (which will be further explained in the local history section of this chapter) echoes both Carino’s call for shifting between tactics as well as the three-

pillar scaffolding framework. Summers' focus is on the insecurity that tutors and student writers may feel—because working without a hard and fast set of rules is more difficult. She and Nicklay (who focuses on tutor guilt) both note that a flexible framework with proper and robust tutor training can serve to alleviate much of the struggles that come with the job.

Flexibility, although in admittedly nuanced different usages, continues to overlap both the position that a writing center fills and the work that tutors engage in. I found that a similar call for a flexible framework also appears where the writing center administrator's position is concerned.

It's Flexibility All the Way Down

Several foundational works have been published to inform, prepare, and guide the people in the position of writing center administrator. Olson's 1984 collection, *Writing Centers: Theory and Administration*, Myers-Breslin's 1999 collection, *Administrative Problem-Solving for Writing Programs and Writing Centers*, and *The Writing Center Director's Resource Book* (Murphy and Stay 2006) cover much of the ground needed for a potential or current director to perform or problematize the duties of their position. However, one of the few overt calls for flexibility in writing center administration scholarship comes from an article not included within those three texts. Harris, in a 1991 article, calls for administrators to subscribe to the same theories that they tell their tutors to take on, that the "underlying principles of writing center theory and pedagogy: individualization and collaboration" ("Solutions" 64) serve administrative duties as well as direct tutoring. She specifies that this individualization includes "the

flexibility to adapt and denies the rigidity of absolutes” (Harris “Solutions” 64). While the core of the article presents, as the title reads, “Solutions and Trade-offs,” the importance (and practicality) of adaptation is the framework that she says allows writing center work to flourish.

Her call ends with the seemingly analogous statement that “collaborative, flexible, individualized solutions to our administrative concerns are bound to produce worthwhile results, just as our collaborative, flexible, individualized tutorials with students do” (Harris “Solutions” 79). In this dissertation I take her analogy in conjunction with the available writing center literature on flexibility to theorize a framework for writing center administration that includes processes of responsiveness and responsivity, reflection and reflexivity, situated in a local understanding of the institution.

Administrative Responsivity/Responsiveness

Responsiveness has a long history with writing center work, both in relation to tutor training—being responsive to an individual—and as an institution—funding tutoring centers to meet demands. As part of building a framework for writing center administration, I found it necessary to further nuance the idea of a response to needs, particularly in terms of administrative and tutoring work. In everyday conversations, “response” is often used in writing center work and across other student service programs to refer to what students need or receive from those offices and programs. For clarity, I define below both response-based terms that I use throughout this dissertation.

Responsivity is typically a term used in physics and electronics to, in very broad terms, measure the speed of the process between a request and an answer inside a

typically mechanical system. Likewise, responsiveness, particular to a piece of machinery, is “the ability of a machine or system to adjust quickly to suddenly altered external conditions, as of speed, load, or temperature, and to resume stable operation without undue delay” (Responsiveness). Administrators of writing centers have historically shied away from referring to their work as part of institutional machinery. I too recognize how seeing our work reduced to a cog in a machine is problematic, but also (as is often the case in writing center work) value the potential importance of a metaphor. The world that the phrase “suddenly altered external conditions” describes has definite connection to our lived pandemic experience as of the time of this writing, but even further back, as is clear from the history of writing centers (later in this chapter) is almost inseparable from the administrator’s position.

The act of being responsive to needs—both of the individual and of the institution—and conditions, to borrow the term, is integral to the administrative process. In “Learning and Leading through Conflicted Collaborations,” Kjesrud and Wislocki present a “travelogue” (90) describing their collaborations with outside and upward-leveled administrative colleagues at their institutions. Specifically, they write that because they lacked a theoretical understanding of administrative conflict, “...in times of crisis, [they] were unable to generate a range of options to help us advocate for ourselves and [their] centers....Instead, we accepted that no foolproof heuristic exists for persistent and ongoing institutional challenges” (90). The “foolproof” admonition is important in that, for most center administrators (and their staff), responsiveness rarely includes 100% success. But to be unresponsive is most likely a non-starter. Taking for granted that

most of the work done in writing centers and by writing center staff is in fact part of the act of being responsive to *something*, the process of reflexivity is useful in evaluating those responses for ongoing revision and success.

Administrative Reflexivity

I borrow reflection, and in turn, reflexivity, from the sciences and educational literature for the purposes of applying those traditionally research-based and pedagogical usages to administration. Contemplative- and mindfulness-based literature is also interwoven, as the primary goal is to apply a more thoughtful, recursive system to the acts of everyday life—whether that be teaching, tutoring, administrating, exercising, breathing, etc. There is an overarching commitment to *attention* being paid: making the unconscious conscious, as I tell my tutors.

Mindfulness and “contemplative administration” (117) are the primary focuses of Christy I. Wenger’s 2014 article, with the important (then and now) goal of self-care for the burgeoning administrator. Pertinent to my descriptions of the administrative processes that indicate movement from responsiveness to reflection and reflexivity, she writes about the “application of mindfulness focused on intention and action (not just reaction) as well as engaged thoughtfulness” (137). This statement provides a clear lens to look back at the ways reflection has been written about in writing center work at the same time providing a pivot point toward “intention and action” that reflexivity requires. In particular, reflection has been used in writing classrooms and for teacher training, owing some of its initial value in the late 90’s and early 2000’s to John Dewey’s work as well as Schön’s *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (1987), (Henry and Bruland, Rogers).

Grimm's work (1999, 2009), Okawa et al's (2010) and Blazer's (2015) productive use of "relentless reflection" (Grimm "Good") to answer questions about staff education and the work tutors do with diverse populations shows a rich history of writing center reflective practice. Salient connections to administrative reflection show up as well, as Blazer poignantly writes that "No other area of our work is more important than the learning we do with our staffs, specifically the staff education we design, experience, and reflect on" (25). This recursive framework of doing, reflecting, changing, and doing again will be both analyzed in a later chapter regarding writing center pedagogy and also further described and applied in chapter 2 as part of the Institutional Ethnography methodology.

For researchers, reflexivity has been defined in connection to the place(s) and roles they occupy as individuals. Far outside writing tutoring, Norton and Sliep (2018) define reflection as the researcher "taking into account their social context and their effect on their research (Gilbert and Sliep 2009) (46). Reflexivity though, for them, implies that change has occurred. Further in the past (1997), but from the field of composition, Qualley defined being reflexive as "turning back to discover, examine, and critique one's claims and assumptions in response to an encounter with another idea, text, person, or culture" (3). Reflection, she writes, is a "unidirectional thought process" while reflexivity requires "critical engagement with an "other"" (11). Also specific to classroom teaching, Davies et al use the idea of positional reflexivity to mean an understanding of our own space within the institution. Moving toward administrative work, in an attempt to make reflexive decisions, the administrator must take into account both their position, their

employees, their tutees, and several other local/institutional and also societal positions that their decisions will affect in various ways. My usage of the term in this dissertation includes both the acts of continued reflection and change-making.

Application of a Framework: Responding to Online and Local Developments

A primary goal of this dissertation is to provide an example of what a flexible framework is and does over the course of writing center's lifespan. During the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, online tutoring, whether synchronous or asynchronous, became a required form of support as most writing centers were forced to move their services to fully online modalities. The history of online writing tutoring is admittedly short, and amidst ongoing calls for research, still undertheorized. However, because the University of Missouri's early adoption of asynchronous writing tutoring via the Writing Center's Online Writery, there is a long history of online experience to use as evidence. For these reasons, I present both a more global history of online development as well as a site-specific history of the MU Writing Center below.

Historical Online Tutoring Developments

As noted before, there are very few texts that connect specifically-online work to tutoring research, but as computers and the internet became intrinsic to higher education, writing centers had to wrestle with the potential opportunities and challenges.

Online support, in either asynchronous or synchronous options, began for writing centers in the early half of the nineties, with Purdue's Online Writing Lab, the University of Michigan's Online Writing and Learning program, and the University of Missouri's

Online Writery. By the end of the decade, many more centers would put some sort of online option in place.

In many cases, this was a cautious foray. My conservative estimate is that there were two broad views of online tutoring at the time, which I term “critically hopeful” and “fearfully resigned.” In 1998, *Wiring the Writing Center* collects much of the scholarship of that period. In the first chapter, Muriel Harris (founder of the Purdue OWL) writes that moving to an online environment is yet one more form of outreach (“Using” 6). She reported that circa 95-96, SUNY-Albany, State University of New York at Plattsburgh College, and Clarke College’s writing centers were all using some sort of email (or fax) tutoring options for the purpose of meeting students where they were (physically distant from the center), indicating early adoption to the technology, and flexibility toward student usage. While there is a hopefulness for long term benefits in Harris’ writing, only a few other articles in the collection cover the same ground.

The editor of the collection, Eric Hobson, attempts to balance the two viewpoints in his introduction by including an earlier publication from the 1995 special issue of *Computers and Composition*, citing David Healy’s line of questioning:

What is the ontological status of a virtual writing center, and what kind of relationship will clients develop with it? How will it be perceived by the rest of the academy? What possibilities and what threats are opened up by going online...These are the kinds of questions that writing centers must confront in the age of information technology...Online writing centers represent a window of opportunity. Our challenge is to be

reflective and self-critical while the opportunities before us are still flush.

(Healy 191-92 qtd in Hobson x)

This collection of articles focuses on the present, circa 1998, and future of online tutoring, and even though Healy's questions focus on a hopeful future, Hobson's overall outlook falls clearly into the second group of fearful resignation. In that same collection, Carino does call for reflection, but for him the level of caution still outweighs the possibilities ("Computers"). Bruce Pegg's contribution, which is a review of twenty (out of over 200) writing center websites "worth visiting," including the University of Missouri's, lays out a potentially critical concern going forward, that writing center staff may not have the time or training to *keep* their sites and services up to date.

One of the interesting developments in many of the early online offerings was the linguistic use of "lab," even if the service had already changed over to centers in their physical space's title. Many online offerings also included—and still do in cases like Purdue's—citation and grammar handouts that Carino mentions in his historical review would have been typically deemed directive in nature. The University of Michigan's process report, on the other hand, provides a review of the three-year process they utilized to regularize what asynchronous tutoring "looked" like for them. (Monroe) In "The Look and Feel of the OWL Conference" Barbara Monroe describes a framework that lays out (in retrospect) many of what would become the hallmarks of successful online *non-directive* tutoring.

One of the few current works specifically focused on tutor preparation for online work reviews usage of student text as online email tutoring preparation and connects

that with multiple years' worth of data from Purdue's OWL mail—a program which was terminated in 2016. While the article takes Hewett's preparation manual (2015) to task because established theoretical foundations of tutoring work don't transfer for the kinds of questions asked in OWL mail, both Hewett and Elder call for flexibility in online responding, just as in face-to-face tutoring.

History of Local Development

The University of Missouri-Columbia has a forty-plus year history of offering writing tutoring to both undergraduate and graduate students across campus. That history largely reflects the overall arc of writing center development nationally, as indicated in the prior chapter. In the subsections below, I present an overall timeline of pertinent developments at the local level, including administrative changes, programming changes, and the establishment of particular training initiatives, ending with the current time period, the spring 2021 semester. This timeline provides text and context for the online developments and pedagogical responses to the pandemic in chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Beginnings: Writing Lab to Writing Center

The MU Writing Center traces its founding to 1976, when the Writing Lab was formed as part of the University of Missouri Learning Center. These services, among others, were part of a Federal TRiO Grant (under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965), established to assist “grant-eligible students—those who qualify for financial aid, are first-generation college students, or are members of minorities” (Hocks, Director's Statement). Doug Hunt, an instructor for the English department, was hired in a half-time

appointment by the Learning Center director at the time to offer writing tutoring (Hunt, personal interview). According to Hunt, during their first years each area (Math, Writing, Reading and Study Skills, and later Counseling) had a single position attached to it. The offices were housed in an “obscure location,” referencing a small house on Watson Place, on the far north side of campus (Hunt). He describes the circumstances of both the location and the students targeted by the grant—“to which perhaps some stigma might be attached” (Hunt) as a connection to a lack of usage during the early years. The conclusion was reached by the staff that they needed to open up tutoring to the entire University (and find more funding than the grant).

That change went into effect in 1982 (Hocks, Director’s Statement), allowing WL staff to work with all undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty. One of their primary programs was working with students en masse who were going to take the “Basic Essentials” test (a grammar/mechanics exam connected with first year composition). These group sessions also allowed the staff to “advertise” the Lab’s one-on-one tutoring services. As more tutees started utilizing the service, more writing tutoring staff had to be hired, and Hunt’s role shifted from half-time tutor to full-time coordinator during that time as well. Their staff was, according to Hunt, made up of hired professional tutors or graduate students who were interested in the job.

In 1987, Hunt left to assist in establishing the Campus Writing Program, the University’s Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) unit, and one of the initial cadre of professional writing tutors, Elaine Hocks, was hired to direct the Writing Lab. Over her twenty-year tenure, she would establish the undergraduate tutor training course

(detailed below) and would receive funding for the Online Writery's founding as well (detailed more fully below). The ongoing collaboration with the English department would flourish as well, including a first-year tutoring experience for English MA and MA/PhD students starting in 1992-93, and various first year Composition-specific tutoring programs, including Stretch and Turbo English courses. Other collaborations, including providing tutors for Academic Retention Services' Summer Transition Program, evening tutoring in residence halls (1995-present), and an online tutoring program for Nursing students completing the RN-BSN program (1995-present) and later Graduate Nursing students (2005-present) also began during this period. In the 2003-2004 academic year, graduate writing tutoring options were funded (for papers 10 pages or less). Hocks would also participate in the hiring and then working alongside multiple Writing Lab coordinators, including Sally Foster, Derrick Kyle, and Eric Crump, all of whom would be part of the online offerings from the Lab in the nineties. In the early years of the new millennium, "Lab" would be replaced with "Center".

Upon Hocks' retirement in 2007, Rachel Harper was hired as the third Director of the Writing Center. In 2008, a second Director position was created for the Online Writery and was filled by Gregory Foster. Those two Co-Director positions divided duties as needed, but taught the revised tutor training course jointly, and further codified training for online tutoring (both processes are detailed in the next sections). Multiple online writeries were formulated between 2005 and 2007 to meet discipline-specific and learning management-specific requests. Those writeries provided services to students from the School of Nursing, the College of Education, and the Center for Distance and

Independent Studies (CDIS, later Mizzou Online) (G. Foster, VPUGS OW FAQ). In addition, the two areas of writing tutoring on campus were combined: Writing Intensive Tutorial Services (WITS), formerly housed within the Campus Writing Program, were transferred to the Writing Center. Those positions were filled by graduate students from across campus and provided writing support for undergraduate students in Writing Intensive courses. Another collaboration, this time to provide walk-in services for graduate and undergraduate students in Ellis Library began in 2009.

In 2011, Foster left his position and Aaron Harms was hired to direct the Online Writery. It was during this period of time that the Writing Center's collaboration with the Division of Information Technology's Applications Development team flourished, allowing for new versions of the Online Writery to be produced and supported by the institution as opposed to by the Writing Center staff. In addition to meeting tutoring requests from the Athletics department, the Writing Center also began its Graduate Writing Support (GWS) program during this period, building on the success of the Nursing program to include department-specific support to the College of Education and the Master of Public Health programs, as well as offering unlimited tutoring to all graduate students on campus.

In 2018, Harper left her position. Harms became Director and Stephanie Kimmey was hired to fill the second position. Harms and Kimmey reallocated duties and working titles (Director and Assistant Director, respectively).

The Tutor Training Class at MU

Writing centers, depending on their local institution's needs and opportunities, utilize different training methods. Before 1995 at the University of Missouri, tutors were hired and trained via interviews and ongoing workshops. Dr. Hocks first established an undergraduate course, an internship in the Writing Lab, in 1995, which prepared potential tutors for work. The course grew and changed as different instructors taught it, but Hocks established the initial version (H120) as the 1-hour "Internship in the Writing Lab". She describes it in a Learning Center annual report (1998) that she

...offered, in conjunction with the English department, an Honors Internship (Honors 120) for English and English Education students. In cooperation with the Honors College, the Writing Lab provides selected honors students with an internship in the lab. Each student is paired with a staff member who serves as mentor, a Stretch English 20 teacher/tutor, and the instructor for the class in a one hour tutorial.

Based out of the Honors College, the syllabi from that period (See Appendix A) show a focus on rhetoric and composition readings, tutoring scenarios, written reflection assignments, observations of tutorials, and a final Newsletter article to be published in-house and circulated to various stakeholders on campus. Later versions of this class (See Appendix B) also include a day allocated to the Online Writery, taught by Eric Crump or Sally Foster. In 2004 the University of Missouri updated its course numbers, and H120 became H1070, an Honors elective, topics-based course, which would run relatively

unchanged until Hock's retirement in 2007. That course was taught each fall and spring with a class size of seven students on average.

Harper, and soon after, Foster, revised the course, proposing several additions. Between 2011 and 2012, it would become General Honors 2015HW, "Theory and Practice of Tutoring Writing," a 3-hour, Writing Intensive credit, with a cross-listing as an English departmental course. Likewise, the readings changed, focusing on current and foundational writing center readings. In class tutoring activities were supplemented with composition and literature-based writing craft techniques. During the 2008 semester Keith Johnstone's *Impro* text was added, with a focus on the theatrical concept of Status, to teach the potential tutors the "ability to perceive the underlying motives of casual behaviour" (Johnstone 27). This addition would quickly become a hallmark of Writing Center tutor training and involves "reading" tutees' behaviors in order to better flexibly respond to their individual needs. Additionally, as part of the Writing Intensive curriculum guidelines, each student would produce at least 20 pages of writing, with 8 of those pages going through a revision process. Those assignments included a Status-based analysis, a personal statement, a tutoring response to an Online Writery submission, and a writing center "manifesto"—a meta-analysis of what students had learned that semester.

The course underwent ongoing minimal changes until the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 required the move to remote teaching. Chapters 4 and 5 detail the pandemic-related pedagogical changes in connection with the class as it was offered in spring 2020 and fall 2020.

CHAPTER 2: Methodologies & Methods

Beginning with the calls for flexibility in writing center work and further analyzing particular periods for both responsive and reflexive administrative behaviors answers a specific need for local and global writing center concerns. While there has been a long history of calls for more research and therefore the professionalization of the field, this dissertation seeks particularly to add to a small subset of writing center studies that provide *transferable* knowledge from the local to other potential sites. The concept of “local variability” as “one of the distinguishing features of writing centers” (Griffin, et al, 4) had to be considered in this research process. In order to negotiate the flexibility of both the local site and the more global flexibility—that there is often no standardization of practice between different campuses—meant to me that the project’s goals required a flexible methodology as well. The usage of Institutional Ethnography (IE) seeks to provide transferable, if not completely generalizable, results (Nordstrom). As an ethnographic methodology, it allows for the recognizing of the individuality of the participants, but particularly provides a larger view of the way institutions (like the University as well as individual programs and departments) interact with those participants. Although initially theorized in the early 2000’s, it has also been successfully applied to writing program research over the past decade, making it both a timely and appropriate choice for this dissertation.

Institutional Ethnography as a Methodology

Institutional Ethnography is the primary methodology behind collecting and examining the varied texts of the historical data for this project. Formulated in the

nineties by Dorothy Smith as a response to the prevalent Sociological methods of the time, IE is primarily interested in “how ‘work’... is constituted within institutional environments” (LaFrance 1). IE allows for an investigator to be part of the institution they’re observing and values their own standpoint just as much as the data they’re collecting from other involved people and texts. This method not only makes sense for the collection and analysis of the data, but it also has been used successfully for several writing-specific projects during the past few years (LaFrance, LaFrance & Nicolas). Specifically, LaFrance writes that IE provides tools to better “understand how writing, writers, and writing instruction are shaped by the material conditions--labor, work, space, place, resources, and material aspects of culture--that surround, inform, and generate them” (*A Theory of Practice* 6). In addition, IE allows program administrators to focus on the “interconnections among writing, the personal, the local, the everyday, and national discourse” (*A Theory of Practice* 18). While that interconnectedness stretches out to add to the global needs of writing centers, IE also allows for the local-ness of the research to drive the usefulness of the findings, “uncovering the situated relationality of these sites” (*A Theory of Practice* 18).

As LaFrance and Nicolas found in 2012, IE lends itself easily to writing program research because of the local focus on “day-to-day work life of individuals” (131) and how that work can be documented and used descriptively. Smith herself describes the process of IE as map-making. She writes that, “Like a map, it aims to be through and through indexical to the local sites of people’s experience” but that “just as a well-made map is...its product should be ordinarily accessible and useable” (29). LaFrance and Nicolas

outline some ways to apply IE to a map of a writing program specifically, including a focus on both training and daily work as well as individual responses to the duties of that work. For this dissertation, that map could easily be defined as a framework of flexible, reflexive administration.

(A or The) Problematic

Writing center work, or administration writ large, often deals with addressing problems. Foundational to this methodology, there is an implicit understanding that applying IE doesn't require a deficit, but rather a point of inquiry. Smith herself defines the need for a "problematic...a field of investigation that is larger than a specific question or problem" (38). At the Writing Center, that "field" could easily be ongoing tutor training. Like any pedagogical or administrative concern, the ongoing, repetitive nature of the process is multi-layered. Many lines of questions spooled out as I considered the initial inquiry. Smith also specifically focuses on the fact that parts "of the everyday world" can be the problematic (40). This initial term recalls the connections I began seeing in my everyday life, noted in the introduction to this dissertation, that the problematic, not unlike administration as a whole, is a flexible, sometimes amorphous beginning premise. And, in yet another connection to the Writing Center's training of tutors, IE's inquiry of a problematic calls attention to things that are "at best only partially visible" (39) to the people involved. As one of our training methods particularly calls for making unconscious writing and thinking decisions more conscious, these methods resonated with the everyday work I was analyzing.

For this dissertation, I applied LaFrance's definition of the term: "a loose set of boundaries for an investigation" (5) to our particular center's history and current training methods. And, as I completed the project, it became clear that the kind of structure I was making a case for—a flexible framework for reflexive administration—was also being represented by the methodology I had chosen. While structured via the terms and ideas in this chapter, IE also includes an integral flexibility for application, allowing my findings here to be transferred to other sites as well.

Standpoint

Rather than attempting to impose some sort of false objectivity, IE establishes that the people contributing to the ethnography are (or were) part of the institution and will of course have particular individual interactions with it. LaFrance identifies the standpoint, along with ruling relations, as the most important parts of IE (4). IE privileges the involved people's "lived experiences" (LaFrance 7) in the hope of uncovering undocumented or ignored work. For this dissertation, that undocumented work was a key concern. While I knew that many flexible and reflexive administrative decisions were occurring over the years, some of them my own, many of them were done in private, without contextual documents. The documents involved, emails, course sites, syllabi, etc., had never been placed in communication with each other, allowing for any transferable framework to be created at the administrative level.

Standpoint is also a vital understanding for this dissertation, given my current position as Director of the MU Writing Center. Starting with what I personally know, IE allowed me to address the local work that our center has historically done, collate and

combine findings from both our text-based archives and prior Directors' experiences, and then put forth some useful outcomes for both the present and future. Smith writes that "[i]nstitutional ethnography begins...with some issues, concerns, or problems that are real for people and that are situated in their relationships to an institutional order" (32). In the case of this dissertation, those issues are literally real for me, but also for those that came before and will come after me in this position. Focusing on our responses to past online needs, both environmental and student-based, have far-reaching outcomes for tutor training and overall administration.

Institutions

This methodology allows for the application of ethnographic research to institutions, as opposed to specific individuals or cultural groups. In IE, an institution is "organized around a distinctive function" (Smith 225) that individuals encounter in individual ways. As a student-facing service, the Writing Center itself is an institution, and while it provides a many-layered, flexible service, the "distinctive function" can easily be described as one-on-one writing support. In addition, the MU Writing Center's particular local placement, under the umbrella of the Learning Center, reporting to the Office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Studies, and further as part of the University of Missouri, includes several levels of institutions to consider.

Furthermore, several other institutions at the University are connected to that distinctive function. While the direction of those reporting lines is primarily vertical, the Writing Center is also connected in a web of institutional relationships. The relationship with the Honors College, for instance, allows for the tutor training course to be offered to

Honors students as well as provides some fiscal support. In connection to offering online tutoring, the Writing Center has had a historical connection to the Department of IT, allowing for support and development. These connections tie back to the problematic: the offering of online tutoring and the training that allows that offering are deeply connected to an ecology of institutions. That ecology suffuses several layers of institutional relationships as well. Some departments like the Honors College provide fiscal support that must be requested annually and supported by data. Others, like the campus Libraries, provide space for tutoring and still others like the English department provide graduate student tutors. The distinctive function of tutoring is connected in different ways to different collaborators and stakeholders and therefore the outcomes of this study may include implications for those continued relationships as well.

Ruling Relations

Just like the institutions themselves, the people and positions within those institutions are important to the study, as Ruling Relations. IE examines the connections of many disparate actions and duties from a person (and their position) with other people's duties and positions. Smith defines this connection as an "extraordinary yet ordinary complex of relations that are textually mediated, that connect us across space and time and organize our everyday lives" (10). These sorts of relations had direct influence on the collection and analysis of historical data for this dissertation. These relationships can be used to better understand the position of the writing center administrator and interrogate how the position has come to be, how it's changed, and where it might point for the future. Ruling Relations are of course specific to a local site,

but one of the primary transferable conclusions for this dissertation comes from the act of writing center administrators recognizing and reacting to Ruling Relations at their local institution.

During the practice of my collection of the historical data, I recognized that Ruling Relations changed for the Writing Center's administrators. Some of those changes, detailed in the history of the MU Writing Center in the prior chapter, were based on new reporting lines and shifts in the institution's administrative structure. Others were collaborative relations, establishing buy-in from academic departments, other support services, and offices on campus. I recognized those connections in both my everyday work currently as well as how they had changed over time. Those observations lead me to more closely connect the idea of reflexive administration with the need for administrators at any local level to build in that observational process to their own framework.

Social Coordination

Another focal point for IE is Social Coordination. In lay terms, according to Smith, this is "how work gets done" (LaFrance and Nicolas 137). These socially coordinated actions happen all around us, all the time. From everyday choices across different settings like standing in lines for coffee or choosing a seat in a classroom to administrative decisions that Co-Directors of the Writing Center might make, these actions are coordinated in mostly unseen ways. An outcome for this dissertation is making the coordination of administrative actions more visible, and therefore more

useful and part of the reflexive process, but also potentially replicable at this and other centers.

The “how” behind these actions is the most important part for the transferability of my findings. The Ruling Relations help to create a structure where our actions take place. But recognizing and calling attention to the coordination of those efforts allows us to see how those same administrative decisions might function, both locally and at other sites. My analysis of those actions in terms of the wider spread of actors involved provides both how we manage successful and unsuccessful administrative actions, with an eye toward repeating the former and redressing the latter.

Data Collection Methods

As described in both the Introduction and chapter 1, not unlike the theme of the project itself, I chose IE for the flexibility it provides. In the narrative below, I describe the overall processes I employed to create and analyze the “texts” for this project. As part of that research process, the research questions that prompted the project changed. What began as an effort to document institutional memory narrowed in scope to focus on three specific moments in time because of those moments’ thematic similarities. In order to gather that information, I collected archived files from the forty-year history of the MU Writing Center and conducted interviews with past WC administrators.

Archival Document Collection

I accessed and collected all of the historical materials hosted on the Writing Center’s institutional server. As with most archival work, there are missing files as well as whole periods of time when either no new files were generated or saved, or those files

had been misplaced. The digital files that I was able to access date as far back as 1995, and included course syllabi, online tutoring usage reports, Writing Lab newsletters, graduate tutor exit interviews, annual reports, course and program proposals, as well as historical emails and memos.

One particular trend in those early files (circa 1995 to circa 2005) is the revision of templates for new semesters and years. In some cases, the same file has been updated to reflect new dates or data, while in other cases a new copy of the file was generated with those new dates, data, or other revisions. As part of my own filing and archival behaviors in later years (circa 2011-present) I have found those same issues occurring. While it isn't the focus of this project, the realization that program administrators are rarely trained in this sort of granular file management has been a concern throughout. In all cases where it appeared as though the same document was used for a particular training, course, or presentation, I attempted to create a timeline for the revision of documents in the hope that I could see antecedents for changes.

Alongside the digital files, I collected the paper files and handbooks that still exist in the Writing Center's physical archives. These continue to be available to me through my position as current Director. Although once again there are gaps in coverage, I was able to fill in certain periods (circa 2000-2005), and found exit the evaluations given to graduate students as they finished their time at the Writing Center particularly useful. Related to my personal history with the Center, I also retained and used the training materials provided to me during the 2003 academic year when I joined the tutoring staff as an English MA student.

Most of the gathered materials originated in the mid-nineties, with a much deeper breadth of coverage from 2007 and on through the present day. There are also a handful of outreach materials from the founding of the service, and although they do not reference training in particular, they do reflect early versions of the same ideals present in the Writing Center today.

Interviews

Because of the Social Coordination involved across multiple directors and the lack of institutional memory documented on our servers, the interviews provided contextual information that was unavailable to me elsewhere. After receiving IRB approval for human subjects research, I sent recruitment emails to both living prior directors to request interviews with them (see Appendix C). Dr. Douglas Hunt, currently an Associate Professor Emeritus in the department of English at the University of Missouri, had been the first Director of the Writing Lab from 1976-1987. Dr. Rachel Harper, currently the Associate Director of the Honors College at the University of Missouri, had been the Director of the Writing Center from 2007-2018. I also contacted the family of the late Dr. Elaine Hocks, who had served as Director from 1987-2007, to request any documents or information they had retained that may not have been housed on University servers. The Hocks family was unable to locate more documents related to this project, but both of the other past Directors assented to be interviewed.

Both interviews followed the same overall structure and began with a set of questions regarding tutor training methods as well as period-specific questions regarding their personal job duties and reporting lines (See Appendix C). Dr. Harper's hour-long

interview took place on July 15, 2020 over Zoom video conferencing software and was recorded for transcription. I audio recorded Dr. Hunt's hour-long interview on his porch outside his home in Columbia, MO on August 7, 2020. I transcribed and coded portions of both interviews alongside the archival documents, generating a list of common themes.

Coding Documents for Themes

I generated the following table (see fig. 1) from repetitive training topics that appeared in both the interviews and the historical training documents. I catalogued the initial concerns as Micro-level first, and then, finding larger themes as work, built up to Macro-level concerns in the table.

Macro:	Working w People	Working w writing	Procedures	New Needs	Justification
Micro:	Non-Directive	Higher Order Concerns	Completing Reports	Working w ESL	To Institution
	Status	Grammar	Assigned Readings	<i>Online Work</i>	To Employees
	Rapport-Building	Plagiarism and Ownership	Personnel Knowledge	Personal Statements	
	PR	Voice		Computer skills	
	Faculty/Office Relationships			<i>Pandemic Response</i>	

Fig. 1 Coding of Themes

Once those coding processes were complete, it became clear that one of the overarching historical necessities in writing center work, particularly at our local site, was the continued pedagogical and programmatic responses to what I had termed "new needs." My selection of Online Work as a primary focus is wholly connected to the Institutional Ethnography tenet of Standpoint. My first full-time position as Online Writery Director provided professional investment in how online tutoring is

accomplished. And, because the MU Writing Center is one of the earliest providers of asynchronous online tutoring—but there has been to date no historical work done on that process—that was both personally and professionally important.

The second new need was a more organic process, as the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 was actively occurring during the research and writing process of this dissertation. Because all of our services were suddenly required to be online during that period, the administrative and pedagogical changes we applied were actively attempting to meet a new need in real time. As they were deeply connected to and facilitated by the history of online work and tutor preparation, analyzing them in relation to the framework I was building allowed for a deeper understanding.

The coding process provided a tight focus on two major “new needs”: Online Work, which I clarified to mean the aforementioned early adoption and ongoing offering of asynchronous writing tutoring, and Pandemic Response, by which I mean the Directors’ pedagogical responses to teaching the tutor training course described in chapter 1 during the interrupted spring 2020 and remote fall 2020 semesters. In both cases, the new need has both internal and external exigencies, calling for an administrative response that meets multiple audiences where they are while also looking toward future goals. Those outcomes and exigencies require the consideration of much of the initial coding themes present in the texts.

I performed a second coding process regarding the pedagogical decisions during the pandemic. Much like the organic rising of the need itself, I noted several themes in the decisions we were making during those semesters. I focus my attention in chapters 4

and 5 on three types of pedagogical decisions: revising the structure of the course, changing the workload for the course with specific attention paid to essential components, and overtly providing and communicating clear contextual information.

Conceptualizing a Framework

The initial coding process led me to the overarching concern of the Writing Center's historical response to new needs. In addition to my methodology's flexibility and the historical trend of flexibility in writing center work, I found yet another set of flexible responses in my daily work. Because of the pandemic, during which I was also co-administrating the Writing Center and co-teaching the tutor training course, I noted clear cross-pollination of this dissertation and my daily work: the trends of flexible responses. And yet some responses were qualitatively different than others. I began re-coding the administrative actions that were taken across time periods where online tutor training had occurred. I divided particular administrative and pedagogical actions into either responsive or reflexive groups.

With the goal of establishing a framework of flexibility, not unlike the framework of my methodology, I worked from those concepts of Responsiveness, the act of responding, and Reflexivity, recursive data-driven changes, in conjunction with recognizing the Ruling Relations and Social Coordination tenets from IE, to conceptualize a framework of administration. The following chapters of this dissertation, the adoption and growth of the Online Writery as a means for offering asynchronous writing tutoring in chapter 3, the changes in the tutor training course during the pandemic-interrupted

semester of spring 2020 in chapter 4, and the further revision of that course in fall 2020 in chapter 5 are all illustrative of that framework.

CHAPTER 3: It Takes Time (and Lots of Training) to Make a Thing Go Reflexive

In student services, one potential way of being (or appearing to be) responsive to new needs is to create new programs and services. In this chapter, I present a history of the Online Writery, the University of Missouri Writing Center's asynchronous tutoring platform and associated tutor training programs. Because of the Writing Center's early adoption of this technology, beginning in 1994 through 2020 and beyond, the Online Writery's life cycle presents a complex site for observing and analyzing the themes of responsiveness, reflexivity, and flexibility from multiple viewpoints at several points in time. I use that history of both the application itself and the changing training methods over time to show how a flexible framework can be created beginning with those initial responses to new needs to more reflexive administration processes. Parts of this chapter therefore focus on how tutors and administrators have interacted with online tutoring needs. I describe both interactions in order to demonstrate the layered application of a flexible framework for reflexive administration. One of the key findings highlighted in this chapter is that responsiveness (the act of responding) and responsivity (the quickness of that response) are not necessarily negative but are instead necessary to progress toward reflexivity (changing a way of responding after reflection) in both tutoring and administration.

With those layers and the definitions I provided in chapter 2 in mind, some of the history of the Writing Center is my personal history, as both a graduate student tutor and later Director. My methodology includes this as part of the Standpoint, with my overall goal being to see both from my viewpoint as well as from others' as equally valuable and

valid. There are broad levels of tutor-based, administrative, and program-level work here and my analysis and application seeks to account for all of them. As such, I interviewed two of the former directors, gathered documents from the Writing Center's historical archives and collected published sources that specifically mentioned the MU Writing Center.

Finally, one of my primary concerns for that accounting, in particular when I direct it toward the parts of this history that I was not personally a part of, is to see them through the institutional lens of the period when they existed. I cannot, for instance, compare the primarily responsive nature of the first years of Online Writery work to the ongoing reflexive nature of that same work in 2019. Instead, I have described timely changes in programming and training patterns by the ways that they embody responsive or reflexive administration, toward the goal of a flexible framework.

Name Changes; TONY

Throughout this chapter as in others, I use "Writing Center" to refer to the center at the University of Missouri. When referencing historical records prior to 2005, when it was called the "Writing Lab," I use that name. In particular quotations it may be referred to as "WC" or "WL" as well. Name-changing concerns also apply to the Online Writery's development. Although the application's formal title hasn't changed, it's often referred to in documentation as "OW" (Oh-Double-You) until 2013, when it was rechristened "TONY." Another term, "Webboard," has been used throughout its history, both by tutors (to refer to the application itself) and by administrators and application developers (to refer to a particular page of the application where submissions are displayed and

accessed). I recognize that in comparing historical documents this may be confusing: all of these terms refer to the same web application at the University of Missouri and are separate from any other applications at other Universities (such as the Purdue OWL).

Historical New Needs

As noted in chapter 1, the University of Missouri's Writing Lab was one of the three major early adopters of an online approach to writing tutoring. The other two highly publicized sites were Purdue's Online Writing Lab (OWL), founded a year earlier in 1993, and the University of Michigan's Online Writing and Learning (OWL) program, founded in 1994. By the end of the decade, there would be over 200 websites for tutoring programs, many of which offered some sort of access to tutoring services (Pegg 197). Those three initial sites represent the general buffet of online services that were adopted during the time period.

The OW at MU would offer an array of potential services, including submitting "writing or writing-related questions" to the original version of the Online Writery, joining a writing listserv, joining "a real time virtual environment for writers," or subscribing to several different forums on writing subjects, curated by the technology coordinator (Pegg 211). Of particular interest in terms of both responding to new needs and the flexibility to do so is that many of those services were open to the world—not just MU students and staff. Meanwhile, the OWL at the University of Michigan's major focus was adding an asynchronous tutoring service as an extension of their face-to-face offerings (Monroe 3). And, as one of the earliest examples (of the three institutions') reflexive processes, they immediately started collecting and analyzing data not just on usage, but on process-

based concerns for their tutors (Monroe). As the earliest adopter, Purdue's OWL included an email-based tutoring service for Purdue students (Pegg 206) but would quickly take advantage of the opportunities that make it useful worldwide today: as a clearinghouse and host site for guides, handouts, and links to other resources (Pegg 206; Harris "Using" 8). During these early years, other institutions of higher education adopted a subset of one or more of these options, with varying results. That variability depended, as with all writing center programming, on their local needs and options, as well as fiscal concerns for both technology and personnel needs.

Across these three initial sites, despite clear differences in programmatic options, the shared goal appears to have been offering services to writers who were not able to be physically present. At the University of Missouri, the technological advancements of the time period certainly assisted that goal and institutional funding support was available as well. In order to also gain the support of writing faculty, the original proposal for online services (See Appendix D) was sent in 1993 to the Campus Writing Board. That entity, a faculty-lead board charged with guiding the Writing Across the Curriculum program, could provide a systemic endorsement of the technology in their classrooms. There is an understanding represented even in that original proposal that "[s]tudents leaving this institution will find themselves living and working in an Information Age society that depends heavily on computer-mediated communication" (Crump 7). The language of the proposal illustrates a responsiveness and a responsivity to new needs—some so new that they hadn't yet occurred. Crump writes the "Internet is the current incarnation of what will become (I boldly predict) the dominant means of literate,

scholarly interaction” (4). And while some of the offerings—listservs, synchronous chat, worldwide usage—would taper off as coordinators, funding, and security concerns changed, the constant for the University of Missouri continues to be the Online Writery.

What is the Online Writery?

The local history section of chapter 1 detailed the beginnings and primary updates to the Online Writery, the MU Writing Center’s internet-based asynchronous tutoring application. This section expands on that history to provide context for the analysis and application of a flexible framework of administration for this chapter.

The Writing Center at the University of Missouri-Columbia was a very early adopter of the technology that would provide online synchronous and asynchronous writing tutoring. Taking advantage of a networked computing campus, and as part of the burgeoning Internet at the time, multiple tutoring options were offered in and around 1994. One of the few programs to eschew the use of “Lab” as part of their online name at the time, the Online Writery allowed users to submit drafts of their writing to tutors at the Writing Lab and get personalized written feedback via email. While many of the technological processes would change in the following decades, the foundational concepts have remained the same.

The Online Writery Provides Responsiveness, Reflexivity, and Flexibility

In the section below, I briefly lay out the ways that the application itself promotes and embodies the traits of responsiveness, reflexivity, and flexibility, followed by how training programs have changed over that time. I utilize the history of the development

of both the application (the Online Writery) and the tutor training methods put in place to prepare tutors for using it to show how a flexible framework can develop over time.

The Online Writery, from its initial launch through the present, has been based on the concepts of responsiveness and responsivity. In the brief history of writing center growth from chapter 1, it should be clear that virtually all writing center work has stemmed from a response to an outside antecedent. The move to online options follows that same pattern. For the Online Writery, responsiveness, and because of the actual programming involved, the mechanical concept of responsivity, are integral to the structure of the service. Not only is the OW programmed to provide a response quickly, the service it provides is in fact responsive to the needs of students as well.

But responsiveness is—can only be—what the word says it is: a response. After its launch in 1994, and for the rest of the decade, the Online Writery and the staff who utilized it appear to have been responsive. While students weren't coming to the Writing Lab's physical location and requesting online tutoring, the administrators at the time saw an opportunity to offer services to a different set of students, taking the often-mentioned educational tenet of meeting the students where they are more literally. In many cases, that meant that the student who may not actively be on campus or may not have access to campus during the center's open hours could asynchronously send their work, still receive tutoring support, and still work on the revision process. Technology coordinator Eric Crump writes in the Writing Lab's February 1996 newsletter to the campus that "The Online Writery is beginning to flourish. MU's online writing and learning environment, co-sponsored and developed by the Writing Lab and the Campus Writing Program's Writing

Intensive Tutorial Service, is serving an increasing number of local students and is gaining a reputation nationally as one of the most innovative online writing centers.” This is only two years since the founding of the program. While it’s clearly meant to inform faculty of the service, he also continues, “The 10 tutors employed by the Writing Lab to serve as “cybertutors” have been busy, especially during the last half of the winter semester, mostly reading and responding to drafts of papers submitted from local students in composition courses.” Here, the specific usage of language common to face-to-face tutorials draws attention to both “responding” (and not fixing, editing, or even tutoring) as well as promoting the idea that work is being accomplished: the tutors “have been busy.”

As previously noted, anyone with access to the internet could access the service, which was a primary goal—to be responsive—and to do so was part of the programming at the time. Like the goals of the burgeoning World Wide Web and WCenter listserv, the Online Writery’s coordinators hoped to provide a networked tutoring option across all boundaries. Those with access could quite literally be anyone working on any kind of writing project. The September 1995 newsletter from the Writing Lab describes the initial goals, “...what this service is intended for, and best suited for, is **conversation with writers**, providing a place in which you can feel free to talk about your ideas, run them by somebody and hash them out” (bold in the original). The language of responsiveness and responsivity continues here and elsewhere, and reflects, much like the cafeteria-style programming at the Writing Lab, a “services for everyone” outlook. Usage records from the overall period do show a slow aggregation of data, though. The “Learning Center

Campus Review” from 2002 provides Online Writery usage numbers for the prior five years. During the 1997-98 academic year, the Online Writery recorded a total of 168 contacts, 32 of which were from outside MU. In the 1998-99 academic year, 252 contacts were logged, and the Online Writery then sees a significant growth in usage in 1999-2000: a total of 601 (with 153 from outside) contacts. And while the University enforces the programmatic change to stop serving non-MU writers for the following (2000-2001) academic year, the Writery records yet another rise in usage, totaling 864 contacts during that year and over 1,000 during the next.

This six-year period shows a clear pattern of students, for one reason or another, finding the service, using the service, and getting responses. While annual reports containing that overall usage data have been preserved, documentation of any internal assessment procedures or the outcomes from those assessments (which would indicate a move toward reflexive processes for the Writery) have not been retained.

Documentation of reflexive processes related to the application itself begins in 2012. Over the next three years, the Online Writery was rebuilt with reflexivity (retroactively, anyway) as a guiding principle. Through a partnership with the Applications Development Network (ADN), part of the Division of IT at the University of Missouri, the Online Writery was rewritten in a more current programming language in order to be supported by campus IT professionals, rather than by the position of the Online Writery Director. That collaboration allowed for multiple levels of flexibility at the level of the Writing Center as an institution itself: the Online Writery as an application was able to be more responsive, handling more formats and providing more data. That responsiveness

allowed for the Directors to troubleshoot concerns more easily as well, as they would spend less (or no) time on the programming side of the application and thus be more responsive to other portions of administration. The update further allowed for better data collection and reflexive training methods, as I detail in the sections below.

As a continued measure of the changes and therefore responsiveness and responsivity of the application, usage over the 2011-2020 period continued to rise. While the beginning of that period would show online usage well below face-to-face tutorials (~3,000 and ~4,500), the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years would show online submissions outdistancing face-to-face options by several hundred contacts. In the years that followed (2016-2019), online contacts would hover just below 10,000 responses per year. In the 2019-2020 academic year, the Online Writery would account for over 10,600 contacts out of approximately 14,000 total Writing Center contacts. As a sole measure of the responsive nature of the application and the service, and of course in connection to a wholly different culture than when it was first built, it's clear that the Online Writery provides responses.

While this history of response is positive—students, tutors, and administrators tend to agree that it's a helpful resource, the work of tutoring has to be done by the tutors “behind” the Online Writery, and they in turn have to be trained to do the work of responding. In the next section I note the ways that tutor training has changed over the years at the Writing Center, moving from responsive to reflexive administration, within a general framework of flexibility.

Tutor Training Provides Responsiveness, Reflexivity, and Flexibility

The prior section shows how the Online Writery, as a web-based, asynchronous tutoring platform, has provided the ability for Writing Center tutors to be responsive to student needs. In this section, I focus on how the tutors have been prepared over the history of the Online Writery. I focus on the same hierarchy of themes within tutor training: initial responsiveness as work was done, eventual reflexivity which included critical reflection and change, and the overall ways that flexibility has guided those training changes. Finally, I connect that hierarchy of training to the administrative concerns in the following section.

Responsiveness in Tutoring Training at MU

Early tutor training seems to have been an individualized process. In the earliest years of the Online Writery, there appear to be no documents dedicated to the specific training of “online writing assistants” as they were first described in 1993. Ten tutors are listed on the original proposal, including both of the coordinators at the time. In a newsletter from 1996, the Online Writery is described again as having ten tutors who respond to submissions. For those first few years, responding was probably the primary goal of the budding service. From a tutoring standpoint, those responses were most likely governed by the same principles that Doug Hunt used to describe the initial training and hiring of face-to-face tutors when the Writing Lab was founded in 1977. “All of them had...good eyes” and were “even-tempered” (Hunt, personal interview). His initial training of that four-person cadre of professional tutors was to observe them working and then debrief with them afterwards. It stands to reason that if ten tutors, including

full-time staff, were responding to less than 300 submissions per *year*, there may have been individualized trainings for those tutors, but there was no need for full-staff trainings.

A reference to that individualized training is noted early in the June 1996 newsletter—where tutors were often asked to write short pieces about tutoring—for the campus. The tutor recounts her reticence, conversation, and outcomes from an “online dialogue” with a writer from California. She writes that she “did not want to respond to the first short story...as I did not like it” but after encouragement from the Online Writery coordinator, she provided an “honest yet considerate response” to the student. The student took the feedback and resubmitted several other projects that year, seemingly finding the service useful. This individualized conversational feedback recalls the way face-to-face training was handled in prior years as well, via observation and debriefing.

However, as usage rose, more tutors were asked to respond to Online Writery submissions. As early as 2000, a question in the exit survey, the English MA Interns’ Writing Lab Survey, specifically asks about Online Writery work (See Appendix E). That survey, used to measure outcomes related to first-year composition teacher preparation in the Writing Lab, had as early as 1995 captured a thematic request for further training and orientations. In May of 1996, three out of the seven responses mention the need for early-semester full trainings for new tutors. While none of them specifically mention working with online submissions, one of those responses does include a request for training for “specialized tutorials,” which include “e-mail, internet, grammar”. Later, in the same surveys from the 1998-99 cohort, one response includes the request to

“[d]evelop a more thorough orientation process.” In comparison with the usage reports and newsletter entries at the time, it appears as though there was a subset of tutors who worked online and a different subset who were not required to. This division of labor seems to have been in place until around 2007, when cross-training of all tutors began (discussed later in this section).

Again, the flexible nature of the environment of tutoring may have had a part to play in the programmatic division of labor concerns. The 2000 exit survey asks, specifically addressing cybertutorials (the name for online responses at the time): “How has cybertutoring affected your attitudes about composition, revision, or responding to student drafts?” Out of five responses, three of them describe a general dislike for tutoring via the Online Writery. However, four out of five—including the prior three—also state how useful the service is to students. This subjunctive dissonance—I (the tutor) am bad at it and therefore don’t like it, but I can see how it would be useful if I *were* good at it—highlights the experience of the line between responsive and reflexive practice. In all cases, these tutors had been somewhat responsive to online work: they had participated in asynchronous tutoring one or more times and had formed opinions about it. They were now, at the end of their time with the Writing Lab, being asked to reflect on their experiences. Reflection in this case shows four of them stating their feelings about the service and their place in it.

However, only one of the five responders provides any reflexive language in her answer, showing a potential change in behavior.

Cybertutoring has made me a lot more conscious of how written comments might be construed by the author of a draft...Also, it's much harder to strike a balanced tone in your comments so that you don't sound harsh or demanding. Being a cybertutor has also helped me to think about revision--how to encourage people to make changes in their papers without making them feel as though their original draft is worthless.

Contextually, and because some of the tutors at the time signed their surveys, this tutor had also made a request for more training overall at the beginning of the year. She had completed her undergraduate degree at MU but had never used Writing Lab services. As a new MA in English, poised to teach first-year composition during the next year, she had wanted more job-shadowing opportunities and observations of experienced tutors, all of which were options as part of the training program at the time, but would grow to be an integral part of training in later years. This response suggests that the tutor's experiences had prepared her to make reflexive teaching decisions related to her online work at the Writing Lab.

Responsiveness and reflection have continued to be treated as themes and outcomes in tutor training practices across the local history at MU. As usage and staffing numbers rose over the next two decades, new approaches were implemented to both prepare new tutors and continue to be responsive. Starting in the latter half of the 2000's and continuing through the present, documents and practices show a move toward reflexivity where tutors training is concerned.

Early Reflexivity in Tutor Training at MU

This first part of this era (approximately 2006-2011) reflects sweeping changes in both investment in and training for the Online Writery tutors. Part of the investment comes from the need for writing tutors (that is, all employees of the Writing Center) to be cross-trained in both face-to-face and online modalities. These changes coincide with new leadership, a change in name (with “Lab” being replaced by “Center”) and the addition of a new set of writing tutors: the institutional decision to add the Writing Intensive Tutorial Services--graduate students with quarter-time appointments—to the mainly undergraduate-staffed Writing Center at the time.

The first tutoring changes based on these new needs came in the form of different training. Trainings had to become more robust—they would now be offered to *all* tutors—and as Writery usage continued to grow, the student demand to fulfill responsive needs became more widely communicated and enforced. In short, the flexible nature of the Online Writery *work* had been given an institutional structure. Three main documents were created at the time to provide that structured set of expectations for the tutors. The “Intro to the Online Writery” (S. Foster) was used primarily as a printed assignment for graduate trainings and the Online Writery unit of the undergraduate course. It would lay out the primary function of the OW and direct students to read the other two documents: “Cyberstyle at the Online Writery”(Foster and Black), hosted on the Writing Center’s Staff Room website, and a “Top Ten” list for OW responses (Slattery-Duda) generally housed in the course’s Blackboard (one of MU’s Learning Management applications at the time) site at the time or printed out for graduate tutor training.

The “Cyberstyle at the Online Writery” guide functioned as an in-house training document. Written by Coordinator Sally Foster, with input from multiple graduate tutors, particularly James Black and Erin Slattery, it begins with the paragraph “In theory, tutoring via the Online Writery should be easy. All you have to do is apply the familiar non-directive tutoring precepts from sessions at the Writing Lab, plus some basic knowledge of netiquette and the ins and outs of the Online Writery, to your online tutorial, and, bingo, you’re a cybertutor...right?” This seems to reflect back on the 10+ years of the Online Writery’s usage of a traditional non-directive approach to text-based tutoring that attempted to utilize the face-to-face training methods (with an extra bit of technological expertise). The guide does so in order to set off a more nuanced methodology. In the “Intro to the Online Writery” document, language like “There was a time, perhaps not entirely past in some quarters, when this was regarded as a gimmicky and inferior substitute for the real work of f2f tutoring. Years of experience at this have taught us otherwise” begins to show the reflexive practice needed to effect change for tutors’ use of the application. The writers of these documents make these rhetorical choices, recognizing that there is a need to contextualize the differences in online and face-to-face tutoring work. That need for and attention to tutors’ need for contextual structure is met with these sorts of changes throughout these documents.

The reflexive process shows up in different ways throughout these documents, but most often present itself in connection to face-to-face tutoring. Just as Monroe describes the University of Michigan’s initial forays into online tutoring as “close kin” to face-to-face options (3), the “Cyberstyle” guide presents the Writing Lab’s face-to-face

model as a starting point. The guide also presents reflexivity of the document itself as part of the process: as “a work in progress, any insight and experience you’d like to contribute are welcome.” This nod toward reflexivity wasn’t idle lip service: any tutor could provide tips and tricks, successes or failures to help build the document. In the “Disclaimer” section, which focuses on letting tutors know that their work will be used for training purposes, the reflexive theme is clear: “The best way to train new tutors and promote the Online Writery is to show the most exemplary work of our experienced cybertutors.” The rest of the guide, which grew over the years as new responses were collected, included snippets of particular tutorials that achieved certain ends, as well as a full response with added commentary from the tutor. By far the most reflexive portion, having a tutor write about why she made the tutoring choices she did—with both explanatory and self-critical comments—foregrounds the training work that tutors were expected to participate in.

This trio of documents, the “Intro” and “Cyberstyle” and “Top 10,” were actively referencing each other, performing a continued reflexive process. While this nuance wasn’t necessarily important, or noticeable, to tutors at the time, the parallels between the reflexive nature of the documents and the ideal nature of a tutor’s work is an interesting one. Specifically, the “Intro” directs tutors to read the “Top 10” describing it as “a good example of the way we, as a community of writers and tutors, can be our own most valuable resource” because the “Top 10” was written by a tutor and shared to the tutors via their listserv. The “Top 10” document then continues the trend of advising tutors to use their face-to-face experiences to guide their online responses.

Over this time period, all three documents connected online tutor training to one of the primary methods of tutor training from the founding of the Lab itself: learning to tutor by observing other tutors' work. This history of providing a loose set of expectations for the tutors, with built-in room for observations, on-the-job trial and error, and a continued collection of tutoring responses shows a longitudinal process of administration.

Continued Reflexivity in Tutor Training at MU: Now in Color, with Cats*

In the decade following (2011-2021), Writing Center tutors gained the benefits of the past responses and a firmer set of expectations. During this period, the need for online tutoring continued to rise, as online submissions outdistanced face-to-face appointments by a two-to-one and later a three-to-one ratio. Midway through this period, the Online Writery was rewritten into a new format more easily supported by the University's Department of IT. While the general guidelines and goals from a history of online responding still held true, they now had much more current technological tools at their disposal (colors, fonts, styles) as well as internal reporting options for data work. As such, new training documents were created to prepare them for the work. These documents illustrate (literally and figuratively) the continued reflexive processes connected to the practical needs of tutor training.

The need for a new training document became clear in 2013 as the new version of the Online Writery came online. The older versions of the training documents presented overall guidelines for online tutoring, most of which were still in place. However, the new version of the application, which a tutor at the time christened TONY,

provided so many more options that a fully-revised guide seemed appropriate. Several themes, established as early as the Online Writery itself, were still prevalent in the day-to-day work of the Writing Center during this period of time. While none of our documents have included this exact language, I have drawn the following value statements from those themes. Tutoring, while at times difficult, should be fun. Tutoring, both online and face-to-face, is deeply connected to the *art* of writing and while professionalism was and is still an important part of student services, it isn't without whimsy.

***A Note About Cats**

During this period, the Writing Center had started, like many individuals, institutions, and university services, social media accounts. We chose Facebook as the most promising of the time period and rarely used it—posts were created once every couple weeks—to draw attention to our service. We utilized a particular meme at the time, LOLcats, where cats were depicted as being terrible spellers. One of our tutors at the time created cartoons for the page, and we jointly created a character, Writing Cat (WC), to use in public relations materials. During those years, cats could be found on virtually every document we created and, as part of the University of Missouri whose mascot is the tiger, it made a certain amount of public relations sense. As time moved on, we featured less cats and less internet memes.

As a general note about responsivity, those rhetorical choices were a response to what was happening in various parts of the internet, particularly on social media sites. While it's beyond the scope of this project to focus on the way memes propagate and

how the Writing Center's usage of them fits into that system, it is a small example of the move from response to reflexivity. Part of the continued updating of the presentation (along with the content) of these documents is that the Writing Center's place within the institutions around it has become more recognizable due to design choices like these.

This is also to say that there are perhaps an inordinate number of cat pictures in the next sections.

The TONY Guide

The two versions of the TONY Guide (known as "TONY's Wonderful Life" and later the "TONY Guide") were created to provide tutors with theoretical, practical, and logistical training for tutoring online via the Online Writery. Tutors-in-training would receive an initial in-person description and how-to presentation of the software and be assigned the Guide to read prior to completing a practice response. While they were also assigned readings (discussed later in this chapter) these tasks were local to the University of Missouri, and like the prior period's trio of documents, were created by tutors in conjunction with administrators, using real-life examples of online tutoring.

Some of the text in "TONY's Wonderful Life" still recalls the earlier documents' references to the online/face-to-face dichotomy of tutoring. In the section devoted to "Strategies for Responding to Tutees" (see fig. 2) the directive, "Read the paper in its entirety" is offset with the language of opportunity. "This is something you can't normally do in a face-to-face session, so take advantage of your online format and read the paper before diving in to comment." However, as opposed to the early documents where the dichotomy was set up as "take what you learned in face-to-face tutoring and apply it to

online work” this guide specifically calls attention to what might be a “bonus” of sorts that working online provides the tutor.

Fig. 2 TONY's Wonderful Life Excerpt: Personalization

In that same section of the guide, another moment of reflexivity shows up regarding personalization: “if your comments could apply to any other paper, it’s probably not a good response” implies a firmer guideline that comes from data collection. The implication here is that there had been responses that were not “good.” This particular concern relates to the Writing Center’s overall goal of individualization of services. While online tutoring might take place without the student physically present, the overall goal was to offer substantive feedback for that particular paper, at that time in the process. Part of the ability to be reflexive here comes from the rise in usage numbers and extensive data collection. With thousands of submissions arriving per year and close to one hundred individuals on staff, quality control was a concern for administrators. The guide was one of the first documents to formally note those processes.

Later, as the guide concludes, the expectation that tutors be reflexive as part of their work is clearly stated again (see fig. 3). Part of the rewritten Online Writery included

an archive of tutors' responses, allowing for new and returning tutors to continually learn by "checking out other tutors' styles and ~~stealing~~ borrowing their techniques." This process, in combination with the firmer guidelines across all tutoring work, meant that there could be a continuous reflexive learning opportunity *within* the bounds of the Writing Center framework at the time.

Fig. 3 TONY's Wonderful Life Excerpt: Ongoing Learning

As tutors continued to create more responses, administrators could focus on particular concerns within that framework as well.

The revised TONY Guide provided an updated design, but also served to formalize a set of terms to describe online tutoring. Establishing a shared language between tutors allowed for both quicker processing of training goals, as well as easier assessment by tutors, tutors-in-training, and administrators. For example, "TONY's Wonderful Life" uses the terms "front comment" and "introduction" interchangeably to describe the text that opens an Online Writery response. Further back historically, the "Cyberstyle" guide refers to that text as a "salutation/opening." In conversations and trainings, the administrators might have used those terms as well as several others to describe both what that section *is* (an introduction to the response) or what that section *does* (lists Higher Order

Concerns, builds rapport, provides answers). The “TONY Guide” was the first formal document to use the term “Frame” to describe what that section of an online response does *and* is. It breaks the Frame down into three sections as well (see fig. 4), further providing a structure (Introduction, Higher Order Concerns, Plan for comments).

Fig. 4 TONY Guide Excerpt: The Frame

The Guide would do the same for the two other sections of a response: “Comments” (parts 1 and 2) and the “Sign-off.” Most importantly in terms of the ongoing need for flexibility, the internal contents of these sections continue to be individualized to the student’s needs and requests.

Assessing TONY Responses

Between these two versions of the guide, there was a clear need for ongoing assessment, brought on by the continued volume of submissions and responses. While full-staff workshops dedicated to TONY occurred once or twice a semester and individual meetings with tutors sometimes touched on online submissions, there wasn’t a document that served that purpose. Individual tutoring observations, a process dating back to the founding of the lab through the present, had a therefore long history of documents attached to them. The Observation form from 2021 (see Appendix F) had been utilized for both tutors-in-training and staff observations for over a decade, with revisions happening as needed. However, in cases where an online response was the

subject of the observation, it was adapted to that need by simply leaving out the parts that specifically connected to face-to-face concerns.

The TONY Checklist was created as an in-house training and assessment document to provide both new and returning tutors a shared point of reference for online work. Since 2015, it has gone through three revisions (see Appendix G), each connected to the training needs of tutors as they continued to respond to online submissions. Our goal for the Checklist was to provide guidelines for tutors' online responses in an easily accessible document they could "check" at any time during their work on TONY.

As a direct connection to this dissertation, the Checklist is also a document-based example of the sort of flexible framework the reflexive process can lead to. While it visually represents a "rubric" of actions to take and be mindful of during an asynchronous response, it also allows for flexible content within and between those actions. As an internal document, it also continuously works to remind and reinform tutors of their goals, both at the macro-level (as most responses should assess and address the stages that the Checklist shows) and micro-level (as individual responses may check some boxes but not others). As a shared document between both tutors, tutors-in-training, and the administrators, it also serves to codify and connect the language used during training and the language used during work.

Like any reflexive document, the Checklist itself is in constant revision. Much like the original Online Writery guides, working with tutors provides insight, both overtly in terms of clarity and terminology, and via observation. One example of a specific change

between the second and third versions of the document shows how the reflexive process doesn't have to be something that is overtly requested. At times, change is needed even when tutors don't recognize it clearly enough to request it. Across all versions, the left-most box included a section devoted to "Before your first words," which were pre-writing tasks that tutors should do prior to starting a response (see fig. 5, left). The following section "The Frame," which of course relates back to the language of the Guide, included in the earlier version adds the language "Mention the assignment or the assignment sheet?". Tutors however, were taught during their tutor training course (see the next section) to conduct an assignment analysis prior to reading the submission. The revision addressed this sort of need by moving the task to the pre-writing section.

<p>BEFORE YOUR FIRST WORDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Read the paper FIRST?□ Grok* effectively? <p>THE FRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Introduce yourself and the WC (with your first name)?□ Create rapport?□ Discuss the student's requests?□ Mention the assignment or assignment sheet?□ Foreground the HOCs?□ Actively use a Reverse Outline (if you included one)?□ Explain your approach and/or format? (colors, font, etc.)	<p>THE COMMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Make your comments easy to read/format them clearly?□ Use white space effectively/differentiate between your text and their text?□ Ask questions you don't know the answers to?□ Provide context for your questions/comments?□ Offer <i>multiple</i> options for rewriting?□ Address grammar <i>patterns</i> (and not line edit)?	<p>BEFORE YOUR FIRST WORDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Analyze the Assignment?□ Read & Grok* effectively? <p>THE FRAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Introduce yourself and the WC (with your first name)?□ Create rapport?□ Discuss the student's requests?□ Foreground the HOCs?□ Actively use a Reverse Outline (if you included one)?□ Explain your approach and/or format? (colors, font, etc.)	<p>THE COMMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Ask questions you don't know the answers to?□ Provide context for your questions/comments?□ Offer <i>multiple</i> options for rewriting?□ Make your comments easy to read/format them clearly?□ Use white space effectively/differentiate between your text and their text?□ Address grammar <i>patterns</i> (but not line edit)?
<p>THE HOCs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Connect the HOCs to your Assignment Analysis?□ Identify or address the argument?□ Use a Reverse Outline to identify or address the structure?□ Relate The Frame HOCs to The Comments?			

Fig. 5 TONY Checklists from 2017 and 2019

That small revision bloomed into a full-scale structural revision as well (see fig. 5, right). While the two main sections (Frame and Comments) still include the same expectations, the horizontal third box was added in order to respond to patterns of tutoring behaviors. A HOC—Higher Order Concerns, also detailed in the following

section—became a shared piece of language not only between tutors and administrators, but for students as well. While tutors had been continually expected to “Foreground the HOCs” as part of the Frame, there was also an expected-but-unsaid understanding that those Higher Order Concerns would thematically show up in their responses. Over several semesters, that goal was becoming harder to achieve and administrators implemented clearer guidelines in both classes and training documents like the Checklist. In the same vein, the final addition of the lower box, “Relate **The Frame** HOCs to **The Comments**” tells the tutors to connect the two portions of their responses as the box itself visually bridges the two. The process of these revisions still shows a continual reflexive loop, attempting to always answer the question of new needs from the standpoint of the online tutor, as more data is collected.

While the documents described in this section were created with tutor training as the goal, multiple levels of administrative action were in place to achieve that goal. One of the primary goals of this chapter is to show that the sort of flexible frameworks that provide successful tutoring and tutor training also work at the level of the administrator of a writing center. The next section describes how the history of pedagogical decisions related to the tutor training course offered by the Writing Center’s administrator show the same pattern of responsive and reflexive changes present in the history of the Online Writery.

Administration Requires Responsiveness, Reflexivity, and Flexibility

The training decisions, documents, assessments, and changes I discuss in the prior sections were of course made or at least partly conducted by whomever was in an

administrative role at the time. I describe those reflexive processes in ways that directly affect a tutor's work in order to draw attention to the practical needs of a flexible framework. While the job requires flexibility, I believe it's impossible to be an effective tutor—to do the *work* of tutoring—without some framework or guidelines to work within. Throughout the history of the Online Writery, administrators have provided different versions of that framework. The following sections focus on the ways that responsiveness and reflexivity have been present in those frameworks, particularly in pedagogical decisions related to the tutor training course.

Pedagogical Responsiveness to New Online Tutoring Needs

The tutor training course at the University of Missouri was established in 1995 and, as I described in chapter 1, has gone from a 1-credit internship to a 3-hour Honors and Writing Intensive offering over the past twenty-six years. Taught each fall and spring semester, it has been the only way undergraduate tutors have been prepared for a position at the Writing Center since its inception. While the course as a whole has experienced wide-ranging changes in form, content, level, and instructor, this section focuses narrowly on the online training content's changes over time.

As described in the initial responsive sections above, the late period of the decade, 1995-2000, shows pedagogical decisions connected to face-to-face tutoring. A small subset of online writing tutors monitored and responded to the Online Writery. The primary tutoring training documents connected to that period of time, specifically from the tutor handbook of 1998, present a combination of “online tutoring concerns” and “computer knowledge and skills.” “Technological” tutorials addressed word processing,

using email, etc., all of which were very new for incoming students whom the Writing Lab primarily served. The tutor handbook from 1998 lists the Online Writery's services and the skills tutors were expected to have (or learn):

- Know how to perform simple text management, editing, and printing functions with commonly used word processing programs and how to make files from a PC readable on a Mac, and vice versa.
- Know how to log in to the campus general use system, Showme, and how to perform basic Unix commands, including making directories and files, navigating directories, changing permissions, and using common text editors.
- Know how to send and receive electronic mail on the Showme system, including how to subscribe to and unsubscribe from Internet mailing lists.
- Know how to read and post to Usenet newsgroups, especially local MU newsgroups.
- Know how to use common World Wide Web browsers, both graphic and text-only.
- Know how to connect to MOOs (multi-user online environments) and how to interact with other characters.
- Know the basics of HyperText Markup Language, enough to be able to create basic World Wide Web pages.

This list of technologically-savvy expectations may have been also implemented in the tutor course but appears to have been specifically connected to professional and

graduate student tutors' trainings. The section also included the following information, referring to ongoing training sessions:

Consultants unfamiliar with any of these skills should plan to attend training sessions offered by the Writing Lab, the Online Writery, or IAT Services, or they should seek assistance from their peers or the Writing Lab staff. (Writing Lab Handbook: Fall 98)

Documentation of those trainings doesn't exist in the archives, but given the minimal staff numbers at that time, these could have been as small as one-on-one trainings conducted as they were needed, rather than something more formal. That process continues to embody the responsive nature of the training at the time: with multiple administrators and moderate student usage numbers, responding to individual tutor training needs was a manageable endeavor.

Pedagogical Responsiveness Moves Toward Reflexivity

An addition to the tutoring course's syllabus from 2002-07 indicates both momentum toward online training and the need for more trained tutors. A class session focusing on the Online Writery occurs in both the historical tutor training documents for graduates during that time and syllabi from the Honors Internship for undergraduates. The inclusion of a "seminar w/ Sally Foster" to discuss Cooper, Bui, and Riker's "Protocols & Process in Online Tutoring" is the first Online Writery-based update to the course's syllabus. This seminar and the choice of the associated reading are telling in terms of the reflexive process at work during this period. More tutors would need to be cross-trained for the Online Writery because of the continual rise in student usage. The OW had now

been functioning for a decade and staffing could no longer be accomplished by a small subset of the Writing Lab staff. While still only a single day of the course, it's also during this period that the Internship is only a 1-hour credit, and, given the rest of the schedule (See Appendix B), this class session accounted for around ten percent of the in-class meetings.

Choosing the Cooper, Bui, and Riker article as the primary training text is also an early moment of reflexivity. As I noted in prior chapters, the University of Michigan and the University of Missouri had begun their asynchronous programs at approximately the same time. Monroe's "Look and Feel" article, published in 1998, had laid out a fairly clear framework for what a University of Michigan asynchronous response would look like. Likewise, Cooper, Bui, and Riker's article (published in 2000, also from the University of Michigan) provided one of the only available practical guides in publication at the time. The movement toward reflexivity—using the data and information available, in this case from a comparable source—is clear here. Tutors, both then and now, have asked for answers to practical online tutoring questions. "Protocols and Process" was a prominently available answer to the questions its authors ask in their own abstract: "What are some things tutors must know about online tutoring, and how can they make it effective?" (91).

Pedagogical Reflexivity as the Online Writery Takes Over

As numbers of all kinds rose, including student usage, course credit hours, graduate training hours, and tutors on staff, pedagogical decisions related to online tutoring became more nuanced and data-driven. Data collection efforts allowed the

administrators to make pedagogical choices that weren't based only on the need for a response but also included reflection on experiential and quantitative data. This reflexive decision-making process can be seen in multiple moments and documents.

While the fall 2007 syllabus lists the "Protocols" article, it does so in conjunction with the "Cyberstyle Guide," connecting Michigan's processes to a local framework. The following semester, winter 2008, the Online Writery section of the course encompasses three class sessions and includes one day entitled "Applying Johnstone to tutoring in the OW," a reference to the Keith Johnstone's theatrical *Impro* text. As noted in the local history, the interpersonal concept of status interactions would become a hallmark of the Writing Center's tutor training, and that day in class sought to connect those interpersonal lessons to online work. The second day retains the two readings from the prior fall and adds an "OW post" assignment to be turned in, referencing a practical application of tutoring online. Finally, a third day is added to the schedule for a "Discussion of OW posts" to process and reflect on what the tutors-in-training had produced. These additions all signify the reflexive nature of that period, as the Director at the time, Dr. Rachel Harper, recounts that she had been hired for her position over the summer, inherited the course from retiring Director Dr. Elaine Hocks with students, texts, and the course itself already scheduled for the fall semester (Harper). Harper, after teaching that fall, revamped the course to meet new administrative and student needs alongside the new Co-Director, Dr. Greg Foster.

One of the most salient reflexive moments in the history of administrative pedagogy connected to the Online Writery was Harper's revision and re-proposal for the

course itself. Fundamentally changing the concept to address long-standing training needs (from internship to theory and practice), she also changed the level and credit hours (from 1-credit freshman to 3-credit, Writing Intensive, sophomore). This revision also included new recruitment efforts. Opening the course to all Honors students rather than limiting enrollment to English, Education, and Journalism students allowed the new version to meet representation needs regarding the breadth of tutoring staff. That proposal (See Appendix H) also directly accounts for online tutor training in the description of the course which, “[a]t its heart is a shared set of assumptions about tutoring writing,” the last of which is that “Online tutoring is a valuable part of the skill set with both advantages and disadvantages over traditional face-to-face scenarios, and it makes considerable demands on the tutor's craft as a writer and as a reader of both prose and people” (Harper “Course”). Among the many changes to the course, more of which are detailed later, is that this assumptive foundation is the first time in the Online Writery’s history that asynchronous tutoring is described in print as equal to—having “both advantages and disadvantages”—face-to-face tutoring. As the course continued to evolve, that balance would continue to show in pedagogical choices by multiple instructors.

Several more key changes, occurring between 2010 and 2020, reflexively negotiate new needs. Tracing each pedagogical choice to specific moments is difficult, but one of the primary needs relates to the ongoing rise in Online Writery usage by students at MU. For example, one pedagogical response was to raise the number of students in the class in order to build a larger potential staff for the Writing Center. In

addition to more students, a general format of the “unit” dealing with online tutor training solidified during this time as well. Over three to four class sessions, students would participate in various ways:

- By reading preparatory published articles, Cooper, Bui, and Riker’s “Protocols and Process in Online Tutoring” until fall 2012, when a new edition of the *St. Martin’s Sourcebook for Writing Tutors* provided Bell’s “Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring When Going Online” essay.
- By reading in-house documents, including the aforementioned “Cyberstyle” and “Top 10,” to be replaced by the TONY Guides in 2013 (version 1) and 2017 (version 2).
- By attempting a low-stakes “practice” response, evaluated via discussion (2010-2014), via the Checklist (2014-2015), via a point-based assignment (2014-present), and with a reflective assignment (2019-present).
- By writing a graded “Essay”—a tutoring response to a student submission—as a course requirement. In addition, as a course that fulfills the campus’ Writing Intensive portion of the general education requirement (all undergraduates must pass a first-year composition course and two WI courses, one at the junior/senior level in their major), the course required at least twenty pages of writing, including eight pages of revision. As part of that revision requirement, there was an optional revision in 2009 that became a mandatory revision and included an individual conference with one of the instructors from fall of 2010 to the present.

This set of shared experiences across semesters and years provided a firm foundation for tutors of various cohorts. Establishing that shared experience met both the tutors' need to be well-prepared for the job as well as the administrative need for a shared set of expectations across time and cohorts. These reflexive actions stem from prior experiences with individuals or groups of tutors who weren't fully prepared for either the task or the expectation. In addition to those foundational classroom decisions, several other more specific, but similarly reflexive pedagogical choices appear in the course syllabus as well.

As I noted earlier, directors of the Writing Center have continually seen a need to establish a shared language between staff, tutors, and students. The responses to this need appear in several versions of the syllabi across this period. In fall 2012, day two of the course reads "Structural Analysis: Prioritizing your OW Response" until spring 2016, when "Grokking essays/ structural analysis, aka how the OW is like/unlike f2f" replaces the plan for day two and "Structural Analysis: Prioritizing your OW Response" moves to day three. While these are both relatively small changes, both represent the instructors of the course negotiating their tutors-in-training's need to have more clear, shared language to describe their work. While the use of "grok," borrowed from *Stranger in a Strange Land* to describe the ability to understand something at an intuitive or emotional baseline level, has been utilized in tutor training at the Writing Center since 2007, it was documented as part of the training materials much later. The same applies to "Structural Analysis": different instructors over time would use different phrases to describe the tutors' task of analyzing and displaying the structure of an individual piece of writing to

the tutee, but it began to be codified during this period. Even later (spring 2020), “Reverse Outline” would replace “Structural Analysis” in syllabi, actual responses to students, and in-house discussions, because it more closely connected the presentation of the structural analysis to the tutee. As micro-level responses to new needs, these linguistic changes represent the full process of reflexive administration: a need for clear understanding between administrators, their staff, and the students they serve; an initial response to that need; a collection of data over time; and ongoing reflexive changes based on that data.

The Tiniest of Case Studies: the Online Writery Unit of the Course, 2014-2016

That same process at a more macro level can be seen in the overall changes of the Online Writery unit of the course itself. While the general *framework* stayed the same for almost a decade, the internal processes, in this case the lesson plans for each day as well as the assignments due, remained flexible. Not all changes were deemed successful, but all were responsive to new incoming data from students and staff and, as presented in the following chapters, environmental factors. For example, the unit structure in the fall 2014 syllabus consisted of the following days (see fig. 6):

October 15	Introduction to the Online Writery. Reading: Lisa Eastmond Bell “Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring when going Online.” Martin’s 326-333.
October 20	OW Post DUE (Exercise #4). Structural Analysis: Prioritizing your OW Response. Reading: TONY’s <i>Wonderful Life</i> —WC Staff Room
October 22	OW Checklist. Schedule Request Form (in-class). 7 completed observations due by 10/24
October 27	Essay 3 Due: OW Response. Sign up for Conferences

Fig. 6 Fall 2014 Online Writery Unit from Syllabus

In reference to changes from prior semesters as well, this is the first time the students’ “practice post” was converted to an “Exercise” with a grade attached. The following

spring 2015 semester (see fig. 7) the normal two-week unit was broken across that year's spring break. Two external, institutional factors impacted this change: the placement of spring break in the semester and the start date, which for the University of Missouri is always on the Tuesday following the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

March 16	Introduction to the Online Writery. Reading: Lisa Eastmond Bell "Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring when going Online." Martin's 326-333.
March 18	OW Post DUE (Exercise #4). Structural Analysis: Prioritizing your OW Response. Reading: TONY's <i>Wonderful Life</i> —WC Staff Room. Schedule Request Form (in-class). 7 completed observations due before you leave for Spring Break.
March 21-29	SPRING BREAK
March 30	Evaluating Exercise #4 via the OW Checklist. Assign Tutor Mentors.
April 1	Essay 3 Due: OW Response. Sign up for Conferences. ESL Reading: Myers' Reassessing the Proofreading Trap" in St. Martin's pp. 284-301.

Fig. 7 Spring 2015 Online Writery Unit from Syllabus

However, this is also a semester of internal fluctuation within the Online Writery unit as well. The fourth day of the unit in 2014 hadn't been as successful and we were, in essence, rethinking its usefulness. Because the external factors of that semester caused a day to be "lost," the decision was made to remove the fourth day.

The following semester, fall of 2015, the schedule from the prior spring is used (see fig. 8) even though spring break isn't an environmental concern. We likely made this decision in an effort to accommodate other units of the class, but the question of the fourth day's usefulness to our tutors-in-training at the time was still under discussion.

October 19	Introduction to the Online Writery. Reading: Lisa Eastmond Bell "Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring when going Online." Martin's 326-333.
October 21	OW Post DUE (Exercise #4). Structural Analysis: Prioritizing your OW Response. Reading: TONY's <i>Wonderful Life</i> —Readings Folder. Schedule Request Form (in-class).
October 26	Evaluating Exercise #4 via the OW Checklist. Assign Tutor Mentors.
October 28	Essay 3 Due: OW Response. Sign up for Conferences. ESL Reading: Myers' Reassessing the Proofreading Trap" in St. Martin's pp. 284-301. 7 completed observations due by Friday, October 30

Fig. 8 Fall 2015 Online Writery Unit from Syllabus

That question was answered as we evaluated both the course and the online work our tutors were doing at the time. In an effort to devote more in-class time to the Online Writery, the following spring (see fig. 9) is one of the large-scale revisions of the unit, including the aforementioned linguistic changes.

M Mar 14	Introduction to the Online Writery. Reading: Lisa Eastmond Bell “Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring when going Online” in St. Martin’s 326-333.
W Mar 16	OW Practice Post (Exercise #4) DUE before class. Reading for Practice Post: TONY’s <i>Wonderful Life</i> —Readings folder on Canvas. Grokking essays/structural analysis, aka how the OW is like/unlike f2f. Schedule Request Form (in-class).
M Mar 21	Structural Analysis: Prioritizing your OW Response.
W Mar 23	Essay 3 (1984 & Privacy Paper response) Due on Training Board before class. In class: evaluating Exercise #4 via the OW Checklist. Assign Tutor Mentors. 7 completed observations due by Friday, March 25

Fig. 9 Spring 2016 Online Writery Unit from Syllabus

We also placed the entire unit prior to spring break, opting to give students a more focused two-week experience. This four-session experience would continue to be the standard until the present semester, spring 2021, when we expanded it further in response to student usage and tutor needs.

In both cases, small linguistic normalization and unit-based pedagogical decisions, the administrator-teachers of those time periods were making responsive and reflexive changes, given the needs that arose. Because these changes were made within the bounds of an established academic course for which they were instructors-of-record, they clearly had both institutional knowledge and professional freedom to make those pedagogical choices. Their understanding of that flexible pedagogical framework provides insight into how a flexible framework for reflexive *administration* allows writing center directors to make these same kinds of decisions and choices at a programmatic level as well.

Applying a Flexible Framework for Reflexive Administration

In this chapter, I have focused on moments of both responsive and reflexive administration across the history of the University of Missouri's Writing Center. While flexibility and responsiveness (the act of responding), and in many cases responsivity (the speed of that response), have been hallmarks of writing centers as a movement and specifically at the local level, this history also shows that there are institutional concerns that exist to promote reflexive (ongoing recursive) work as well. Notably, and connected to the methodological tenet of Working Relations, institutional support for the Writing Center's services and staff have provided an environment where responsiveness could slowly grow toward reflexivity. Recognizing this, the administrators across different eras acted responsively first, as expected of a student service, and with those initial needs met, worked toward reflexive practice. As more experiential and quantitative data was collected, those reflexive actions become more prevalent. Administrators, myself included, have continued to respond but also focused on the assessment of those responses, reflexively making changes as appropriate.

That movement over time has provided current administrators and tutors with a rich and varied history of experiences, documents, and institutional relationships. That history is integral toward conceptualizing a flexible framework at the local level and applying it to continued reflexive administration at both micro- and macro-levels going forward. And, as noted in the examples in this chapter, that framework can function across all levels of the service, impacting students served, tutors-in-training, tutors across

their time with the Center, the administrators, and the Center more conceptually as part of the institution.

Having that framework in place also allows for responsive actions when new and unforeseen events occur. Chapters 4 of this dissertation provides a specific description of a response to such needs, as the institution and the Writing Center's spring 2020 semester was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

CHAPTER 4: Holy Shit, it's Pandemic: A Semester Interrupted

In the spring semester of 2020, the tutors and administrators of the Writing Center at the University of Missouri began our semester like most others. As I describe in chapter 3, student usage of tutoring during this period was high, averaging between 14,000 and 15,000 contacts per year, with around two-thirds of those contacts occurring via TONY, the Online Writery, the Center's internet-based, asynchronous tutoring platform. The directors of the time period, myself and Dr. Stephanie Kimmey, spent the first half of the semester normally: offering ongoing trainings to returning tutors, onboarding new tutors from the prior fall's tutoring class, and teaching the course for new tutors-in-training. On March 13, 2020, we, with the rest of the University of Missouri, received the message that we would not be returning to campus from spring break due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus. The pandemic would continue through the spring semester of 2021. This chapter applies the premises of a flexible framework for reflexive administration to the last half of the spring 2020 semester.

This chapter also treats both the concepts of new needs and responses to them differently than before. The prior chapter provided an example of how the Online Writery was initially launched and developed in response to an *anticipated* need connected to the burgeoning Internet. Over the following years, administrators answered the *related* new needs, rising numbers of students and staff, in both responsive and reflexive ways. There is a nuanced difference to the kind of need here, which I believe plays into the administrative and pedagogical decisions we made during the "remote" portion of the semester to continually adjust to our and our students' new needs. That is, the change in

the semester's delivery to our students was *unforeseen*. Therefore, while at times during this period we believed we were administrating reflexively, using past data to inform our changes, upon reflection, several of those decisions ended up being responsive ones.

Our pedagogical response to a pandemic and the initial development of the Online Writery do have connections, though. In both cases, the administrators could *only* act responsively: we had very little (or no) active data available to guide our choices. Specifically, for our pandemic online teaching needs, neither of us had any pedagogical preparation for teaching online. That is to say that in both cases, we were building the dataset (in order to become reflexive) while addressing the new need. The overall flexibility of writing center work at the University of Missouri was vital to both time periods. The other primary similarity is the online nature of the work. Administratively, the early development and later reflexive administration of the Online Writery allowed for the flexibility we needed when the pandemic occurred.

With that local flexibility and the tendency toward responsiveness in mind, this chapter functions as a case study of sorts. As part of the Institutional Ethnography methodology, I have collected documents—course information, institutional email correspondence, personal notes and experiences—in order to build a dataset. I have then focused my analysis on the same themes which I discuss in prior chapters to code the types of actions we took. This process connects a particular kind of unforeseen environmental new need for online work to the pedagogical and administrative decisions we made between the second week of March through the end of the semester in 2020.

I have broken the chapter down into four main sections, beginning with a full description of the Writing Center's Honors, Writing Intensive course, *Theory and Practice of Tutoring Writing*, as it was initially intended to be taught. Following that, in the second section, I focus particularly on our responsive actions during the second half of the course, including both our decision-making process and the actual changes we made to the course in order to attempt to meet our students' needs. These actions formed organically into several thematic groups: restructuring the syllabus, reducing workload in terms of essential and non-essential assignments, and producing clearly written and communicated expectations. As I noted before, this primarily responsive work still fits within the flexible framework. The third section details the reflexive actions we took as we actively reflected on the data we were gathering from both students and the institution. In the fourth section, I collect several overall themes from the results of that course and discuss them within the bounds of a flexible framework. I then conclude, based on those results what changes we would need to enact in the course in order to offer it for the following fall 2020 semester. That semester is then further detailed in chapter 5.

Pronouns, Joint Administration, and Co-Teaching

Here, as in other chapters of this dissertation, I attempt to ascribe proper ownership to actions, decisions, and written documents. However, as in almost every era of the Writing Center's history, many of the administrative duties were shared between two or more people. In this particular chapter, I most often refer to the administrators, Dr. Stephanie Kimmey and I, as a unit. In the few cases where it's clear that one of us

specifically performed an action, made a decision, or wrote a document or message to our students, I ascribe that to the individual. In most cases, I use plural pronouns because of the shared labor and decision-making that occurred.

The Writing Center Preparatory Course: a 15-Week Job Interview

As I described in chapter 3, the class that prepares potential undergraduate tutors to work for the Writing Center has grown over time into a 3-credit, Honors, Writing Intensive course, housed in the Honors College and cross-listed in the English department. We often refer to it colloquially as a “15-week job interview” because students who do well in the course are eligible for a paid position the following semester. For the spring 2020 semester, we enrolled sixteen Honors students. The course was planned to meet on Mondays and Wednesdays for fifty-minute class sessions in one of the main general classroom buildings on campus.

The course has the overall goal of preparing students for tutoring in both online and face-to-face environments, as well as a concurrent goal of providing the opportunity to hone their writing skills. In order to achieve both of those goals, most of the class sessions follow a general pattern: a preparatory reading or activity; a short presentation or discussion of topical information; a group or individual “hands-on” task related to that information or topic; and a full-class processing or reflection on that task. In class meetings, there is an unsaid but often overtly communicated understanding that each lesson applies to the individual students’ both polishing of their own skills and gaining the tools to help another student with those skills. We typically refer to this dual-layered approach during the reflection or the initial discussion.

Across a traditional 15-week semester, we provide them with a wide set of “tools” that will be useful to them whether they end up working for us as tutors or not. Portions of that toolset include long-term writing center tenets described in chapter 2 like the continuums of “directive/non-directive tutoring,” addressing “Higher Order Concerns (HOCs) and lower order concerns (locs),” assignment analysis and reverse outlining, and scaffolding skills. Particular to the Writing Center at the University of Missouri’s course, we have since 2006 utilized a concept of theatrical improvisation to prepare tutors for interpersonal work with other students. Keith Johnstone’s *Impro* is assigned to all tutors-in-training and his concept of Status, an interpersonal adjustable role that all humans play when they interact with each other, quickly becomes one of the shared tools that allow us to discuss meeting new people and adjusting to their writing needs and personalities at the same time.

Outside of the course meetings, students are required to complete three kinds of other assignments as well. The first are practice-based exercises, usually on either a discussion board provided by our University’s learning management system (LMS), Canvas, or as “homework” to bring to class. These are sprinkled throughout the semester and used to prepare for either group work or as pre-writing for larger projects. The second group of assignments are larger “essays,” assigned with the goal of both traditional assessment and the practice of revision. Students complete four major writing assignments, an analysis essay based on their understanding of Status as a lens, a personal statement, an Online Writery response, and an argument essay about the practice of tutoring based on a metaphor of their choice. The first essay is always eligible

for revision, while the second and third have conferences and a revision as part of their process. The fourth is their final essay for the course and uses all of their observations, data they have collected by shadowing other tutors, as evidence. The students observe or participate in ten tutoring sessions of various kinds over the course of the semester and complete two-page observation forms reflecting on each session. Finally, every student takes part in a cumulative, interactive final examination which includes both writing and tutoring tasks.

Students work collaboratively with each other both in and out of class as well. Almost all of the class sessions have paired or small group discussion or writing work. Many of the class sessions specifically ask pairs to practice tutoring each other on that day's pre-written content, for both peer review processes and skill acquisition. There are also two group projects that students collaborate on outside of class: one, the Grammar Explanation Test (GET), asks them to respond to student scenarios related to rules and grammar questions. The group responds to the student, building tutoring responses that help them understand the difference between helping a student learn and doing the work for the student. The other group project is a group presentation of particular themes they observe during their observations. Generally occurring late in the semester, we assign students into small groups with the goal of a creative, hopefully entertaining and educational 10-minute presentation for us and their peers.

We don't break the course down into discrete units in the syllabus, because many of the individual days and assignments build and refer back to one another. However, the table below (see fig. 10) outlines the overarching themes or topics for spring 2020 (See

Appendix I for the full syllabus), with the number of course meetings that were planned and clarifying language:

Tutor's Toolbox (3 days)	A metaphor for the course, showing up in multiple days
Foundational Concepts	What tutoring looks like now and in prior eras
Status (2 Days)	A foundational interpersonal toolset from improv training
Assignment Analysis (2 days)	Working outside our own experience
Persona/Voice (2 Days)	Writing practice for understanding how voice is created
Personal Statements (3 Days)	How to write and tutor personal statements
Analysis/Evidence (3 Days)	Writing practice for analysis and source usage
TONY (4 Days)	Online Writery training
ESL (3 Days)	Working with ESL students
locs & Grammar (2 Days)	How to tutor lower order concerns, grammar, mechanics
Project Presentations	Presenting collaborative analysis of observations
Plagiarism (2 Days)	How to respond to source usage concerns
Brainstorming	How to tutor prior to their being a paper
Scenarios	Practical work with tutees

Fig. 10 Spring 2020 Course Themes

These topics were planned to be covered in this approximate order as well. In terms of the syllabus, the pandemic struck just as we were scheduled to begin the Online Writery section of the course. For context, our students had at this point completed two of the major writing assignments, an analysis essay applying ideas of status to an interpersonal interaction and two drafts of their own personal statements. They were also nearing or had recently completed the second benchmark of the shadowing component of the course, observing and writing reflections on seven (out of ten) tutoring sessions of various kinds.

Save us, LMS

Since 2015, the University of Missouri has used Canvas as their Learning Management System (LMS) for most academic courses. The tutoring course had grown organically over time, much like the training materials described in chapter 3. While we were using Canvas for document delivery, assignments, and grading functions, we were not prepared for a hybrid course in the way that some normally-hybrid courses are able to serve students. That is, we only had the information in our Canvas course that our students needed in order to access what we were discussing in our face-to-face class meetings. While the LMS had more functions to offer us for teaching, we weren't using it to the fullest extent because we didn't see the need to.

In retrospect, this sort of materials usage is partially a holdover from many years of the University subscribing to Blackboard, requiring the transition to Canvas in 2015, and our lack of full engagement with the change due to persistent concerns of “what if it changes again?”. We had during the past few years also made decisions to provide a more “green” Writing Center, using less paper for handouts, returning comments electronically, etc. This semester was our first moment when a lack of face-to-face access to those materials had become an obstacle to effective course delivery. In the language of this project, we had been responding, but not proactively looking forward in order to be reflexive.

The LMS became an integral component of our responsiveness to a remote semester, though. As described in the sections below, simply having the documents and assignments available to the students didn't provide them context or instruction in the

way that our face-to-face course did. We found ourselves instead revamping the last eight weeks of the class in a responsive fashion via the Canvas site.

Responsiveness and Responsivity to New Needs Right Now

In conjunction with the ideas of reflexive administrative, what is clear to me *now* about our responsiveness at the time is that we were dealing with a brand new need with very little incoming data. While the administrative decisions that we made to the course do fit into the same sort of framework, we were privileging responsivity—the quickness of our responses—as opposed to a more reflexive—waiting for more data—decision. At a baseline though, our course had to be revised to meet the now-remote needs of our students. Those needs were changing as well, so our process had to provide the flexibility that writing center work privileges. Delivering eight weeks of flexible-yet-structured online Canvas-based instruction meant enacting several sweeping revisions to the way we presented the course. Those included content decisions, method of delivery concerns, and how clearly we communicated those changes to students in writing. Some of the major themes to those revisions included restructuring due dates, determining essential exercises, cancelling less essential tasks, and sending more frequent and clear updates to our students, both individually and within the LMS.

We committed early on to applying the same goals and values we try to teach our tutors to our treatment of the students in the course. I believe this is inherent in some ways to the idea of reflexive administration, but to put it in language that we give to our tutors, we hoped to be “kind and generous.” While we haven’t overtly established these values as a style of pedagogy, part of the course challenges our students to practice

giving tutees (and instructors, and other human beings) the benefit of kindness in our work. That same value system functions as part of our particular flexible framework: it structures the way we might make decisions in the course and administratively.

Pedagogically, that meant that we had to honor and value the experience we all found ourselves in and set achievable goals within it. This is obviously only one way to be responsive. We could have cancelled more class sessions or made further reductions to our expectations. We felt at the time that giving the students a structure they could depend on for stability and enough leeway to flexibly succeed was the right decision.

With those values in mind, our pedagogical response was directly influenced by concerns about time management and space. In connection with our values, we requested information from our students individually, asking what we felt were the most salient questions. Did they have a place to go for the rest of the semester? Did that place have access to reliable internet? Did they have access to the hardware they would need—computers, webcams, microphones—to participate in a synchronous class? Their responses provided us with a minimal set of data to at least begin to make reflexive decisions about our class. While all of the responses to personal needs were positive, they had homes to move back to and would be physically safe, the questions about technological needs were less so. Several students, after moving off campus, found that their internet capabilities at home were unable to support synchronous coursework. That issue, along with other general needs for upgrading laptops and cameras, would not be met until later, possibly over the summer in some cases.

To alleviate those concerns and offer the same course experience to all of our students, we chose a completely asynchronous course delivery method. This allowed for our students to physically move home and/or wherever they would be spending the rest of the semester but still participate equally. They would be able to access all of their needed course materials via our LMS in whatever timeframes they were able, within the institutional structure of the course. This initial data collection and reflexivity was important because it provided us as the instructors with guidelines, although more restrictive than we were used to, for meeting the new needs to come.

With those initial pedagogical decisions made, we began the restructuring process. The sub-sections below break up that restructuring into some general topics, each of which tends toward illustrating responsive decisions we made as new needs arose.

Restructuring the Plan for the Course

When the initial directives came from the institution, we assumed that while the students' regular class schedules would be disrupted, there was potential that all areas of their daily lives would be as well. As described earlier, we were on the cusp of beginning the first week of Online Writery training, followed by a week of spring break, followed by a second week of Online Writery work. Because of the level of uncertainty at the time—it was still unclear whether we would return to campus for any part of the semester—and the knowledge that our potential tutors-in-training needed the Online Writery unit as an essential component (see that section below), we changed the order of the presentation

of information. But time limits were part of our circumstance as well; we felt we needed to give our students a firm plan as early as possible.

Restructuring the course “units” took the following form. The original syllabus as presented to students (see fig. 11) had the following sections related to this portion of the course.

M Mar 16	Introduction to the Online Writery. Reading: Lisa Eastmond Bell “Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring when going Online” in St. Martin’s 326-333.
W Mar 18	OW Practice Post (Exercise #4) DUE before class. Reading for Practice Post: TONY Guide (This is 1/2 Your Job) in the Canvas Module for this week. Grokking essays/reverse outlines. Schedule Request Form (in-class).
Mar 21-29	Spring Break
M Mar 30	In class: Real Time Grokking and writing a frame. Exercise 4.2 due before class on Wednesday.
W Apr 1	In class: Real Time TONY comments. Assign Tutor Mentors. Essay 3 (Privacy & Orwell's 1984 response) Due on Training Board by Sunday, April 5, 11:59pm. 7 completed observations due by Friday, April 3.
M Apr 6	ESL Reading: Myers’ Reassessing the Proofreading Trap” in St. Martin’s pp. 284-301. Sign up for OW Conferences. Assign Group Presentations
W Apr 8	Exercise #5 Due for Class: Visual Analysis of Sample ESL Paper on “Privacy.” Group Presentation Work-time. Interview of Mentor Tutor due on Canvas. Revision of Essay 3 Due on Training Board by Sunday, April 12, 11:59pm
M Apr 13	LOC Error Analysis. Reading: Carol Severino’s “Avoiding Appropriation” (Readings folder on Canvas).
W Apr 15	Group Presentations: Observations.
M Apr 20	Essay 4 Assigned: Why Tutoring is Like Playing the Ukulele.
W Apr 22	List of Tips for Essay 4 Due: Bring a Hard Copy to Class. Brainstorming Exercise.
M Apr 27	Exercise #6 Assigned. Plagiarism and Documentation. Reading: Howard’s “Plagiarisms, Authorships, and the Academic Death Penalty” (Readings Folder on Canvas)

W April 29	Exercise #6 Due Before Class. You're the Next Contestant on "How Do I Cite That?": Real work with real student citation problems.
M May 4	Essay 4 Due. Brainstorming/Learning Strategies: Monty Hall. Reading: Neff's "Learning Disabilities and the Writing Center," St Martin's pp. 249-262
W May 6	Course Evaluations. Final Scenarios. Final Observations Due. Final Revisions Due.
Final Exam W May 13	Final Exam: New Room TBD: 12:30-2:30 p.m.; Bring a blue exam book!

Fig. 11 Spring 2020 Original Course Schedule

We opted to move the Online Writery unit to after the break in order to give us more time to address the need to convert all four days' instruction for asynchronous delivery. Additionally, for the past several years, our class sessions devoted to plagiarism have also linked with and referred back to the Online Writery unit. At the time, we felt that the class sessions focused on working with English as a Second Language (ESL) students would provide "just enough" work to do to keep our students grounded and invested in the course while we made the transition to remote learning.

Tutoring ESL students has been a part of the syllabus since the course was founded, and as noted above, is usually a multi-day section. In its current form, the unit has a good bit of preparatory work to get students up to speed on both the global issues and the local issues on our campus concerning ESL student needs. That preparatory work includes viewing the short video *Writing Across Borders* from Oregon State University's Writing and Learning Center, as well as reading two articles related to ESL tutoring concerns (Myers, Severino). We believed those tasks could be accomplished without direct contact with us and would allow for the students to have a minimal amount of

work during the week before their spring break while we took the next two weeks to revamp our plans for the rest of the semester.

Those rescheduling decisions were intertwined with the choices in the next sections as well, as we chose to retain essential lessons and removed less essential ones in order to reduce the amount of assignments overall. We ended up splitting the ESL unit over the spring break instead, opting to present what would have been the third day's exercise as their work for the week. We then spent three, instead of two weeks focused on the Online Writery, making the decision to merge our discussion of plagiarism with the third week while we conferenced with the students individually. The last two weeks of the semester were devoted to the final paper and tutoring scenarios, respectively.

In retrospect, each of these pedagogical decisions was made in response to what we perceived as an imminent need. At the time, as with most decisions made under heightened emotional circumstances, the process felt harried and anxiety-provoking. While we had formally requested information from our students and tutors about their situations during the move to remote work, those information sources weren't necessarily ongoing. We attempted to balance the idea that the work our students were doing was still important with the cognizance that there were *so* many other concerns on their minds. We were in most cases attempting to anticipate the need and therefore be responsive to it. That balance lead us to make key decisions regarding the content of the course as well as we tried to meet the potentially-changing learning outcomes of the course without overburdening our students with the transition. One of the decisions we

made early on in the process was related to which content pieces were essential to the course.

Changing Workload Without Changing Outcomes

As described in the beginning of this chapter and portions of chapter 3, the tutor preparatory course prior to spring 2020 had crystallized. While Dr. Kimmey and I, as I had with Dr. Harper, and as she had with Dr. Foster before me, been continually revising certain days or lessons or documents related to the course, it had its own framework that we were all working within. I see that framework as both a reflection of and perhaps inspiration for the reflexive administrative framework as well. Within the framing of the course's objectives, days, lessons, documents, and readings have always been flexible to a certain extent. Moving to remote learning in the midst of the semester tested that flexibility. With one of our primary goals as reduction of both time and workload, we attempted to make pedagogical responses to limit the overall number of assignments. This meant choosing which ones to cancel. In order to make those decisions, we returned to the framework of the course in order to make responsive decisions.

Determining What is Essential

As described in the section about restructuring the syllabus, we had a shared, firm understanding that several "units" had to be covered in order for the course to fundamentally achieve our goals. Those included online tutor training, working with ESL students, and handling plagiarism concerns. We also recognized that the students had only completed half of the primary essays for the course and would be hard-pressed to complete their shadowing components. Again, the course's framework as a part of our

administering the Writing Center assisted us in addressing these concerns. In retrospect, our process effectively broke our concerns into three themes: things that had to be addressed before the semester was over, things that had to be addressed *sometime*, and a few things that we deemed inessential.

Important to the concern that we were administering responsively as opposed to reflexively is the fact that we didn't *actively* make that tripartite differentiation. It's only with the passage of time and the reflection that came at the end of the semester to prepare for fall 2020 that the delineations became clearer. We knew, for instance, that certain assignments such as the group presentations and the observations they would be based on would be very difficult to complete remotely. We also had the knowledge that while the collaborative and processing experience that came with the group work was something that past students had both enjoyed and benefitted from, removing it wouldn't change the essential outcomes of the class. Without the group project's demands on their schedules, students could *individualize* the time they opted to work on the class; they wouldn't be beholden to other students.

Some of the observations that would have provided content for those presentations were also put on hold, although for different reasons. While some of the students in the course had completed seven out of ten assignments and were ready to be matched with mentors, others had not. Those seven would have been due the week after we returned from break. The Writing Center, like all support services on campus, was moved to remote-only work as well. That meant that for mentoring purposes, there was no *physical* way for that process to happen, particularly for any of the students who

hadn't completed the first set. We opted to remove several of those assignments from the course as well because they could be dealt with the following fall during the first weeks of work. This sort of on-the-job training is used across many writing centers where a training course is not offered. At the time, we were adding this to the list of things that could be handled *sometime* and having no conception of how long we would be working remotely, that seemed to be the most responsive thing to do for the tutors-in-training. We determined that what was still essential was the mentoring component: getting to observe and ask questions to an experienced tutor.

In one of our earliest uses of the Zoom video conferencing application for tutoring, we had tutors-in-training meet with and interview their mentors, and then followed up that meeting with two kinds of observations. With the tutor-in-training playing the part of the tutor, we asked our experienced tutors to bring real assignments and writing they had done to play the part of the tutee. The first session would involve brainstorming, one of the days that we had cut from end of the semester. With the tutee providing a supportive, comparatively low-stakes setting, a tutoring conversation would give the tutors-in-training the opportunity to tutor "with a parachute" as we started calling it. While we still believed it was essential for them to tutor "real" students, we would delay that process until the fall, where they would again be matched with experienced tutors as "parachutes" to observe their first sessions.

Finally, we still believed that in order to make appropriate hiring decisions about the tutors-in-training for the following fall, we needed to assign them both the final paper and the final exam. In the case of the paper, we wanted to give the students the

opportunity to process everything they had learned during the semester. Likewise, we thought the final exam would provide us with a clearer picture of where each student ended the semester in relation to our administrative goals, so we could appropriately plan for hiring and additional training in the fall. The final would have normally been offered as an experiential, comprehensive exam, wherein they would get a chance to showcase and practice many of the skills they had learned over the course of the semester in a timed, modular experience. That process instead became an asynchronous experience, where we allowed them to impose their own modularity. We provided a full document of the final's tasks with the guidance to impose their own 10-minute time limits on each task—which is part of the in-person process—well ahead of the official final exam time.

Determining what was essential to us as instructors of the course (and potential employers of the students) did reduce the overall workload. Whether that particular reduction was essential in the students' view is still unclear, but their positive responses during the semester generally support our choices. We made those essential determinations to reduce the actual amount of assignments, but most importantly to reduce the amount of time we were asking students to participate in a course that was fundamentally not how they assumed it would be. That applied to our interactions with them as well, though. One of the primary concerns that we found ourselves recognizing and continually addressing was the need for clear online written communication with a group of students that we had heretofore seen in person two or more days a week.

“I Hope This Finds You Well” and Other Factual Communications

There is a clear overlap between the work of online tutoring, the training that we provide for online tutors, and the online communication that we as administrators and teachers use to contact our students and staff. That overlap, and the communicative skills involved with each of those tasks began as responsive concerns within the framework of administration. Those practices have over time become reflexive in nature: what the earliest online writing center theorists predicted has come true regarding electronic communication. We, at the Writing Center, are always revising our tactics for online communication at both the administrator and tutor levels. When we were forced into remote work in the spring of 2020, we focused on two areas of communication with our students. The first was an overarching communication plan which needed to be as responsive and timely as possible. The second would be an ongoing, reflexive effort to present our complete course via Canvas with the most clarity.

In order to document our initial responses to the news at the time, the following section is necessarily narrative in nature. Most salient for the purposes of this project is the fact that, much like those very early days of the Online Writery’s founding, we had potential future plans in mind, but everything that we wrote and sent to students was reactive. A piece of information would find its way to us through one of many channels—which is part of being a centrally-located student service—and we would attempt to quickly make sense of its effect on us and our students. We were in each instance attempting to support that kind and generous value system that we espoused to our staff and students.

For context the timeline below indicates how we learned about institutional concerns during that period of the semester:

March 4th: an email regarding travel regulations was sent to faculty.

March 6th: an email regarding considering online options for classes and preparing for that potential change was sent to faculty.

March 11th: an email was sent to all members of the University to move in-person classes to remote instruction until we returned after spring break. That email also notes that there are not cases of the virus on campus. An hour before that email arrived, we had contacted our staff members to give them the option to not come to work. No decisions had been made about services on campus at that point, and we were collecting individual information about both health concerns and access to internet and technology for our tutors. We knew this would have potential effects on our students' observations but had not yet collected enough information to forward it on to them. An hour after the full campus email, Dr. Kimmey posts our first Canvas announcement, confirming that our students can still complete their observations, although some of our tutors are choosing to go home. She closes the announcement with, "[w]e will be in touch once we know what class will look like next week. As always, if you have questions, we're happy to answer them." This was the start of our pedagogical restructuring response detailed above.

March 12th: I sent another announcement, detailing our plans for the following week. Focusing on responsivity, we had planned to forge ahead: "...to pre-record/provide lesson plans for both Monday and Wednesday. We'll be introducing you to the Online

Writery's online tutoring component, from both a theory and practice standpoint.”

Because we were still anticipating a return to campus after the scheduled spring break, we laid out a general stopgap—in this case, preparing and publishing everything we would have showed and said in class in text form—to get our students the information they needed.

March 13th: after we had paused our course delivery and adjusted the services that the Writing Center would provide, we received the message that we would not be returning from spring break, and that all University classes would be remote for the rest of the semester. In our new message to the students from our class, we continued to try to balance two of the aforementioned goals: continuing to support them in what would be called an unprecedented time and letting them know as transparently as possible what our plan would be.

March 16th: Dr. Kimmey and I trade emails with our graduate assistant with a plan for the rest of the semester. From this mainly responsive time period, this document shows our most reflexive moment, as we lay out the overview for a third audience before we reproduce it on Canvas for our students.

Over ten days, we were asked to consider and delivered a revision of seven weeks' worth of course content. While of course reactive, the work from those ten days, in terms of both responsiveness and responsivity, met the goals for both our class and students. With a plan in place, we began converting a relatively barebones course site into a far more robust set of Canvas modules, each including everything our students would need to complete that week's work.

How Do You Solve a Problem Like Pandemic? Save us, LMS, Part II

One of the primary changes we enacted was to upload and recreate everything that would have happened in class, as well as any outside materials the students would need. We began by building an entire lesson plan inside each Module for each week of the semester. That normally would have occurred in multiple formats: some assignments would have been hosted on Canvas, some assignments would have been handed out in class, some notes for class would have happened in handwritten form in real time, some were notes the students would have taken over what was actually said in class. Rather than pre-recording discussions, we opted for a primarily text-based approach. In retrospect, this choice was probably related to the overall need: we were attempting to teach students to tutor online in an online format. Our course was already a multi-layered plan, with many meta-interactions, so our initial leanings toward the delivery made the best sense at the time. Our students had also already responded to that early set of questions about their specific living situations and ability to meet synchronously and their overall Wi-Fi and internet access concerns. Several of them had reported access issues, which also supported our response to stay asynchronous and avoid live video conferencing.

Our presentation of each week's work was initially a responsive pedagogical reaction. Each week we would lay out a set of objectives or tasks in a single document, using the Module feature in Canvas for each week. Students could log in and access the entire current week's worth of work at any point in the week, but our goal was to present everything they needed to know by Sunday in a clear, task-based format. Ideally, this

provided a flexible structure for them to self-pace their work in our course over that week in relation to other tasks they might have. As part of that structure, we lead with what in an Online Writery response would be the “Frame”: in the first week’s module, we present a set of tasks:

This week, we're diving into how to work with ESL students.

TL;DR:

- 1) Readings
- 2) Discussion Board 9a
- 3) Videos to watch
- 4) Discussion Board 9b
- 5) Discussion Board 9c: Visual Analysis of an ESL paper.

While I detail how we would reflexively revise this practice later, the initial attempt here highlights our response to students’ perceived needs. We deliberately chose short descriptions because we were in the throes of the first week and a good portion of our pedagogical decisions were being made through a lens of concern for our students’ well-being and time management. Again, we anticipated that our students were experiencing the same deluge of emails as we were. Therefore, it was vital for us to provide something both brief and clear. For this particular week, we then bolded the tasks one through in the Module to call the students’ attention to them and linked the appropriate videos and discussion board assignments in each section.

As described before, the students accessed the second half of our ESL unit after spring break, and we were still carefully considering how much work to give them. While

responsive in theory, we were still dealing with a dearth of information about what other instructors were doing and how students were reacting to the change. We elected to not overwhelm them, but rather to build to a higher workload in the coming Online Writery weeks. For instance, this week only holds two “Steps” with the preparatory statement that “We’re going to be a little light on homework this week.” In my recollection neither of these linguistic choices were particularly thoughtful, pedagogically speaking. While we had an understanding of what was coming up in the class, we were still responding to perceived new needs. Aiming for flexibility, we needed to collect more data in order to move toward reflexivity.

Making Reflexivity Happen...Reflexively

As we completed the rest of the semester, we continually revised the format and structure of our weekly modules, based on our in-the-moment assessments and perceptions of where students were misunderstanding our instruction.

Some interesting outcomes from being “forced” to lay all of this out for students included a focus on an observable structure to each module. Because we were completely replacing lecture, discussion, readings, and homework for an entire week in a single, link-laden document, we spent each week revising exactly how we wanted to display all of that information to students. While some of those pages were a daunting task for the students to read, we found ourselves changing and formalizing the format of these documents so that students knew which parts to expect where for each week as well.

As we moved on through the semester, we continued tweaking this format: First, we found that the students needed overt guidance regarding which steps needed to occur before others. Rather than simply listing tasks by bullets or numbers, in Week 12's module we returned to describing the tasks as "Steps" as we had in an earlier module. We also built rolling due dates into that first framed list, as seen below:

Week 12 (4/13-17): TONY Part 2

Please note now: this week will feel like more work, because it is.

However, within the steps below we have provided some mid-week deadlines to help guide you and us. We suggest reading this entire module and planning accordingly. Let's go!

Step 1: Reading and Remembering (Before Step 2)

Step 2: Reading the Paper; Writing Frames (By Tuesday night, 11:59pm)

Get Individual Feedback via Email before Step 3

Step 3: Re-Reading the Paper; Writing Comments (By Thursday night, 11:59pm)

Get Individual Feedback via Email before Step 4

Step 4: Essay # 3 (By Sunday night, 11:59pm)

This example also presents the rising level of specificity for individual students. Because some students opted to complete different parts of a particular week's work out of order, but still prior to the final deadline, we began to give clearer directions related to when each step's deadline was, and which tasks had prerequisites as part of the module. This specificity in relation to the order of operations would come up again for the

scheduling of conferences, as students were meeting with us via Zoom across the week and only then completing their next steps.

The level of overt communication seemingly needed by our students about these points continued to rise (and would continue past the semester's end). We also found that we could use those long pages as a sort of "master document" that students could leave, do a step or task, and come back to for the next step or task. While this of course meant that links had to function correctly and someone had to build the appropriate pages elsewhere, it allowed for us to have a touchstone that would keep everyone on the same plan for that week.

Why the Framework Works, Even When it Feels Bad and Slow

While there has been an ongoing theme of responding to student needs in writing center history, this largely stems from the reactive nature of tutoring itself. There is a perceived need, writing centers attempt to respond to it, and then ideally collect, assess, and reflect on the data from that response. Reflexivity then can occur as training practices and associated materials are created in order to better meet the need. In the particular instance of our tutoring course during the spring 2020 semester, this process, for those of us in it, often felt slow, anxiety-provoking, and awful. The pandemic created a need for us that required a response, and *within* the framework of our knowledge base as teachers, administrators, tutors, and past students ourselves, we responded in ways we thought would meet that need. For the course, a particular framework existed already, that is, the way lessons change and documents adapt on a micro-level is expected, pedagogically. What has been most unexpected during the current period of

teaching within a pandemic are the overarching changes that have had to occur in order to meet students where they are both physically and educationally, while still taking into account the personal (and emotional, cultural, social) needs that those students would be carrying with them. But even those sweeping changes, although filled with missteps, were supported by what we had learned by participating in reflexive administration before that, particularly when it came to teaching online tutoring in an online modality.

A Flexible Class Has Unforeseen Outcomes

While the University has since begun offering coursework and training for faculty members in online teaching, we at the time had never been trained or asked to do this sort of work before. I had taught a single semester of an online writing course with a synchronous component at another institution, but the content was delivered to me wholesale, with no flexibility. My co-instructor had never taught online prior to that semester. Ironically, as we noted in one of our announcements, some of the primary tenets of online teaching are the very same sort of tenets that we give our tutors when preparing them to work on the Online Writery: a recognizable format with a preparatory frame, including a hierarchy of needs for revision in response to a particular assignment. We were both balancing our administrator and instructor roles during the semester, and although online pedagogy groups, blogs, and professional listservs had begun to form, most of our time was taken up by responding to in-the-moment needs. We also found that our shared history and the Writing Center's history of online work informed the majority of our pedagogical and administrative decisions. Recognizing those connections,

we took time at the end of the semester to gather our outcomes and plan for the fall 2020 version of the course.

For instance, this group of students had a course that, while recognizable, could not be compared to any of our other tutors' experiences. They were thoroughly thankful and kind with their feedback and praised us for our thoughtfulness and clear communication. And yet we found it very hard to assess whether many of them would succeed as tutors. They had received less overall training than the cohorts before them. Because we were unable to fully assess their progress, we opted instead to offer positions to all the students in the course and put a plan in place to build the experiences that they missed in class into their first few weeks of tutoring in the following semester. As noted before, there are many writing centers that utilize an on-the-job training program, although we have not historically done that because of the existence of this course. And, as we progressed through the fall 2020 semester, where we were unable to return to campus anyway, some of the in-person skills we were concerned about were still put on hold.

One particular outcome of the forced-asynchronous course that would inform our decision-making for the fall semester was the lack of time spent together. If the class really is a "15-week job interview," what did it mean for us as the interviewers to not synchronously "meet" and "interview" the students? We had quickly gone from two hours of in-class interaction per week to zero real-time hours for over half the semester. The students still wrote—we corresponded via email and read their submissions to

discussion boards and essays—but there was a clear deficit when it came to evaluating their potential as employees.

This semester's other primary outcome involved the Online Writery unit. Due in full to the serendipity of the moment in time when we began remote teaching and our knowledge that online tutoring might become the primary way we continued to serve students in the Writing Center, we were able to focus more time and energy on that portion of the course. The outcomes of that section of the course would later inform both future classes and further training for our tutors as well.

How Pandemic Helped Define the Framework

This semester and our responses to it helped to further define some of the primary tenets of a flexible framework. In comparison to the prior chapter's multi-decade process, these eight weeks needed responses to new needs with more speed: responsivity felt paramount. And while the new needs for online work in 1994 were anticipated and therefore planned for to some extent, 2020's online work was both unforeseen and frankly unwanted. Our responses to those needs, however, illustrate that while time is always a factor in the reflexive process, it doesn't need to take years. It can in fact take days or hours, if the administrators involved understand the framework, that is, the constraints under which they're working.

Foregrounding and valuing those administrative concerns of response, responsivity, and reflexivity are what allowed us to finish the spring semester effectively, even if the outcomes were different than we had seen in prior semesters. And, looking ahead, we would use the experiential information gathered during spring 2020 to fully

revise our course for the following fall. Our goals were initially the same for that version of the course, except that we had more experience, and therefore more data to work reflexively within the limits of our framework. While flexible in some ways, the fall 2020 semester would also add some very rigid health and safety guidelines, as the COVID-19 pandemic continued through summer, fall 2020, and spring 2021. Chapter 5 of this dissertation specifically deals with the reflexive process connected to offering the course during the fall 2020 semester and our efforts to meet our pedagogical goals, our students' needs, and institutional requirements.

CHAPTER 5: How to Solve a Problem Like Teaching in a Pandemic

In this chapter, I recount the reflexive revision to the Writing Center's tutor preparatory course for the fall 2020 semester. During the prior semester, as described in chapter 4, coursework at the University of Missouri had been interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the second half of that semester was abruptly switched to remote teaching, instructors had the summer to consider options for teaching in the fall. The administrators of the Writing Center, in our roles as instructors, utilized the experience of the interrupted semester to revise the class in preparation for meeting both our learning outcomes and institutional health and safety regulations. While reflexive in nature, not all of the decisions made were inherently successful. In part due to faulty suppositions on the part of the instructors, the balance between structure and flexibility was compromised. However, this semester provided us with a series of experiences that have directly changed ongoing pedagogical choices and conversations about the tutor training course. This chapter shows how the changes made and outcomes assessed during the fall 2020 semester fit within a flexible framework for reflexive administration.

Identifying and theorizing that framework has been the primary focus for this dissertation, but in both of the prior examples, the growth of tutor training for online work and the changes to the course during an unexpectedly remote semester have involved both new and particularly online needs. The fall 2020 semester's needs represent a more nuanced set of concerns. One set of those concerns came from the institutional regulations (detailed later in this chapter) that were put in place to care for the health and safety of students and staff. Another related concern for teaching faculty

during this time was the choice to teach in various remote or hybrid modes. The option we chose as instructors of the tutor training course was to attempt to balance those two needs by building on the lessons we had learned from the spring 2020 semester within the new guidelines for safety.

Our particular version of the flexible framework includes the value systems that we have applied to our tutor training course. The three kinds of decisions I highlighted in chapter 4 (restructuring the course, reducing workloads by choosing essential tasks, and revisions to communication) were once again our primary concerns for the course as we moved into a new semester with both a deeper understanding and more institutional guidelines. In order to provide further analysis of our decisions in this chapter, I have utilized those same thematic divisions. What this chapter's analysis adds to the prior one's is failure—or at least negative outcomes—which has allowed me to provide a more robust examination of what the framework does *for* an administrator, and what the choices an administrator makes can achieve inside the framework.

One More Note About Pronouns and Co-Instruction

During the planning for and teaching of this course, I once again co-taught with Dr. Stephanie Kimmey. We were joined by the graduate student who held our Writing Center Assistant position. Bailey Boyd, at the time an advanced PhD student in Creative Writing, took part in both the day-to-day teaching of the course as well as the preparatory conversations. As in chapter 4, I have used plural pronouns to describe our work when it was done as a collaborative effort. I have also ascribed ownership to ideas or plans when those decisions were only made by one of us.

Preparation For Socially-Distanced Teaching: A New Structure with Old Values

In order to prepare for teaching in any face-to-face capacities, health and safety, and therefore space concerns were among the initial regulations we had to meet. During our planning period over the summer of 2020, we committed to a synchronous in-person course because one of our outcomes from the prior semester had pointed us toward the need for real-time, in-person interaction with our students. It was our belief at the time that those choices were the best, most responsive *and* reflexive options that would meet our needs and the students' needs, simultaneously. At the time, the University was requiring that all classrooms be socially-distanced, with minimum six foot boundaries between all course personnel. There was also an institutional request for more lower-level (our course is listed at the sophomore level) to meet in person, if possible. Alongside those space concerns were the use of masks and face shields, cleaning of re-used spaces, one-way pathways for entering and exiting classrooms, and the addition of video and audio technology to provide the course in a hybrid modality should students be unable to attend in person.

Preparing for the eventuality of some students being unable to attend due to sickness (both pandemic-related and because of general illnesses) or quarantining was one of the primary hurdles of face-to-face teaching. The required quarantine period for both students who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and those students who tested positive was typically two weeks. Instructors were encouraged to provide online options for students who could not attend. Some courses on campus were offered in hybrid or hyflex models. We had made the decision to continue to offer our course as an in-person

option and it was listed as such in the course catalog. Therefore, the students who had enrolled in our course knew ahead of time that we would be meeting on campus, socially distancing throughout the semester, and wearing masks at all times.

In addition to those institutional regulations, we were invested in delivering a course that clearly resembled the training courses that the rest of our staff had received. As such, we attempted to retain, if in a revised fashion, many of the same values that we had established in prior semesters.

Retained Values

In part because this course functions as a prerequisite to working in the Writing Center, we needed it to continue to both reflect our values and prepare tutors, ideally in the same ways as we had in non-pandemic semesters. For that reason, we planned to maintain our pedagogies in the following ways. As before, we wanted to start from a position of kindness and generosity. We also wanted to balance that with the rigor that the course, as both an Honors and Writing Intensive class, should have. Finally, we had the goal of maintaining the general structure of the course, much as I described it in chapter 4, but with an added layer of what we might have called “pandemic” considerations.

As a continued envisioning of a flexible framework, these values allowed us to work from, as well as overtly describe for our students, the structure that we were putting in place for the course within the new restrictions. The responsive nature of writing center work, as well as the reflexivity of our pedagogical choices after the prior semester all fit within our framework, and the changes we made to the course were

directly connected to the restrictions, goals, and values described earlier in this chapter. In order to meet those restrictions, goals, and values, we made sweeping structural changes to the course, identified and implemented workload changes related to the parts of the course we deemed essential, and continued to revise our outgoing communication regarding the course and our expectations. In the rest of this chapter, I describe several examples of each of those kinds of actions in order to show how our use of reflexive administration functioned during the process. I then include a section of assessment points and conclusions we reached, allowing us to further revise the course for spring 2021 and beyond.

A Reflexive Process for Course Revision: Pre-Planning in the Summer

Over the summer, we attempted to expand on what had gone well during our initial foray into remote teaching. While those pedagogical conversations were happening between the three of us as instructors, Stephanie also completed one of the University's online teaching preparation courses and I administrated the Writing Center's summer semester. All courses were online during the summer of 2020 and Writing Center work included the always-available Online Writery as well as a small pilot program of synchronous Zoom appointments. As a continuing reflexive process, we attempted to take the experiences our tutors were having in those appointments and apply the outcomes of those experiences to the training course.

One of the primary anecdotal responses that we collected that summer was that tutoring, teaching, and learning tasks seemed to be taking exponentially longer than we expected. In the summer Zoom tutoring sessions, we saw students and staff slowly

acclimating to the reality of online synchronous communication. While the administrators and tutors were often *available* at a moment's notice, quarantined and working from home, the new technology brought new time-based challenges. The time to establish rapport, figure out and teach ourselves and our students how to best utilize video conferencing, and give feedback appeared to continually take more time than it had in face-to-face appointments. We weren't able to quantify those changes; by the time we started seeing the trend, the summer was nearly over. However, as part of our continued reflexive process, we and our staff *felt* that it was true and therefore attempted to make changes to meet this new need for context, and therefore extra time. We began that process by training returning tutors to spend some time contextualizing tutoring appointments for their students. We also knew it would affect the students in our course, both in their connection to the class and in their training to potentially tutor for us afterward.

That contextual preparatory training came as a response to a specific concern as we added synchronous video options to both the Writing Center and our course: students needed more overt context for the expectations of those interactions. In particular, tutoring sessions where the tutor started the session by preemptively describing what would happen over the next (up to) fifty minutes seemed to go more smoothly than those sessions where they "jumped right in" and started the session. One of the primary changes that became part of this descriptive process was the tutor making sure that the student could participate fully in the synchronous session. This included early conversations about sharing screens via Zoom (and therefore not logging in via their

mobile device), making sure the student received their end-of-session notes via the Chat function before logging out, and confirming that the student wasn't currently operating a motor vehicle. These parts of the conversation among other more general tutoring topics, took up more time than our prior face-to-face appointments ever had. Again, these pieces of experiential data were all collected and considered as we revised our services and our course for fall 2020.

Structural Changes

We made two kinds of structural changes to the course prior to the semester beginning. The first was adopting a hybrid model by switching the course to one day per week in person with the other day's work assigned asynchronously. That change was mainly prompted by space needs and health and safety restrictions on campus. The other related change was a restructuring of the way individual weeks would be taught within the syllabus. When we revamped the prior semester, the modality of the course had been decided for us. Now, we sought to make a choice that would best meet our and our students' needs.

Our process started from our supposition that our *particular* students would, like their instructors, want to keep their social interactions to a minimum yet still feel like they were taking an Honors-level course. The conversion process included fitting our regular Monday/Wednesday class meetings into a split-class schedule that would allow for half of the class to be assigned to either Monday or Wednesday. On whichever day they didn't attend, they would complete asynchronous work online. We were attempting

to balance our concerns for rigor with the new concerns for health and safety and still provide students with an educational atmosphere that this course typically provides.

A New Institutional Need: Health & Safety Join the Framework

One of our primary concerns was a space for the course, where we could have some control over moving in and out of the space but also providing some semblance of tutoring opportunities. In order to safely conduct in-person courses, all classes had been assigned larger-than-usual classrooms. We had initially enrolled fourteen students in addition to our three instructors and were thus being assigned to very large rooms with the normal capacity for thirty to forty students. Our main Writing Center space inside the Student Success Center had been converted to classroom space but was fully scheduled for even larger classes and did not include ours. We were able to successfully request to move our course into the basement, where the MU Career Center's space had also been converted to a classroom for smaller groups of students.

We had requested a physically smaller space to meet safety concerns while we implemented the broader structural change to the course plan, dividing attendance across two days. We thought that, given the option, students would prefer smaller groups and only one day per week in a classroom, while the other "day" would include asynchronous work. The three-credit version of the course, as we were offering it, had historically included tutoring observations as an asynchronous component already. We thought that moving a larger portion of the course to that method made sense given the needs for health and safety. With the new physical space we were able to meet with half the class, which we envisioned as six or eight students per day, and deliver the same

course content on both Monday and Wednesday. The new space was small enough that talking volumes could stay at relatively normal levels, there would be virtually no traffic through the area other than us, even outside of our class meetings, and when we chose to pair students to practice tutoring skills, we could utilize the surrounding areas to keep them socially distanced from each other as well as farther distanced from other groups. While this would necessitate changes across the syllabus, it felt at the time like the best course of action in order to keep all of us safe, healthy, and at least six feet apart.

Our decisions regarding the class, both responsive and reflexive, had positive and negative outcomes. All of these pedagogical decisions were made in relative privacy by the three instructors for the course. Our understanding of the flexible nature of our own teaching within the bounds of the institutional structures indicated to us that we could meet our students' needs, our own concerns for safety, and still offer the course effectively. In addition to that level of understanding, we had received positive reactions from our prior semester's students. We believed we were acting reflexively, given the data available and our understanding of the framework we were working within. However, as the semester progressed, we found unexpectedly negative outcomes in connection to our structural changes. In retrospect, we had privileged two primary sources of data that we found weren't applicable to the semester: that our students valued health and safety as much as we did, and that the prior semester's students had the same values and beliefs as our new students. While we felt we were working from an informed perspective in both areas—students were receiving the same bevy of health and safety information which we were repeating to them, and we would request

feedback from the students on the course plan—our false foundations lead to some negative outcomes.

One example of negative outcomes came specifically from our reflexive decision to split the class across two days. As a response to new needs, choosing to divide the students this way allowed us to meet both institutional and, ideally, individual concerns. In practice we found that my random assignment of students to particular days, paired with individual student concerns, made the overall class experience suffer when compared to prior semesters and our goals for this semester. With fourteen students in a course where we use pair work often, I had assigned six students to Monday and eight to Wednesday. We had a plan for odd numbers in the case that a student missed a particular day: our Writing Center Assistant, also the Teaching Assistant for the course, would step in play the part of student or tutor. What was unexpected was that five out of six students that I had randomly assigned to Monday could be described as “quiet”. Meanwhile, fully six out of eight in the Wednesday class were “talkative” by our standards. We didn’t fully recognize this concern until several weeks in, and I had neglected to consider pre-planning a reorganization of their groups during the semester. In effect, while we had data coming in that could have been used reflexively, we may have overvalued the students’ need for a steady, unchanging schedule instead of the quality of the discussions during class.

Because we were placing so much value on our students’ time management and scheduling concerns, we felt at the time that we could not reorganize the groups. As the weeks passed, multiple students in Monday’s group encountered personal and academic

hurdles as well. After the midpoint of the semester, it was common for us to only have three to four students attend on Mondays. While individual students also missed class on Wednesdays, it was more likely that those particular students would attend via Zoom instead of being completely absent. Without the buffer of more students in *each* class meeting, discussions and paired work faltered, particularly for Monday's meetings. And while we ended up offering tutoring to positions to selected students from both days, those students would also share their reflections with us later: they would have liked to have had more time in the classroom.

These negative outcomes illustrate a part of the framework that hadn't been clear to me earlier. While we had made reflexive decisions, we had neglected to build in enough flexibility to reflexively change *those* decisions based on new information. The framework, as a theoretical construct, was still present though. Part of the purpose of having a *flexible* framework instead of a more rigid set of "rules" is for the system to bounce back from negative outcomes. Our administrative responses could be reflexive, but the framework doesn't require those responses to have positive outcomes, either. The framework isn't the evaluative component; it instead provides a space for ongoing response, reflection, and reflexivity to occur. Looking back on those weeks is uncomfortable: there's a feeling of personal failure associated with those negative outcomes. The framework on its own can't mitigate the in-the-moment problem or that personal discomfort. However, it allows that failure to inform later decisions. It always accepts more data, whether the outcomes that the data represent are positive, negative,

or somewhere in between. The flexible nature instead allows a space for the administrator operating inside that framework to continuously respond to that new data.

Essential Workload Decisions

With less time in class, we found ourselves working with more nuanced pedagogical decisions than during the semester before. For each week, we had to decide which portions of the course were essential to face-to-face learning, and which were therefore inessential. As part of that determination process, I broke down the syllabus into a thematic list including the different goals of the course. This full process (documented in the NEW-HYBRID-NOT-NORMAL SCHEDULE DRAFT in Appendix J) allowed for us as instructors to see the entire semester's goals from a much broader perspective. As a pedagogical exercise, it also provided a reflexive process for determining what we each felt were the essential parts of the course.

As an example of that process, I focus on the first week of the Online Writery unit, below. The two days illustrated below (see fig. 12) are taken directly from the prior fall's (2019) schedule as presented in the course syllabus. In that particular semester, those two days would have occurred across a Wednesday (Day 1) and Monday (Day 2). We would have met in a computer lab on campus, rather than in our typical classroom, in order to make certain that all students had access to a computer during class. The students would have pre-read the Bell article for class on Day 1 and received the initial introduction to the Online Writery, a metaphor lesson about how reverse outlining is a primary goal of asynchronous work. Outside of class that week, they would then have

finished a group project (the GET, or Grammar Explanation Test) by the end of that Friday.

Wednesday (Day 1 of the Online Writery)	Introduction to the Online Writery. Reading: Lisa Eastmond Bell “Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring when going Online” in St. Martin’s 326-333. GET Due via Canvas: Friday.
Monday (Day 2 of the Online Writery)	OW Practice Post (Exercise #4) DUE before class. Reading for Practice Post: TONY Guide (This is 1/2 Your Job) in the Canvas Module for this week. Grokking essays/ reverse outlines. Schedule Request Form (in-class).

Fig. 12 Fall 2019 Online Writery Unit from Syllabus

Over the weekend, they would have read more: the TONY Guide referenced in chapter 3, and then attempted their first Online Writery Response for practice. In class on Monday, we would have read through another student submission, reverse outlining it as a group. The Online Writery unit would have continued for two more class periods, followed by individual conferences and revisions to their responses (as detailed in chapter 3).

In order to convert those two days, we made the decision that the essential component would be structured around Day 1’s content. We made this decision mainly with the understanding that discussion of the underlying theoretical concerns, the context behind the Online Writery, would be more successful if done synchronously. We moved both of the primary readings (Bell and the TONY Guide) to the prior week’s asynchronous work in order to allow students the time they needed to read prior to their class, no matter which day they were scheduled to attend. We also further communicated that this was one of the weeks where the Wednesday class would have to wait to complete their homework for the week. The outcome of that decision was

moving to a Sunday due date, rather than Friday, to allow both the Monday and Wednesday groups to have at least four days to finish a practice response. During their in-person day (see fig. 13), they would also be introduced to TONY, the Online Writery as tutors instead of students. We could therefore walk them through the practical functionality of the application in person, in real time. They would also benefit from the metaphor lesson of reverse outlining—“how to spatchcock a chicken”—and then we would immediately look at a student paper focused on a rhetorical analysis of a golf advertisement. As a class, we would read aloud and reverse outline the submission and discuss their initial tutoring concerns.

	Monday/Wednesday In Person Work	Online/Self-Paced Work	Assignments Due
Week 10	Introduction to TONY, the Online Writery: How to Spatchcock a Chicken for Tiger Woods	Complete: Schedule Request Form Watch: Nike video Complete: First TONY Response on the Training Board	Sunday: TONY Practice Response

Fig. 13 Fall 2020 Week 10 Unit from Syllabus

The work we determined that could be done asynchronously that week included the administrative work of gathering their schedules to match them with tutoring mentors later and giving them time to work on their practice responses. We assigned them to watch the video that the rhetorical analysis had been focused on in order to inform their tutoring responses and to complete their first response to the submission by Sunday.

This was the work of a single week of the course, and included an hour of in-class time, approximately two hours of self-paced work, and a potential hour of shadowing, if

the student chose to do it that week. Across the semester, we attempted to maintain that structure as well as that amount of work. Although the Online Writery example week's online work required them to come to class first, most weeks allowed them to complete their asynchronous assignments any time between Sunday afternoon and the following Sunday night.

Our choices about workload also provided us with mixed outcomes. During the semester, just like in non-pandemic times, we found that some students would access and complete work ahead of time and others would meet deadlines, and still others would ask for extensions (or not) for late work. In sum, our in-the-moment assessments indicated that our workload was appropriate to the situation. After finishing the semester, our class evaluations did not support those ongoing personal assessments. While very few (four out of fourteen) of the students filled out evaluations, those that did indicated that they felt the workload was too high. It is also clear in retrospect that our response rate is too low to draw wide-ranging conclusions, but I do think it's important to note that in comparison to ten years of teaching the course, this particular set of evaluations were the first to have less-than-positive overall responses. Upon reflection, I see this as salient for two reasons: we had made significant programmatic course changes with the goal of supporting the student's needs (and that wasn't achieved, according to those that responded) and because of the connection from taking the course to working for the Writing Center, the evaluations felt more personal in some way. Personally, offering positions and potentially supervising students who had a clearly negative experience with us felt uncomfortable. Although the negative feedback still

stings, separating that from the programmatic concerns and instead contextualizing with what we as administrators know about evaluations has provided some closure. In my administrative experience, tutees who provide feedback to the Writing Center are often doing so to express one of two sentiments: their experience was either great or it was terrible. That administrative viewpoint may provide context here as well.

Because those course evaluations were anonymous, and as noted before we had hired a small subset from both days, we also asked those current tutors to provide us with feedback about their experiences as well. I was careful to make it clear that their responses were neither required nor would responding have any bearing on their work. In this case, only two out of five replied. Again, while the response rate made it hard to address systemically, they too saw the workload as too high. Although we had made sure it was steady across the semester, these *particular* students felt it was too much. Statistically, I realize that these responses might not be significant, and that more data is needed. But again, this negative feedback is still useful—possibly more so than positive feedback—as it continues to drive the part of reflexive administration that requires a change in behavior.

Communication and Context

Our concerns for communication were still connected to our general value for the students themselves. The prior semester, our students, now employees, had been very clear that in some remote courses, workloads went up while in others there was little to nothing assigned as we moved online. In their reported experiences, the level of communication from instructors was disconnected as well; a larger workload didn't

necessarily align with more communication with regard to those changes. We opted to continue with what we knew had worked for the prior class—flexibility inside a firm structure—and clearly communicated expectations.

To that end, I contacted each student enrolled in our course prior to the semester officially beginning. I explained the split-class plan and how our choices aligned with health and safety guidelines but also allowed us some freedom to teach the class in smaller groups. I had randomly assigned students to either Monday or Wednesday groups, and requested feedback if that wouldn't work for any reason. With only a single response to those initial emails, we moved forward with the plan, concluding that we had been both responsive to potential needs and reflexive as well, given the needs we already knew about. Part of those prior considerations included what we had gathered over the past semester and summer regarding students' need for more context. We made efforts to address that need for context across the course, but specifically to the assigned readings.

One of the components that this course has included since its founding is a set of readings, starting with early writing center scholarship to present day, a robust historical grounding, that quickly acclimates tutors-in-training to terms and topics. What hasn't always been clear to students in the course is where our local Writing Center stands on many of those issues. To address this, I wrote brief "reading guides" over the summer to implement in our graduate student trainings. Each one functioned as an introduction to the reading from a current perspective of writing center work. While I didn't add or summarize any content from the reading itself, I did clearly tell them what to ignore and

then added potential questions for them to consider. We revised them for the undergraduate students in our courses to better prepare them for both the overarching topics of writing center work as well to prompt discussions in our now-small group meetings.

This particular change comes from ongoing feedback from course discussions, however its implementation this semester fulfilled another goal as well. We hoped that providing our students with more context for their reading assignments would allow them to still draw their own conclusions, but also to not spend too much time on issues we weren't overly concerned with. Ideally, it also allowed them to better manage their time in conjunction with our expectations of them as well.

Assessments & Outcomes: Looking Forward

This semester added important data to my conception of a flexible framework for reflexive administration. As a new experiential data source for this dissertation, this semester's pedagogical needs were both *new* and expected. Not unlike the early Online Writery developments detailed in Chapter 3, we could recognize that responses were needed. Additionally, the unexpected needs from the prior semester had provided us as instructors with both time to prepare and at least some prior information, including institutional safety guidelines. While some of that information was in flux as it had been in the spring 2020 semester, we were well aware that health and safety concerns had to be responded to as part of our decisions. Because our early structural decision to move the course to one day of in-person instruction for each student was a major change to the course, we tried to self-evaluate on a regular basis. In retrospect—and certainly

looking forward to more reflexive work in the future—we should have built in more opportunities to amend our plans based on the results of that self-evaluation process.

In general, we had made our decision about the structure of class from a false supposition: that the students' *values* were the same as ours. That starting point had far-reaching effects, and even though we were continuously collecting our experiences, most of our evaluative responses still trended toward worry. We worried about whether we were achieving the goals that we set out—because there were so many of them layered on top of each other, it was difficult to sort out what was working and what wasn't. We worried about individual students in the course, as in multiple cases we could go a week without contact from them. We worried about the students we did have contact with as they described their experiences in life and in other courses. We worried about how to balance supporting them as humans and educating them as potential employees. In retrospect, I believe that my particular focus on those worries pulled my attention away from being as reflexive as I would have liked. What our reflexive administration should have produced was moments to take stock of all those worries and attempt to find their causes. Our framework, based on our understanding of how our class could be taught, would have been there to handle those changes, but we didn't stop to consider and implement them.

Part of the reticence to pause may have been connected to the feeling of inflexibility of the semester itself. During the pandemic, the calls for flexibility in writing center work, but also in educational work, have seemed much louder, stronger, and prolonged. We were implementing the most flexible course delivery we could think of at

the time but failing to notice that responses from our students might lead us to more reflexive decision-making. However, the responsive and reflexive changes to the course have provided us with both guidance for the future and more questions to answer.

We collected institutional evaluations for the course, personal evaluations between the three instructors, and follow-up evaluations from the students we hired to be tutors for the following semester. In all three cases the results were qualitatively different than any evaluations we had received in prior semesters. Particularly from the student responses, we found that they trended toward a less-than-satisfactory experience with the class. While our experiences in the prior remote semester pushed us in particular directions—allowing asynchronous work, communicating often, adjusting workloads, offering more support—the assessments suggest that the students involved either didn't recognize those as benefits or didn't value those changes to begin with. It's unclear whether the semester itself, and our course by extension, was simply *too much* work overall for the students involved. As noted before though, the negative evaluations and outcomes also provide a more robust view for theorizing the flexible framework.

The entire experience, when viewed through a flexible framework, has illustrated that we can use both negative and positive outcomes to consider reflexive decision-making. The framework works, particularly when there is a need for improvement, because it allows for the flexibility to address that need and then reassess for more changes. But that reflexive process has to include time and space to make that change. Sometimes, and this has been the case for our course, that time comes later than we would have liked. But the concepts of responsiveness and reflexivity do not *require* split-

second responsiveness to work. As in the early online developments in chapter 3, time is often an important factor in moving through the reflexive process.

In chapter 6, I build from the outcomes of this semester to macro-level conclusions for the flexible framework, including how reflexive teaching and administration overlap, and the institutional knowledge needed to create a local framework.

CHAPTER 6: Conclusions

As I conducted the research and writing that lead to this dissertation, the concept of a flexible framework for reflexive administration seemed to occur organically. Throughout writing center and educational literature as well as the lived experiences of a year of pandemic, I found that the ideas of administrating, tutoring, teaching, and *existing* flexibly continued to build and mingle with each other. It was, in tutoring terms, the best kind of writing experience: working with and reflecting on administration, mixing Higher Order Concerns and lower/later order concerns, finding connections between the “right now” new needs with long term future *and* historical needs provided both product and process nearly simultaneously. The framework helped me to *name* a conglomeration of ideas that could be useful to me (and the MU Writing Center) now *and* later but also provide a transferable system for other administrators at other sites.

That vertical layering and horizontal, webbed interconnectedness also proved difficult to navigate. It should come as no surprise that the writing process, like administration, like teaching, and even like working out to fitness DVD’s, is often that same multi-directional process. But to the outside viewer the product still appears linear. Unless I deliberately choose not to, I have read this dissertation from start to finish, but I am also hyper-aware that it wasn’t composed that way nor do the component parts necessarily interact that way. What has been most and perhaps even surprisingly useful about this dissertation is that while I have prided myself on administrating, teaching, and training Writing Center tutors to view their work in these interconnected ways, it took a

pandemic to make me see how to more fully describe those interconnected relationships in terms of a framework.

Codifying that framework and the potential for transferability is the primary goal of this chapter. In order to do so, I have summarized what I believe to be the prerequisites, both practical and theoretical, that an administrator needs to recognize in order to apply this framework in their own centers or worklives. Institutional Ethnography presents a methodology for the act of recognizing some of these needs. Using the tenets of IE, particularly Ruling Relations and Standpoint, but also understanding how the Coordinating structures of a particular institution work together, provided me with an easily replicable set of lenses to view any institution. While another administrator doesn't have to apply that methodology, having it as an option is one way to build their own framework. In terms of practical knowledge, the following needs were specifically important for me to form the framework for reflexive administration at my local campus.

Institutional Structures

An administrator needs to recognize and seek out the limits of their position within the institution. This will be different on each local campus, but the transferable process will provide answers to questions of where funding comes from, how positions are created and described, how much crossover with other departments and units there is, and perhaps most importantly, who the potential collaborators are. Some of these should be obvious: knowing what individuals or which units to ask budgetary questions, whether salary-based or general operating-focused, is a primary concern for any

leadership position. But having an understanding of the institutional history (or lack thereof) of that position or service is part of the work as well. In the same way, understanding where collaborations have already occurred and what those outcomes were is vital to ongoing momentum and reflexive decision-making. That information is not always readily available. There will always be gaps in institutional memory as well as information from other people's standpoints that may not reflect objective truth. However, even flawed information allows a framework to take shape, and as long as they understand that it's continually under construction, administrators will be able to respond to needs, old and new.

Administrative Values

An administrator needs to have a clear understanding of their personal values and how those values synch up with the institution's and their potential collaborators' values. In both of the pandemic teaching chapters, I was able to more clearly articulate the value system that we as teachers and administrators employ when making pedagogical decisions. These sorts of articulations often make their way into teaching statements or vision/mission statements for student services. Part of defining the flexibility of the framework requires creating a structure. While that structure can still be revised due to ongoing reflection, it is often value-laden. Furthermore, knowing how those administrative values match (or don't match) particular institutional collaborators' means that work can often still be accomplished within the framework. That understanding—of what matches and doesn't—is crucial to staying flexible in administration. And because

values *can* change, the process of collecting both that internal and external information exhibits reflexive administration as well.

Reflexivity All the Time

That process of response, coupled with assessment, reflection, and revision, is what undergirds the framework itself. Reflexive administration, as I have described throughout this dissertation, can't be about making the correct choice every time. Instead, administrative actions have to take into account the localness of the administrator and make responsive decisions first. In a recursive process, that response has to be assessed, reflected on, and either revised or repeated depending on further incoming data. Particularly in the field of writing center work, where the act of responding and speed of the response can feel mandatory, it's vital to not lose sight of the reflection stage and further reflexive actions.

This same process shows up in the everyday work of tutorials; tutors are constantly taking in new and different information within the framework of their job. They're constantly being asked by their center administrator to adapt to the new needs presented by the particular student at the table. As part of their continued training, they are often given sets of tools to help them assess and respond to those new needs as they arise. The idea of a flexible framework for reflexive administration conceptually allows for the administrators of those tutors to do the same in their everyday existence as well.

But What About Aaron? A Hyper-Local Framework Application

At the beginning of this chapter, I wrote that my primary goal was to address the transferability of this framework for others. I also wrote that this dissertation was

“surprisingly” valuable toward allowing me to see my own work through the lenses I ask my students and employees to use. One of my primary conclusions associated with that view, and potentially the most important area for my own reflexive processes going forward, is continuing to recognize and interrogate the overlap between my position’s varied teaching and administrative roles.

While this dissertation’s focus is primarily on the training and teaching areas of those roles, the framework should inform the entire position. The MU Writing Center director position has a long, rich, *muddy* history of role overlap. Even though the official job descriptions haven’t often changed, the particular individuals in those roles have invested more or less of their time in different areas. That’s to be expected; different strokes, etc. But because part of my answer to questions about “what I like about my job” has always included the *varied* tasks that I get to do on a given day, it wasn’t until I was conceptualizing the framework that I saw that conflagration as *a singular* job. Prior to this dissertation, I would often use the phrase “partition my hard drive” when it came to switching between tasks—spreadsheets, scheduling, grading, teaching, presenting—and even more so when it came time to “unplug” from work—driving, playing music, dungeon mastering, working out, cooking—but now I’m curious whether those divisions are particularly problematic or useful. I find myself seeing more interconnections between the different subsets of the job as well as intra-connected between the work and everyday life.

“Take this with you into your daily life” (Jack) was explicitly one of the fitness-isms from my initial steps toward this framework. I also think there’s room for the framework

to effect change vertically for the institutions at the local level. From the WPA position, connected to staff, faculty, tutors, students, other units and departments, and campus leadership, I'm curious as to how the changes in my and the Writing Center's daily (frame)work might inform those relationships in the future.

Appendices

Appendix A

Syllabus WS 1995

- Week 1--get E-mail accounts and instruction on its use
1/18begin reading Handbook, Harris book, and article "Ideas in Practice,"
begin annotated bibliography entries on above readings
assigned WS mentor and WL mentor
journal entry on-line RHETORIC (Aristotle, you, application to lab)
- Week 2--meet with instructor and discuss Writing Lab Handbook
1/23join listserv groups that pertain to interests for paper--Eric Crump
discussion Handbook/each student takes a chapter
journal entry COMPOSITION (How different from rhetoric, you, lab)
- Week 3--hand in rough draft of scenarios 1 hard copy instructor/Email students
1/30continue on listserv discussions
discussion Harris book--each take a chapter
journal entries-TOPOI-(Aristotle, you, lab)
- Week 4--discuss "Ideas in Practice" working toward a def. of comp/rhetoric/w lab
2/6 hand in scenario 2-- 1 hard copy--Email to class for comment
newsletter discussion--see model from last year
journal entries ENTHYMEME (Aristotle, you, lab)
- *2/10 F Tutor Training workshop 3:40-5:00 (required)
- Week 5--discussion Eric Crump article continue reading and entries in bibliography
2/13hand in revision of scenario 1 or 2 to instructor--hard copy
journal entry-Kiersey Temperment Sorter--Discuss outcome to you-tutor
- Week 6--discussion assigned essay
2/20scenario 3 due--1 hard copy rest on Email for comment
continue reading for final paper and making bibliography entries
continue with weekly journal entries-LOGOS (Aristotle, you, lab).
- Week 7--scenario 4 due--(1 hard copy/ rest on Email), reading, bibliography
2/27journal, ETHOS (Aristotle, you, lab)
- Week 8--revision scenario 3 or 4 due, reading, bibliography , **PAPER PROPOSAL**
3/6 journal entry, PATHOS (Aristotle, you, lab)
SPRING BREAK 3/10-3/20 Rough draft of your research essay to partner to read/comment.
- Week 9--scenario 5 due to instructor, reading, biblio.
3/20journal entry, PROCESS (Killingsworth, you, lab)
- Week 10--scenario 6 due (1 hard & Email class), reading, bibliography
3/27journal entry, (PRODUCT, Killingsworth, you)
- Week 11--scenario 6 due, reading, bibliography
4/3 journal entry, EMAIL-(Pick a term or concept, define, you, lab)
- Week 12--revision of scenario 5 or 6 due
4/10journal entry, HOLTZ ESSAY--(pathos, ethos, logos)
- Week 13--reading, bibliography **ROUGH DRAFT DUE at WITS**
4/17journal entry, STYLE
- Week 14--reading, bibliography **MEET WITH GROUP ON PAPERS**
2/24journal entry, Week 15--**FINAL DRAFT** each student's draft critiqued by group in seminar
- 5/1 journal entry, NEGATIVE CAPABILITY
- Week 16--FINAL DRAFT 2 copies & Bibliography due 1 to be graded and 1 mailed to journal
5/8 Course evaluations completed, newsletter finalized

Appendix B

HONORS 120: INTERNSHIP IN THE WRITING LAB ---SYLLABUS WS 2002

Week	Assignment
1 1/21	MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY HOLIDAY! NO CLASS. Use H120-l@lists.missouri.edu for journal entries, scenarios, and discussion
2 1/28	begin reading <i>Writing Lab Handbook</i> , *meet with Stretch 20 group on R 1/31 and every Thursday at the same time and place, email journal entry RHETORIC (Aristotle--on reserve my office-- you, application to lab)
3 2/4	seminar discuss <i>Writing Lab Handbook</i> , each student discuss quote *meet in the WL with mentor at scheduled hour and every week at same time, journal entry TOPOI (Aristotle--on reserve my office-- you, application to lab)
4 2/11	scenario 1—due on email for instructor & class comment seminar discuss article "Ideas in Practice," each student discuss quote begin annotated bibliography entries on above readings-- quote + 1 paragraph discussing it; journal entry- ENTHYMEME (Aristotle, you, lab)
5 2/18	scenario 2—on email for comment, seminar discuss Harris book, <i>Teaching One-To One</i> , each student discuss quote journal entry- KIERSEY TEMPERAMENT SORTER --Discuss outcome to you-to your tutoring
6 2/25	scenario 1 or 2 to instructor--hard copy seminar discuss James Berlin "Contemporary Composition" journal entry- COMPOSITION (C/C to rhetoric, Berlin, you, lab).
7 3/4	scenario 3 due-- on email for comment seminar discuss D. Murray "Writing Process" or J. Killingsworth "Product & Process. . ." journal entry, PRODUCT/PROCESS (Murray/ Killingsworth, you, lab)
8 * 3/11	scenario 4 due-- on email for comment seminar w/ Sally Foster discuss Cooper, Bui, Riker, "Protocols & Process in Online Tutoring" journal entry, (Pick a term or concept-- WWW, HTML, MOO, Email --define, you, lab)
9 3/18	revision scenario 3 or 4 --hard copy due, seminar discuss Harris article, "Talk To Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers" journal entry LOGOS, ETHOS, PATHOS (Aristotle & Harris, lab)
3/25	Spring Break-Do journal entry before you leave. Journal entry M Dossin "Using Others' Words" (How do we spot plagiarism, respond to it, and steer students away from it?)
10 4/1	PROPOSAL PAPER/NEWSLETTER (1 paragraph-thesis & purpose), scenario 5 due-- on email for comment, seminar discuss Alice Trupe, "Organizing Ideas" journal entry HOC (Trupe, you, lab)
11 4/8	scenario 6 due--on email for comment, seminar discuss Ben Raforth "Helping Students to Write Analytically" journal entry, ANALYSIS (Raforth, you, lab)
12 4/15	Audience analysis newsletter due in class 1 page--title, audience, style, no. footnotes, articles revision scenario 5 or 6--hard copy due, seminar discuss Alexis Greiner "Tutoring in Unfamiliar Subjects" journal entry, CONSULTANT VS. TUTOR (Greiner, you, lab)
13 4/22	DRAFT #1 of your research essay or newsletter essay to partner to read/comment. seminar discuss R. Haswell "Minimal Marking" B. Young "Can You Proofread This?" journal entry, HOC vs LOC (Haswell & Young, you, lab)
14 4/29	DRAFT #2 of your essay DUE at WITS seminar discuss Lea Maiello "Style in the Writing Center" journal entry, STYLE (Maiello, you, audience)

15 5/6	DRAFT #3 CONFERENCE WITH TEACHER --NO CLASS Read Jennife Ritter "Recent Developments in Assisting ESL Writers" journal entry ESL (Ritter, you, and lab)
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Appendix C

Sample Recruitment Email

PROJECT IRB #: 266780

Dear Person-who-at-one-time-held-an-administrative-position,

I hope this finds you well. I'm writing today to ask for your assistance and participation in an MU Writing Center-focused research project.

As you may know, I currently direct the Writing Center. I am also currently working on a dissertation in the English department, focusing on the history of tutor training at the Writing Center. If you would be willing, I would love to ask you some questions regarding your time as a staff member/Director/Coordinator at the Writing Center, specifically focusing on the training practices during that period of time in our history.

Please let me know if you would be available and interested in participating!

-Aaron

Aaron A. Harms
Director, Writing Center
University of Missouri
<https://writingcenter.missouri.edu>

Sample Interview Questions

NAME OF RESEARCHER: AARON A. HARMS PROJECT IRB #: 266780

STUDY TITLE: HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE TUTOR TRAINING?: AN INSTITUTIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI WRITING CENTER'S HISTORY OF TUTOR PREPARATION

As with any "live" interview, I expect that there will be follow-up questions to ask, depending on the nature of the interviewees' answers. The questions below are the primary starting questions that all participants will be asked.

--

What was your position with the Writing Center?
What duties were expected from that position?
What did that make your day-to-day work look like?
How did you build the training of tutors into that daily work?
What kinds of assessment did you conduct to measure success?
What years were you connected to the Writing Center in that/those role(s)?
During that time, what was the reporting structure of the Writing Center (and your role)?

All of the following questions pertain to the time period you were connected to the Writing Center.

How were potential tutors identified?
How were tutors hired?
Tell me about the training activities/procedures/curriculum for Writing Center tutors. What was the training curriculum for the tutors when you were working with them? What do you believe were the most important skills tutors needed at the time?
Why did you believe those were important?
What skills did/do you believe make tutors "good" at their job?
What skills did/do you look for prior to starting train potential tutors?

The following questions pertain to you looking back at that period from your current position. Have any of your beliefs about those prior answers changed? If so, what's different? Why?
What do you wish you'd known about Writing Center work then that you know now?

Students, hark:

The Writing Lab has set up an experimental outpost on the electronic frontier.

You can now talk with someone about *any* aspect of *anything* you are writing without leaving the comfort of your spot in front of the computer.

Convenient, friendly, noncarcinogenic...

The Online Writing Center

With two locations to serve you...

- **Online Writers' Corner**, which is located in the *Student Information* area (#5 on the main menu) of **INFORMU**. Questions and problems can be posted on the bulletin board.
- Via electronic mail directly to one of the Writing Lab's designated electronic writing assistants:

Eric Crump CS09379@mizzou1
Kathy Whitson CS07004@mizzou1

A shortcut: At the arrow at the top of the main **INFORMU** menu, type => Go Write

Hit PF6 (Write) to post a question or problem or suggestion. Suggestions welcome.

Eric, the current editor of the Online Writers Corner, will post a response as soon as possible (sometimes within an hour) so check back with the Writers Corner when you can.

Please flip this piece of paper OVER ---->

What if you don't know HOW to use electronic mail?

In addition to instruction provided by Campus Computing, the regular old non-electronic Learning Center Writing Lab, 214 Arts & Science, can help. Campus Computing help documents are available there (as well as at the HelpDesk in the Heinkel Building), including the *Guide to Ricemail*, the *CMS Cookbook*, and the *Beginners' Guide*. Also, a number of writing assistants are experienced e-mail users and can help introduce you to the campus mainframe and its communication systems. Call 882-2493 for an appointment, tell the receptionist that you would like help with e-mail, and ask for one of the following writing assistants:

Eric Crump
Kathy Whitson
Melissa Deutsch
Kerry Ashby
Diane Musgrove
Elaine Hocks
Mike O'Conner
Andrew Smith
Kenn DeShane
Andrea Massar

If you do not have a mainframe account, go to the HelpDesk in the basement of the Heinkel Building, 7th and Locust, across from Peace Park.

Just show your student ID card to a consultant at the HelpDesk. Usually new accounts are active the following day.

These folks can help you survive your first attempt to logon to the mainframe (most people escape with few if any scars), and they can help you learn how to send and receive electronic mail, manage mail you want to save, join electronic discussion groups in your areas of interest, and explore other network resources.

The Writing Lab and Online Writing Center are places you can go to talk about any writing issues or problems, from **getting started** to **polishing a paper**, from writing essays or reports to **poems** and **stories**, from matters of **organization** to matters of **style** and **grammar**.

If you have any questions, please contact **Eric Crump**, 223 Arts & Science, C509379@mizzou1, or 882-3148.

The Campus Computing HelpDesk is available to answer questions about e-mail and other computer applications. Call 882-5000 or write to helpdesk@mizzou1. Hours are 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday. Most employees in the computer labs can also help iron out problems.

NOTE: When you call the HelpDesk or ask a lab assistant for help, try to have as much information for them about your problem as you can: the kind of computer and application you are using, the text of error messages, etc. These folks help many people who are using a wide variety of applications in a wide variety of settings. The more you can tell them, the better they can help you.

The Writing Lab:
It's free!

A glimpse at an infant online writing center . . .

```

=> █ To select an item type its item number. then press enter
Main Menu
Items
1 WELCOME - Information About Using INFORMU Editor CCMIEV
2 Latest News CCMIEV
3 MU Events & Activities CCOERLV
4 Faculty & Academic Unit Information CCOERLV
5 Student Information CCMIEV
6 Administrative Information & Job Opportunities CCMIEV
7 Computing Information CCMIEV
8 Accessing Data, Information And LUMIN At MU CCMIEV
9 Electronic Mail Processors CCMIEV
10 Digests Of Selected Discussion Lists & News Lists CCMIEV
11 How To Access Information Via The INTERNET CCMIEV
12 Faculty And Staff Directory CCMIEV

PF1=Help 3=Return 4=Update 5=Find
PF7=Backward 8=Forward 9=HomeMenu 10=Review 11=Print

```

The first screen to the left is the main menu for INFORMU, the campus bulletin board system. Anyone can access the system from public computer labs, but only people with active mainframe accounts can print or send e-mail. The Online Writers Corner is a submenu under #5, Student Information, but it is faster to simply type => GO WRITE in the command line at the top of the screen.

```

=> █ On-Line Writers Corner
Items
1 An Idea About To Hatch... Editor C509379
2 Welcome To The Online Writer'S Corner C509379
3 Surviving Composition (English 20) C509379
4 Creative Writing Everywhere C509379
5 Technical Writing (Not Limited To English 161) C509379
6 The BIG Online Writing Environment: The Internet C509379

PF1=Help 3=Return 4=Update 5=Find
PF7=Backward 8=Forward 9=HomeMenu 10=Review 11=Print

```

This is the first screen in the Online Writers Corner and it comes with 6 different places to go because that's how many categories occurred to me the other night when I was fiddling with it. Maybe there should be more; maybe there should be fewer. Maybe we should change them once a week so they don't get stale.

(Actually, it *has* changed since I first fiddled. This is a developing project, so it may continue to change. Don't hesitate to make suggestions about what you'd like to see here.)

```

=> █ Type an item number and press enter
Welcome To The Online Writer'S Corner
Items
1 What This Place Is For... Editor C509379
2 A Question: Writing In "Other" Classes C509379
3 RE:Welcome To The Online Writer'S Corner C509379
4 How To Make Connection/Get Help C509379
5 New Listserv List--Students And Faculty Welcome C509379
6 Megabyte University (Computers & Writing Talk) C509379

PF1=Help 3=Return 4=Update 5=Find
PF7=Backward 8=Forward 9=HomeMenu 10=Review 11=Print

```

Each of these items (except #6) contains a notice written by me, mostly information and questions intended to help people use this space and give them a reason to use it.

The last item contains an automatic link to a digest of list mail from MBU-L, an electronic forum for people who are interested in computers and writing.

```

                                Press enter or pf keys to indicate desired
What This Place Is For...
The Online Writer's Corner is the hub of what will become an online
writing center, or perhaps online writing ENVIRONMENT would be more
accurate. The Corner can serve as a starting point, a place to ask
questions and get responses about issues related to writing, but
it can also serve as a jumping off place to other places in the
larger online writing environment: the Internet.

PF1=Help      2=Top      3=Return      5=NextPart
PF7=Backward  8=Forward  9=NoneMenu 11=Print

```

The Internet is the current incarnation of what will become (I boldly predict) the dominant means of literate, scholarly interaction. It is to the scholarship of the future what print publishing has been for the past couple of centuries. It's worth learning how to get around on it: this is where knowledge and power will reside.

```

=> 2
                                Press enter or pf keys to indicate desired action.
New Listserv List—Students And Faculty Welcome 03/09/93
A new Listserv list has been created for the purpose of giving students,
faculty, and staff a place to talk about the development of online
writing environments (like this one, for instance).

WIOLE-L@uizzou1 (Writing Intensive Online Learning Environments)

is open to anyone who is interested in learning more about, or helping
to shape the places where writers (students and scholars) will interact.
To subscribe, local users with mainframe accounts can send an interactive
message to listserv@uizzou1. In the ready mode, type:

TELL LISTSERV SUB WIOLE-L YourFirstName YourLastName

If anyone has any questions about the list or problems subscribing,
please write to Eric Crump at LCERIC@uizzou1 or call 882-3148.

PF1=Help      2=Top      3=Return      5=NextPart      6=MakeTop
PF7=Backward  8=Forward  9=NoneMenu 11=Print      12=Options

```

And we (meaning students and teachers and writing center folks and administrators) should talk about our visions of these environments, about the shapes they can take and the roles they can play in our lives. The Listserv list described next door is at least one place where those conversations are occurring. Everyone is welcome to join. Anyone who needs help joining can ask for help in the Online Writers Corner or at the Learning Center Writing Lab.

The Online Writing Center

An introduction to a proposal being developed by the Learning Center
(Eric Crump and Elaine Hocks)
and Campus Computing
(Glenda Moum and Diane Oerly)

Our society is in the middle of a rather dramatic cultural and technological shift, moving rapidly toward electronic written communication as a significant form of interaction. Locally, the new General Education Architecture at MU reflects this trend by stressing the importance of writing *and* computer and information literacy.

The Campus Writing Program has done a fine job of pursuing the former, but we think more needs to be done to include the latter in our work. The time seems right to acknowledge the broad social changes associated with communications technology and to merge the two local goals. We have begun designing a program that will move toward that convergence: an online writing environment.

The Online Writing Center, as we currently envision it, would be centered on INFORMU, the university's online bulletin board system. The precise shape the Online Writing Center will take is still an open question--the possibilities are numerous--but we imagine it as initially an extension of the services currently provided by the Writing Intensive Tutorial Service and the Learning Center Writing Lab, a place writers can go--via the campus computer network--to discuss and develop their work. In the process, they will not only learn about writing well but will learn about using the latest writing technologies. We hope to create an accessible, inviting online environment that will foster a greater sense of community among and between teachers, students, TAs, and tutors.

MU is in a position to take a leadership role in the development of online writing environments. We have the technology on this campus to make this vision a reality. This idea is relatively untried, but interest in it is growing in writing centers and writing programs in the U.S. and abroad.

We want to enlist support and participation from the people who care about improving writing development and education in general on this campus. Because the members of the Campus Writing Board are leaders in the writing community, the board's endorsement of this project will improve its chance of success.

We have begun exploring possibilities for external funding, and the board's endorsement would help that process as well.

Whether or not grant money materializes, however, we will pursue the development of the online writing center with whatever resources we can muster. This project is a natural next step in the evolution of MU's writing programs, a way to manifest the spirit of the general education mission and capitalize on the university's investment in computer technology. We hope the board will agree and will formally endorse the development of the project.

The full text of a draft grant proposal is available on request. For that, or for any other questions about the project, please contact Eric Crump, LCERIC@mizzou1 or 882-3148.

Some expected benefits of online writing environments:

- Convenience and accessibility for teachers, students, and tutors: Conversations can take place asynchronously, dispersed over time, reducing the problem of appointment scheduling.
- Community: More and more, scholarly communities are taking their conversations online (John Foley, in the English Department, just started an online forum for oral tradition scholars, for instance). Online interaction allows a new avenue for community-building, giving students, teacher, and tutors an opportunity to converse in an environment less laden with traditional demarcations of authority. Many people find it easier to address others like colleagues online, regardless of institutional status. This tendency to moderate levels of authority can be liberating to both teachers and students and can help create a rich learning environment.
- Ecology: Course materials, "papers," and other information exchanged online saves paper.
- Money: Saving paper helps ease the strain on tight E/E budgets.
- Quality of undergraduate education: Students leaving this institution will find themselves living and working in an Information Age society that depends heavily on computer-mediated communication. If we hope to prepare them for that world, we need to introduce them to the kind of technology they will be using and to help them learn how to write and read and locate information in the vast web of global computer networks.

Appendix E

Writing Lab Survey for MA Interns

Please fill out this survey form and return it to my SSC mail box if you prefer to remain anonymous, or send your response via e-mail to HocksE@missouri.edu. Thanks for all you do to help students.

1. You have tutored in the Writing Lab for 10 hours a week for the first semester and for 7 hours per week for the winter semester. How has your work at the lab helped to prepare you to teach English 1000 next fall?
2. What have you learned about English 1000 students, assignments, and the course itself while assisting students in the lab?
3. What have you learned about the teaching English 1000 while you were visiting as a primary tutor for the course during this fall semester?
4. How has cybertutoring in the Online Writery affected your attitudes about composition, revision, or responding to student drafts?
5. What suggestions do you have to improve this internship to the Writing Lab for the next group of MAs?
6. During your **first** year as a MA, would you prefer being a discussion leader to approximately 25 students in a large (100) student introductory literature class supervised by an English Department professor or being an intern in the Writing Center? Why?

Appendix F

Writing Center 2015HW Tutorial Observation Form

Your Name:		
Date:	Observation Number:	Observation Type:
Tutor:	Course:	Type of Assignment:

START <i>What does the student want to work on? / Prioritizing / setting an agenda / Reading the paper</i>	
Introduces self (yes/no/other):	Asks for assignment sheet (yes/no/other):

MIDDLE <i>What is the main focus of discussion? / Who propels the discussion? / Who writes during the tutorial, and what?</i>

Types of Questions Asked	Status Observations

Tutor Strategies	Tutorial Style (<i>Directive vs Non-Directive? HOCs vs LOCs? Appropriate balance?</i>)

Appendix G

THINGS THAT YOU SHOULD OUGHT TO HAVE DONE IN YOUR TONY POST

BEFORE YOUR FIRST WORDS

- ☐ Read the paper FIRST?
- ☐ Grok* effectively?

THE FRAME

- ☐ Introduce yourself and the WC (with your first name)?
- ☐ Create rapport?
- ☐ Discuss the student's requests?
- ☐ Mention the assignment or assignment sheet?
- ☐ Foreground the HOCs?
- ☐ Actively use a Reverse Outline (if you included one)?
- ☐ Explain your approach and/or format? (colors, font, etc.)

THE COMMENTS

- ☐ Make your comments easy to read/format them clearly?
- ☐ Use white space effectively/differentiate between your text and their text?
- ☐ Ask questions you don't know the answers to?
- ☐ Provide context for your questions/comments?
- ☐ Offer *multiple* options for rewriting?
- ☐ Address grammar *patterns* (and not line edit)?

THE SIGN-OFF

- ☐ Sign off (with your first name)?
- ☐ Thank them for submitting?
- ☐ Encourage them to use the Writing Center again?

AFTER YOUR LAST WORDS

- ☐ Make sure you were not a bitch/asshole?
- ☐ Reread and revise your post?
- ☐ Check your spelling and grammar?
- ☐ Not use the word "edit"? Ever? Seriously. Ever?

*Grok is a word coined by Robert A. Heinlein for his 1961 science-fiction novel, Stranger in a Strange Land, defined by the Urban Dictionary as, "To understand something intimately and completely." Because we trust Urban Dictionary.

THINGS THAT YOU SHOULD OUGHT TO HAVE DONE IN YOUR TONY POST

BEFORE YOUR FIRST WORDS

- ☐ Read the paper FIRST?
- ☐ Grok* effectively?

THE FRAME

- ☐ Introduce yourself and the WC (with your first name)?
- ☐ Create rapport?
- ☐ Discuss the student's requests?
- ☐ Mention the assignment or assignment sheet?
- ☐ Foreground the HOCs?
- ☐ Actively use a Reverse Outline (if you included one)?
- ☐ Explain your approach and/or format? (colors, font, etc.)

THE COMMENTS

- ☐ Make your comments easy to read/format them clearly?
- ☐ Use white space effectively/differentiate between your text and their text?
- ☐ Ask questions you don't know the answers to?
- ☐ Provide context for your questions/comments?
- ☐ Offer *multiple* options for rewriting?
- ☐ Address grammar *patterns* (and not line edit)?

THE SIGN-OFF

- ☐ Sign off (with your first name)?
- ☐ Thank them for submitting?
- ☐ Encourage them to use the Writing Center again?

AFTER YOUR LAST WORDS

- ☐ Make sure you didn't sound like a terrible person?
- ☐ Reread and revise your post?
- ☐ Check your spelling and grammar?
- ☐ Not use the word "edit"? Ever? Seriously. Ever?

*Grok is a word coined by Robert A. Heinlein for his 1961 science-fiction novel, *Stranger in a Strange Land*, defined by the Urban Dictionary as, "To understand something intimately and completely." Because we trust Urban Dictionary.

THINGS THAT YOU SHOULD OUGHT TO HAVE DONE IN YOUR **TONY** POST

BEFORE YOUR FIRST WORDS

- ☐ Analyze the Assignment?
- ☐ Read & Grok* effectively?

THE FRAME

- ☐ Introduce yourself and the WC (with your first name)?
- ☐ Create rapport?
- ☐ Discuss the student's requests?
- ☐ Foreground the HOCs?
- ☐ Actively *use* a Reverse Outline (if you included one)?
- ☐ Explain your approach and/or format? (colors, font, etc.)

THE HOCs

- ☐ Connect the HOCs to your Assignment Analysis?
- ☐ Identify or address the argument?

THE COMMENTS

- ☐ Ask questions you don't know the answers to?
- ☐ Provide context for your questions/comments?
- ☐ Offer *multiple* options for rewriting?
- ☐ Make your comments easy to read/format them clearly?
- ☐ Use white space effectively/differentiate between your text and their text?
- ☐ Address grammar *patterns* (but not line edit)?

THE SIGN-OFF

- ☐ Sign off (with your first name)?
- ☐ Thank them for submitting?
- ☐ Encourage them to use the Writing Center again?

AFTER YOUR LAST WORDS

- ☐ Make sure you didn't sound like a terrible person?
- ☐ Reread and revise your post?
- ☐ Check your spelling and grammar?
- ☐ Not use the word "edit"? Ever? Seriously. Ever?

- ☐ Use a Reverse Outline to identify or address the structure?
- ☐ Relate **The Frame** HOCs to **The Comments**?

***Grok /'grɒk/ is a word coined by Robert A. Heinlein for his 1961 science-fiction novel, *Stranger in a Strange Land*, defined by the Urban Dictionary as, "To understand something intimately and completely." Because we trust Urban Dictionary.**

Appendix H

Course Proposal for Honors/English 2015: Theory and Practice of Tutoring Writing

H2015 is an Honors Writing Intensive (WI) class which addresses both the theory and practice of tutoring and the foundations of good writing. Therefore, in addition to theoretical frames for what writing tutors do, it focuses on hands-on craft and practical experience working with other writers. At its heart is a shared set of assumptions about tutoring writing:

- In order to help someone else competently, a tutor needs to have an expert command of the craft of writing herself. This is not something we assume, or a simple prerequisite: we make it part of the course to sharpen each student's command of the craft of language.
- A tutor needs to know something not only about the practical application of rhetoric and composition theory, but also about the subtleties of verbal and nonverbal communication (we bring some perspectives from theater to bear in this area).
- Hands-on experience from both sides of the desk is a crucial part of the process of learning to work with other writers.
- Online tutoring is a valuable part of the skill set with both advantages and disadvantages over traditional face-to-face scenarios, and it makes considerable demands on the tutor's craft as a writer and as a reader of both prose and people.

This course also prepares students to work as writing tutors, and, in fact, doing well in it qualifies them for a part-time job working as Writing Lab/Online Writery tutors in future semesters. Prerequisite: Engl 1000. A/F.

(English majors may also receive credit for working in the Writing Lab by taking English 4950: Internship in English.)

Appendix I

Aaron Harms
Email: harmsaa@missouri.edu
Office Hours: MTW 1-2
Phone: 884-8725
Office: 100 Student Success Center

Stephanie Kimmey
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Office Hours: MTW 1-2
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Heather Asbeck (TA)
Email: heather.asbeck@mail.missouri.edu
Office Hours: by appointment
Office: 100 Student Success Center

SPRING 2020

GEN HON 2015H/ENG2015H: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TUTORING WRITING

General Plan: This course provides students with the theoretical and practical frameworks for the one-on-one tutoring of writing. Students will 1) examine the major tenets of writing center philosophy and pedagogy through readings, discussions, and observations, 2) explore the practical application of theory to tutoring through study, observation, writing, discussion, role play, and hands-on tutoring in the Writing Center, 3) study writing as a craft, 4) conduct one observation of an experienced Writing Center tutor each week beginning the third week of the semester.

Course Materials:

Murphy, Christina, and Steve Sherwood. *The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors*. 4th ed. Boston: Bedford, 2011.

Selected articles available in the Modules section of our Canvas site (courses.missouri.edu).

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is extremely important for your success in this course. Students who have more than 3 unexcused absences may be dropped from the class. You'll also be asked to make up any days you miss by meeting with one of the instructors.

Types of Assignments	Points
First Submissions of Essays (4)	300 (75pts each)
Second Submissions of Essays (2)	200 (100pts each)
Observations/Write ups of Tutorials (10)	100
Group Presentation of Observed Tutorials	75
Exercises (6)	150 (25pts each)
GET (Grammar Explanation Test)	75
Final Exam	100
Total	1000

Plus/Minus Scale: 980-1000: A+; 930-979: A; 900-929: A-; 870-899: B+; 830-869: B; 800-829: B-; 770-799: C+; 730-769: C; 700-729: C-; 670-699: D+; 630-669: D; 600-629

Late Assignments: Assignments are due by the beginning of class, unless otherwise arranged, on the date listed on your syllabus. 10% will be deducted for any late assignments.

Essays (or those big assignments with the points) take four forms in this class. There's a breakdown below, but you should expect each of them to engage a slightly different part of the writing/tutoring experience. To foreground the WI-ness and revisionist aspects of the course,

essay 1 has an optional revision, while essays 2 & 3 have mandatory second submissions. Essay 4 is the only submission in the course that isn't eligible for revision.

1. A "lens" essay: We'll give you a theoretical framework. You'll write 3-4 pages of your analytical observations from applying that framework to a real-world interaction you observed.
2. A 1-2 page personal statement to a scholarship or application prompt of your choice.
3. A tutoring response to an Online Writery submission.
4. A 3-4 page "metaphor" argument paper, wherein you choose a task that isn't like tutoring and prove to us, using tutoring observations as evidence, that it really is kind of like tutoring.

Observations are a crucial part of your training to become a writing tutor. In fact, *you cannot be eligible for a tutoring position* without having observed a total of **ten** tutorials by tutors currently working in the Writing Center. Please use the observation form (in the Assignments folder) to submit your typed observations to Canvas. After your observations, please talk with the tutor about the session; there is space on your observation form for this conversation as well.

Submit Observation Assignments on our Canvas site as you complete them.

By the end of the semester, you must have **ten** observations, as follows. The first seven types may be undertaken in any order:

- Observation of a face-to-face tutorial in the Writing Center
- Observation of an Online Writery tutorial in the Writing Center
- Observation of a face-to-face or online tutorial in a Residence Hall (Brooks, Schurz, or Mark Twain)
- Distance Observation of a face-to-face tutorial in either the WC or Res hall: an observation of body language/space negotiations
- Personal Observation of your own visit to a tutor: make an appointment with a tutor for help on one of your papers (from any class)
- Personal Observation of a tutorial response you receive on the Online Writery (from any class)
- Observations from any of the prior 6 categories (your choice)

*You must complete the first seven types above to start this part. Prior to the final **three** observations, you will be assigned a mentor-tutor. You'll then do four things, in the following order, with that specific mentor:*

1. Interview them
2. Conduct and submit an Observation of them, either doing an online or face-to-face appointment
3. Conduct and submit another Observation of them, either doing an online or face-to-face appointment
4. Submit an Observation (reflection) of a "takeover" session with your mentor's (emotional) support

Progress dates for these observations:

1. *3 observations completed*—that means observed, written up, and submitted—by **Friday, February 28**
2. *4 more observations (7 total) completed* by **Friday, April 3**
3. *3 remaining observations due* by the last day of class, **Wednesday, May 6**

WPA Statement on Plagiarism: *“In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. This definition applies to texts published in print or on-line, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers....Ethical writers make every effort to acknowledge sources fully and appropriately in accordance with the contexts and genres of their writing. A student who attempts (even if clumsily) to identify and credit his or her source, but who misuses a specific citation format or incorrectly uses quotation marks or other forms of identifying material taken from other sources, has not plagiarized. Instead, such a student should be considered to have failed to cite and document sources appropriately. Students who are fully aware that their actions constitute plagiarism—for example, copying published information into a paper without source attribution for the purpose of claiming the information as their own, or turning in material written by another student—are guilty of academic misconduct.”* <http://www.wpacouncil.org/node/9>

ADA Accommodations: Students who have special conditions as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and who need any course materials to be furnished in an alternative format should notify us immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of these students.

Statement on Discrimination: The University of Missouri prohibits all forms of sex or gender discrimination, including sex-based violence. If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination or been harassed or assaulted, you can get help at the Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center, a confidential resource, at rsvp@missouri.edu or (573) 882-6638, or www.rsvp.missouri.edu. You can also contact the Title IX Office (civilrights-titleix@missouri.edu; (573) 882-3880; or www.civilrights.missouri.edu). Because we care about our community, Mizzou employees are required to report all incidents of sex discrimination to the Title IX Office. The RSVP Center and Title IX Office will respect your privacy.

SCHEDULE

Date	Assignments
W Jan 22	Introduction: The Toolbox.
M Jan 27	Exercise #1 Due on Canvas Discussion Board: “My History as a Writer” and “How I Write” Writing Center History. Reading: Stephen North’s “The Idea of a Writing Center” and Lunsford’s “Collaboration, Control, and the Idea of a Writing Center” in St. Martins, pp. 44-58; 70-77.
W Jan 29	Reading: Keith Johnstone’s “Status” from <i>Impro</i> (In the Week 2 Module on Canvas)
M Feb 3	Role-Playing. Readings: Brooks’ “Minimalist Tutoring” in St. Martin’s pp. 128-132; and Corbett’s “Tutoring Style, Tutoring Ethics,” pp.148-155. FERPA exam assigned.
W Feb 5	Analyzing Assignments. Status Transcript/Essay 1 Assigned. Observations Assigned.
M Feb 10	Writing Workshop on Persona/Voice. Exercise #2.1 on Voice Due on Canvas (after class)

W Feb 12	WI Outreach Presentation. Writing Workshop on Persona/Voice cont. (aka “Chicken & Waffles”). Exercise #2.2 Due on Canvas (before class) Status Transcript Due on Discussion Board by Friday 2/14, 11:59:59pm.
M Feb 17	Peer Review. Draft of Essay 1 Due in class.
W Feb 19	Essay 1 on Status Due. Introduction to Personal Statements.
M Feb 24	Essay 2 Due: Personal Statement. Bring a hard copy to class. Sign up for Conferences. Role-Playing/Active Listening.
W Feb 26	Writing Workshop on “Rules/Style.” Reading: Gopen’s “Bad Advice and Why not to Take it” and “Fifty Years of Stupid Grammar Advice” (Readings Folder on Canvas). GET Assigned. 3 Observations Due by Friday, 2/28.
M Mar 2	Mr. Paragraph: Coherence and Cohesion Writing Workshop.
W Mar 4	Writing Workshop on Textual Analysis. Revision of Essay 2 Due.
M Mar 9	Exercise #3 Due on Canvas: Choose a quotation and discuss two different interpretations. “Folding the Universe.”
W Mar 11	Introduction to the Online Writery. Reading: Lisa Eastmond Bell “Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring when going Online” in St. Martin’s 326-333. GET Due via Canvas: Friday, March 13.
M Mar 16	OW Practice Post (Exercise #4) DUE before class. Reading for Practice Post: TONY Guide (This is 1/2 Your Job) in the Canvas Module for this week. Grokking essays/ reverse outlines. Schedule Request Form (in-class).
W Mar 18	In class: Real Time Grokking and writing a frame. Exercise 4.2 due before you leave for break.
Mar 21-29	Spring Break
M Mar 30	Assign Tutor Mentors. Real Time TONY comments. Essay 3 (Privacy & Orwell's 1984 response) Due on Training Board by Friday, April 3, 11:59pm.
W Apr 1	ESL Reading: Myers’ Reassessing the Proofreading Trap” in St. Martin’s pp. 284-301. Sign up for OW Conferences. Assign Group Presentations. 7 completed observations due by Friday, April 3.
M Apr 6	Exercise #5 Due for Class: Visual Analysis of Sample ESL Paper on “Privacy.” Group Presentation Work-time. Interview of Mentor Tutor due on Canvas.
W Apr 8	Revision of Essay 3 Due on Training Board by Friday, April 10, 11:59pm. LOC Error Analysis. Reading: Carol Severino’s “Avoiding Appropriation” (Readings folder on Canvas).
M Apr 13	Group Presentations: Observations.
W Apr 15	Essay 4 Assigned: Why Tutoring is Like Playing the Ukulele.
M Apr 20	List of Tips for Essay 4 Due: Bring a Hard Copy to Class. Brainstorming Exercise.

W Apr 22	Exercise #6 Assigned. Plagiarism and Documentation. Reading: Howard's "Plagiarisms, Authorships, and the Academic Death Penalty" (Readings Folder on Canvas)
M Apr 27	Exercise #6 Due Before Class. You're the Next Contestant on "How Do I Cite That?": Real work with real student citation problems.
W Apr 29	Essay 4 Due. Brainstorming/Learning Strategies: Monty Hall. Reading: Neff's "Learning Disabilities and the Writing Center," St Martin's pp. 249-262
M May 4	Scenarios.
W May 6	Course Evaluations. Final Scenarios. Final Observations Due. Final Revisions Due.
Final Exam W May 13	Final Exam: 12:30pm-2:30pm; Bring a blue exam book!

Appendix J

Fall Draft for

GEN HON 2015H/ENG2015H: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TUTORING WRITING

General Plan: (after the completed pre-requisite English 1000 course) This course provides students with the theoretical and practical frameworks for the one-on-one tutoring of writing. Students will 1) examine the major tenets of writing center philosophy and pedagogy through readings, discussions, and observations, 2) explore the practical application of theory to tutoring through study, observation, writing, discussion, role play, and hands-on tutoring in the Writing Center, 3) study writing as a craft, 4) conduct one observation of an experienced Writing Center tutor each week beginning the third week of the semester.

Why an Honors Course? Throughout the course, students will see the same themes available to all Honors courses: a group of closely-connected-by-shared-experiences students from diverse backgrounds and disciplines, applying old and new knowledge and concepts to real-world examples. Everything students learn or experience in this course, whether through personal interactions or written responses, can be applied outside the classrooms in either other classes or their future programs and jobs, whether they accept the potential job offer with the Writing Center or not. We think that's pretty cool.

Course Materials:

Murphy, Christina, and Steve Sherwood. *The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors*. 4th ed. Boston: Bedford, 2011.

Selected articles available in the Modules section of our Canvas site (courses.missouri.edu).

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is extremely important for your success in this course. Students who have more than 3 unexcused absences may be dropped from the class. You'll also be asked to make up any days you miss by meeting with one of the instructors.

Types of Assignments	Points
First Submissions of Essays (4)	300 (75pts each)
Second Submissions of Essays (2)	200 (100pts each)
Observations/Write ups of Tutorials (10)	100
Group Presentation of Observed Tutorials	75
Exercises (6)	150 (25pts each)
GET (Grammar Explanation Test)	75
Final Exam	100
Total	1000

Plus/Minus Scale: 980-1000: A+; 930-979: A; 900-929: A-; 870-899: B+; 830-869: B; 800-829: B-; 770-799: C+; 730-769: C; 700-729: C-; 670-699: D+; 630-669: D; 600-629

Late Assignments: Assignments are due by the beginning of class, unless otherwise arranged, on the date listed on your syllabus. 10% will be deducted for any late assignments.

Essays (or those big assignments with the points) take four forms in this class. There's a breakdown below, but you should expect each of them to engage a slightly different part of the writing/tutoring experience. To foreground the WI-ness and revisionist aspects of the course, essay 1 has an optional revision, while essays 2 & 3 have mandatory second submissions. Essay 4 is the only submission in the course that isn't eligible for revision.

1. A "lens" essay: We'll give you a theoretical framework. You'll write 3-4 pages of your analytical observations from applying that framework to a real-world interaction you observed.
2. A 1-2 page personal statement to a scholarship or application prompt of your choice.
3. A tutoring response to an Online Writery submission.

4. A 3-4 page “metaphor” argument paper, wherein you choose a task that isn’t like tutoring and prove to us, using tutoring observations as evidence, that it really is kind of like tutoring.

Observations are a crucial part of your training to become a writing tutor. In fact, *you cannot be eligible for a tutoring position* without having observed a total of **ten** tutorials by tutors currently working in the Writing Center. Please use the observation form (in the Assignments folder) to submit your typed observations to Canvas. After your observations, please talk with the tutor about the session; there is space on your observation form for this conversation as well.

Submit Observation Assignments on our Canvas site as you complete them.

By the end of the semester, you must have **ten** observations, as follows. The first seven types may be undertaken in any order:

- Observation of a face-to-face tutorial in the Writing Center
- Observation of an Online Writery tutorial in the Writing Center
- Observation of a face-to-face or online tutorial in a Residence Hall (Brooks, Schurz, or Mark Twain)
- Distance Observation of a face-to-face tutorial in either the WC or Res hall: an observation of body language/space negotiations
- Personal Observation of your own visit to a tutor: make an appointment with a tutor for help on one of your papers (from any class)
- Personal Observation of a tutorial response you receive on the Online Writery (from any class)
- Observations from any of the prior 6 categories (your choice)

*You must complete the first seven types above to start this part. Prior to the final **three** observations, you will be assigned a mentor-tutor. You’ll then do four things, in the following order, with that specific mentor:*

1. Interview them
2. Conduct and submit an Observation of them, either doing an online or face-to-face appointment
3. Conduct and submit another Observation of them, either doing an online or face-to-face appointment
4. Submit an Observation (reflection) of a “takeover” session with your mentor’s (emotional) support

Progress dates for these observations:

1. *3 observations completed*—that means observed, written up, and submitted by **Week 7**
2. *4 more observations (7 total) completed* by **Week 11**
3. *3 remaining observations* due by the last day of class, **Week 16**

WPA Statement on Plagiarism: “In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. This definition applies to texts published in print or on-line, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers....Ethical writers make every effort to acknowledge sources fully and appropriately in accordance with the contexts and genres of their writing. A student who attempts (even if clumsily) to identify and credit his or her source, but who misuses a specific citation format or incorrectly uses quotation marks or other forms of identifying material taken from other sources, has not plagiarized. Instead, such a student should be considered to have failed to cite and document sources appropriately. Students who are fully aware that their actions constitute plagiarism—for example, copying published information into a paper without source attribution for the purpose of claiming the information as their own, or turning in material written by another student—are guilty of academic misconduct.” <http://www.wpacouncil.org/node/9>

ADA Accommodations: Students who have special conditions as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and who need any course materials to be furnished in an alternative format should notify us immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of these students.

Statement on Discrimination: The University of Missouri prohibits all forms of sex or gender discrimination, including sex-based violence. If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination or been harassed or assaulted, you can get help at the Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center, a confidential resource, at rsvp@missouri.edu or (573) 882-6638, or www.rsvp.missouri.edu. You can also contact the Title IX Office (civilrights-titleix@missouri.edu; (573) 882-3880; or www.civilrights.missouri.edu). Because we care about our community, Mizzou employees are required to report all incidents of sex discrimination to the Title IX Office. The RSVP Center and Title IX Office will respect your privacy.

QUASI-NORMAL SCHEDULE

This is the usual schedule with my extra (mostly from memory) notes of what those days would have looked like during the normal schedule.

Date	Class Stuff
Day 1	Introduction: The Toolbox. Syllabus questions and initial metaphor chat for the toolbox.
Day 2	Exercise #1 Due on Canvas Discussion Board: “My History as a Writer” and “How I Write” Writing Center History. Reading: Stephen North’s “The Idea of a Writing Center” and Lunsford’s “Collaboration, Control, and the Idea of a Writing Center” in St. Martins, pp. 44-58; 70-77. Interview role-playing with Journalism-style “profile piece” as players do both brainstorming and content generation. That prepares them for “no paper” as well as “no idea what kind of paper this is.”
Day 3	Reading: Keith Johnstone’s “Status” from <i>Impro</i> (In the Week 2 Module on Canvas) Reading discussion; breaking down what status is and what it’s not. Watch Good Will Hunting and apply status to the scene.
Day 4	Pre-RP, talk about who becomes a tutor and what their goals are and who comes to tutoring and what their goals are. Role-Playing. Readings: Brooks’ “Minimalist Tutoring” in St. Martin’s pp. 128-132; and Corbett’s “Tutoring Style, Tutoring Ethics,” pp.148-155. FERPA exam assigned. Post-RP, work through what an appointment looks like.
Day 5	Analyzing Assignments. Status Transcript/Essay 1 Assigned. Observations Assigned. Show them real assignment with workshop outline sheet; show them observations assignments; show them status essay assignment; they apply assignment analysis to status assignment.
Day 6	Writing Workshop on Persona/Voice. Exercise #2.1 on Voice Due on Canvas (after class) FreeWrite initial “birth and early childhood”; Dress and set scene for Copperfield/Caufield; Work back to specific authorial choices to achieve voice.
Day 7	WI Outreach Presentation. Writing Workshop on Persona/Voice cont. (aka “Chicken & Waffles”). Exercise #2.2 Due on Canvas (before class) Status Transcript Due on Discussion Board by Friday. Group writing on voice changing/adopting for new theme. Identify traits of particular authorial voice and apply as group.
Day 8	Peer Review. Draft of Essay 1 Due in class. Work through student intro paragraph to focus on what’s missing and what’s needed for a successful status essay: focus on details, scene setting, and context. Review how status works/doesn’t work.
Day 9	Essay 1 on Status Due. Introduction to Personal Statements. Read complete package, work through dressing/scene setting and back into what a good PS does.
Day 10	Essay 2 Due: Personal Statement. Bring a hard copy to class. Sign up for Conferences. Role-Playing/Active Listening. List of three adjectives; partner reading; tutorial discussion for both partners.

Day 11	Writing Workshop on “Rules/Style.” Reading: Gopen’s “Bad Advice and Why not to Take it” and “Fifty Years of Stupid Grammar Advice” (Readings Folder on Canvas). GET Assigned. 3 Observations Due by Friday. Collect many grammar and style rules from students; interrogate and categorize the types of rules and talk about how tutoring accesses the discussion of those rules at the table.
Day 12	Mr. Paragraph: Coherence and Cohesion Writing Workshop. Look at two versions of coherence and cohesion: White’s paragraph on cohesion and refer backs; Margaret Mead’s broken up paragraphs to consider cohesion in groups.
Day 13	Writing Workshop on Textual Analysis. Revision of Essay 2 Due. First day of Use of Force; TW: reading out loud; work on identifying potential themes; in-class writing on paragraph and supporting evidence; how to use quotes.
Day 14	Exercise #3 Due on Canvas: Choose a quotation and discuss two different interpretations. “Folding the Universe.”
Day 15	Introduction to the Online Writery. Reading: Lisa Eastmond Bell “Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring when going Online” in St. Martin’s 326-333. GET Due via Canvas: Friday.
Day 16	OW Practice Post (Exercise #4) DUE before class. Reading for Practice Post: TONY Guide (This is 1/2 Your Job) in the Canvas Module for this week. Grokking essays/ reverse outlines. Schedule Request Form (in-class).
Day 17	In class: Real Time Grokking and writing a frame. Exercise 4.2 due.
Day 18	Assign Tutor Mentors. Real Time TONY comments. Essay 3 (Privacy & Orwell's 1984 response) Due on Training Board by Friday.
Day 19	ESL Reading: Myers’ Reassessing the Proofreading Trap” in St. Martin’s pp. 284-301. Sign up for OW Conferences. Assign Group Presentations. 7 completed observations due by Friday. Watch ESL video; discuss ESL concerns on campus.
Day 20	Exercise #5 Due for Class: Visual Analysis of Sample ESL Paper on “Privacy.” Group Presentation Work-time. Interview of Mentor Tutor due on Canvas. Discuss visual analysis.
Day 21	Revision of Essay 3 Due on Training Board by Friday. LOC Error Analysis. Reading: Carol Severino’s “Avoiding Appropriation” (Readings folder on Canvas). Takako’s loc issues. How to pitch the most important loc.
Day 22	Group Presentations: Observations.
Day 23	Essay 4 Assigned: Why Tutoring is Like Playing the Ukulele. Walkthrough of a potential topic for the paper.
Day 24	List of Tips for Essay 4 Due: Bring a Hard Copy to Class. Brainstorming Exercise. Pair students to peer review the possible processes for the tip choices.
Day 25	Exercise #6 Assigned. Plagiarism and Documentation. Reading: Howard’s “Plagiarisms, Authorships, and the Academic Death Penalty” (Readings Folder on Canvas) Discuss how plagiarism shows up in the WC and how tutors can both keep writers classy and keep them out of trouble.
Day 26	Exercise #6 Due Before Class. You’re the Next Contestant on “How Do I Cite That?”: Real work with real student citation problems. In real time.
Day 27	Essay 4 Due. Brainstorming/Learning Strategies: Monty Hall. Reading: Neff’s “Learning Disabilities and the Writing Center,” St Martin’s pp. 249-262.
Day 28	Scenarios.
Day 29	Course Evaluations. Final Scenarios. Final Observations Due. Final Revisions Due.
Day 30	Final Exam: Tbd; Bring a blue exam book!

Ok, goals: fit this into a M/W split-class schedule that allows half of the class to attend each Monday or Wednesday and do some sort of work online that week that allows them to get both normal sessions worth of work per week.

Considerations: Monday & Wednesday have to be identical for 8 people apiece. Later than that in the week is when things are due, but we can't unfairly set deadlines for the Wednesday kids...so...that means moving a lot of due dates.

Here's a quick breakdown of topics we normally would/have to cover:

1. Toolbox/Syllabus/Introductions
2. WC History/Foundations
3. Status (2 Days)
4. Assignment Analysis
5. Persona/Voice (2 Days)
6. Personal Statements (3 Days)
7. Analysis/Evidence (3 Days)
8. TONY (4 Days)
9. ESL (2 Days)
10. locs & Grammar (2 Days)
11. Plagiarism (2 Days)
12. Brainstorming
13. Scenarios
14. Final

Feels like we'll have to for sure revise some of the multiple days, but maybe also look at which days to throw away. I've taken a first pass at the schedule below by "week" instead of day. Anything with an asterisk is me not knowing whether it needs its own week or whether we can rework it elsewhere.

New thoughts as of 7/1: pros and cons to talking about tutoring before status.

NEW-HYBRID-NOT-NORMAL SCHEDULE **DRAFT**

Date	Class Stuff
Week 1	Introduction: The Toolbox. Syllabus questions and initial metaphor chat for the toolbox.
Week 2	Exercise #1 Due on Canvas Discussion Board: "My History as a Writer" and "How I Write" Writing Center History. Reading: Stephen North's "The Idea of a Writing Center" and Lunsford's "Collaboration, Control, and the Idea of a Writing Center" in St. Martins, pp. 44-58; 70-77. Interview role-playing with Journalism-style "profile piece" as players do both brainstorming and content generation. That prepares them for "no paper" as well as "no idea what kind of paper this is."
Week 3	Reading: Keith Johnstone's "Status" from <i>Impro</i> (In the Week 2 Module on Canvas) Reading discussion; breaking down what status is and what it's not. Watch Good Will Hunting and apply status to the scene.

Week 3?	Pre-RP, talk about who becomes a tutor and what their goals are and who comes to tutoring and what their goals are. Role-Playing. Readings: Brooks' "Minimalist Tutoring" in St. Martin's pp. 128-132; and Corbett's "Tutoring Style, Tutoring Ethics," pp.148-155. FERPA exam assigned. Post-RP, work through what an appointment looks like.
Week 4	Analyzing Assignments. Status Transcript/Essay 1 Assigned. Observations Assigned. Show them real assignment with workshop outline sheet; show them observations assignments; show them status essay assignment; they apply assignment analysis to status assignment.
Week 5	Writing Workshop on Persona/Voice. Exercise #2.1 on Voice Due on Canvas (after class) FreeWrite initial "birth and early childhood"; Dress and set scene for Copperfield/Caufield; Work back to specific authorial choices to achieve voice.
Week 5	WI Outreach Presentation. Writing Workshop on Persona/Voice cont. (aka "Chicken & Waffles"). Exercise #2.2 Due on Canvas (before class) Status Transcript Due on Discussion Board by Friday. Group writing on voice changing/adopting for new theme. Identify traits of particular authorial voice and apply as group.
Week 5	Peer Review. Draft of Essay 1 Due in class. Work through student intro paragraph to focus on what's missing and what's needed for a successful status essay: focus on details, scene setting, and context. Review how status works/doesn't work.
Week 6	Essay 1 on Status Due. Introduction to Personal Statements. Read complete package, work through dressing/scene setting and back into what a good PS does.
Week 6	Essay 2 Due: Personal Statement. Bring a hard copy to class. Sign up for Conferences. Role-Playing/Active Listening. List of three adjectives; partner reading; tutorial discussion for both partners.
*	Writing Workshop on "Rules/Style." Reading: Gopen's "Bad Advice and Why not to Take it" and "Fifty Years of Stupid Grammar Advice" (Readings Folder on Canvas). GET Assigned. 3 Observations Due by Friday. Collect many grammar and style rules from students; interrogate and categorize the types of rules and talk about how tutoring accesses the discussion of those rules at the table.
*	Mr. Paragraph: Coherence and Cohesion Writing Workshop. Look at two versions of coherence and cohesion: White's paragraph on cohesion and refer backs; Margaret Mead's broken up paragraphs to consider cohesion in groups.
*	Writing Workshop on Textual Analysis. Revision of Essay 2 Due. First day of Use of Force; TW: reading out loud; work on identifying potential themes; in-class writing on paragraph and supporting evidence; how to use quotes.
*	Exercise #3 Due on Canvas: Choose a quotation and discuss two different interpretations. "Folding the Universe." Group work in class/how origami helps us learn use of evidence.
Week 7	Introduction to the Online Writery. Reading: Lisa Eastmond Bell "Preserving the Rhetorical Nature of Tutoring when going Online" in St. Martin's 326-333. GET Due via Canvas: Friday.
Week 7	OW Practice Post (Exercise #4) DUE before class. Reading for Practice Post: TONY Guide (This is 1/2 Your Job) in the Canvas Module for this week. Grokking essays/ reverse outlines. Schedule Request Form (in-class).
Week 8	In class: Real Time Grokking and writing a frame. Exercise 4.2 due.
Week 8	Assign Tutor Mentors. Real Time TONY comments. Essay 3 (Privacy & Orwell's 1984 response) Due on Training Board by Friday.
Week 9	ESL Reading: Myers' Reassessing the Proofreading Trap" in St. Martin's pp. 284-301. Sign up for OW Conferences. Assign Group Presentations. 7

	completed observations due by Friday. Watch ESL video; discuss ESL concerns on campus.
Week 9	Exercise #5 Due for Class: Visual Analysis of Sample ESL Paper on "Privacy." Group Presentation Work-time. Interview of Mentor Tutor due on Canvas. Discuss visual analysis.
Week 10	Revision of Essay 3 Due on Training Board by Friday. LOC Error Analysis. Reading: Carol Severino's "Avoiding Appropriation" (Readings folder on Canvas). Takako's loc issues. How to pitch the most important loc.
*	Group Presentations: Observations.
*	Essay 4 Assigned: Why Tutoring is Like Playing the Ukulele. Walkthrough of a potential topic for the paper.
*	List of Tips for Essay 4 Due: Bring a Hard Copy to Class. Brainstorming Exercise. Pair students to peer review the possible processes for the tip choices. How to teach tutoring without a paper, again.
Week 11	Exercise #6 Assigned. Plagiarism and Documentation. Reading: Howard's "Plagiarisms, Authorships, and the Academic Death Penalty" (Readings Folder on Canvas) Discuss how plagiarism shows up in the WC and how tutors can both keep writers classy and keep them out of trouble.
Week 11	Exercise #6 Due Before Class. You're the Next Contestant on "How Do I Cite That?": Real work with real student citation problems. In real time.
*	Essay 4 Due. Brainstorming/Learning Strategies: Monty Hall. Reading: Neff's "Learning Disabilities and the Writing Center," St Martin's pp. 249-262.
Week 12	Scenarios.
Week 12	Course Evaluations. Final Scenarios. Final Observations Due. Final Revisions Due.
?	Final Exam: Tbd; Bring a blue exam book!

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VITA

When Aaron was ready to be born on July 8, 1978, his mother sent one of his older brothers to tell their father, who was driving the tractor out in the field North of their farm in rural Missouri. “Mom’s ready to go” was approximately the message and their father’s response was something to the effect of, “ok, let me finish this round.” Mom handled it ok, I guess. She was pretty flexible when she needed to be, too.

Aaron grew up in the middle of Missouri. He attended multiple higher education institutions and pursued multiple majors before finishing a BS in Psychology, with the goal of becoming a school counselor. He started graduate school at the University of Missouri in 2002. He moved from Education to English and finished an MA. During that time, he became a tutor at the MU Writing Center, taught composition classes, and became a father. He loved those three jobs, but hated the Online Writery; they were fated to be together, though. He became a Student Services Coordinator with Academic Retention Services in 2009.

He was hired as the Director of the Online Writery in 2011. In 2018, he became the Director of the Writing Center. During 2020-2021, he wrote this dissertation, endured a pandemic, and lost around twenty-five pounds. You don’t have to sell him on flexibility.