**The Guided Tutorial in Writing**

If you feel that weak writing skills will impede the success of one or more of your students, you might consider asking those students to take part in a Guided Tutorial in Writing with one of our professional Writing Center instructors during the semester.

**What is a Guided Tutorial in writing?**

The Guided Tutorial in Writing is similar to a regular writing center referral but with more structured regular support. Students work with a professional writing tutor-instructor in the Writing Center on specific writing skills or on particular writing assignments, usually once a week throughout the semester. The main purpose of the Guided Tutorial is to help students improve their writing while they are in your class and also to reinforce and teach, as needed, skills they can apply to assignments for your class and for other classes in the future.

The program is “guided” because you determine the nature of the assignments and the skills the students will work on and will help to guide them through the process, and is “tutorial” because students will be expected to work with a Writing Center instructor one-on-one for a number of weeks on their writing skills.

You apply the specific conditions that a student should fulfill, such as working in the Writing Center on revisions of an assignment or preparing future assignments in stages from drafting to revision, or attending regular meetings with a Writing Center instructor. You can also specify the types of skills the student needs to work on, the number of revisions required, and the number of tutoring sessions you expect the student to attend.

Writing Center instructors are happy to work with you on planning and shaping the Guided Tutorial plan for your students.

**How does the Guided Tutorial in Writing differ from the End-of-Semester “U” in Writing?**

Unlike the End-of Semester “U,” the Guided Tutorial does not appear on a student’s academic transcript, but it is still a formal referral and agreement between you, the student, and the Writing Center while the student is still in your class rather than after the term has ended. You guide the process more directly than with an end-of-semester “U.”

This program is more structured and longer-term than a simple referral to the Writing Center, but less strict than the End-of Semester “U” in writing, which some students and instructors feel happens too late (after the semester ends) and does not allow students to improve and apply skills during the classes in which they may be struggling.

**When and in what circumstances should I consider assigning a Guided Tutorial in writing?**

You can refer students for Guided Tutorials any time during the semester, but the earlier the better after you have noticed problems with a student’s writing. If you assess your students’ writing early in the semester and are concerned that a student might not pass the class or earn an “R” unless writing skills improve, or if you think you may be likely to assign a student a “U” at the end of the term, you might consider referring that student for a Guided Tutorial.

A Guided Tutorial could be helpful for students whose skills need to improve in one or more major areas of writing, such as writing with sources or developing sentence- level skills, or who have more global, large-scale writing problems. Again, the main considerations are that the student is in danger of not passing and assignment or the class, might not earn an “R,” or might be likely to receive a “U” in Writing at the end of the term unless the student’s skills improve.

**What are some of the benefits of assigning a Guided Tutorial?**

The Guided Tutorial allows you to identify specific writing goals and outcomes for students so they can develop the skills they need to succeed in your course and other courses. Professors can assign a Guided Tutorial to encourage students to work on their writing skills during the semester, when attention to their writing will have the greatest impact on their written assignments that term. The Guided Tutorial gives students a better chance of success on written assignments and increases the likelihood they can earn “R” credit.

**What happens after I assign a Guided Tutorial?**

We will send follow up emails to the students and let you know if students have come to work with us, and you can contact the Writing Center to check on students’ progress at any time. We will let you know when the students have completed the conditions you agreed upon and will share our assessment of their improvement.

However, you establish the terms of completion and then determine if students have made sufficient improvement in their writing skills and fulfilled the conditions you agreed on with the students. (The referral form includes a space for signatures and dates so you can establish clear agreement.) Based on your re-assessment of their skills and a review of their participation in tutoring, you decide the effect on grades on assignments and whether to give students a “U” at the end of the term and/or grant “R” credit.

**What can I do if students have notable problems with writing but not sufficient to merit a Guided Tutorial?**

You can simply encourage students to visit the Writing Center, request they visit in a note on an assignment, or let them know you expect them to visit and send us a “Writing Center Referral” form (attached). You may contact us to see if a student you have referred has come to the Writing Center, but we typically don’t monitor and follow-up on the progress of those who are referred for one or two specific assignments or encouraged to visit, unless you ask us to do so.

**Can I still assign an end-of-semester “U” to a student I referred for a Guided Tutorial ?**

Yes. If a student’s writing skills have not improved sufficiently and could still benefit from regular instruction, or if the student did not follow through with the terms you established for the Guided Tutorial, you can assign an end-of-semester “U” in writing along with the final course grade.

**Procedure for Referring Students for a Guided Tutorial in Writing**

**1. Discuss the Guided Tutorial with the students you plan to refer to the Writing Center:**

* Inform students that you would like them to work on their writing skills, and explain that their class performance could be negatively affected unless they improve their writing. If they are in a writing-intensive course, explain they may not get “R” credit.
* Talk to students about the course writing objectives and goals and outline the expectations they need to fulfill to complete their individualized Guided Tutorial programs. (Examples of types of expectations: completing a specified number of revisions, working on particular writing skills, visiting the Writing Center a certain number of times.) Note these expectations (or conditions) in the “Recommended Plan” section of the Guided Tutorial Referral Form.
* Explain the potential benefits of the Guided Tutorial in Writing, such as
* Receiving individualized one-on-one writing instruction
* Improving the quality of writing in subsequent course papers
* Improving writing skills so students are prepared to meet greater writing challenges
* Earning “R” credit for an “R”-option course
* Addressing writing obstacles now to prevent receiving a “U” in Writing at the end of the term
* Emphasize that even if students fulfill the Guided Tutorial obligations identified in the Guided Tutorial referral form—and even if their writing improves during the semester—they may still receive an end-of-the semester “U” in writing if they have not met the writing objectives of the course or demonstrated writing competency equivalent to their peers or appropriate to their class status.

**2. Complete the referral form and sign the Guided Tutorial agreement with the student**

* Send a copy of the form to the Writing Center (campus mail or email to [mlstephe@owu.edu](mailto:mlstephe@owu.edu)) , or ask the student to bring it to Corns 316 to make their first appointment.
* You may also send this form to us if you don’t have a chance to talk about the Guided Tutorial with the student and we will then contact the student if we have not heard from them in one week after we receive the form. We hope you will be able to review and sign the form together as a contract between you and the student.

**3. Prepare students for their first Writing Center appointment. Please ask them to**

* Call (740-368-3925) or stop by the Writing Center (Corns 316) to schedule an appointment
* Bring any writing prompts, drafts, and papers with grades and/or instructor’ comments to the first

appointment

* Bring the completed referral form/contract to their first meeting. As noted above, you may also send

this form to us.

Please Contact Martine Stephens (mlstephe@ owu.edu; 740-368-3926) if you have questions or would like to share additional information about a student you have referred for a Guided Tutorial.