



Getting the Most out of a Visit to the Writing Center

Writing Center Consultants and Specialists are prepared to help you become a better writer. Your preparation for and active participation during a consultation will help you achieve this goal. It is important to remember that you are in control of what will happen; below are some tips to help you get the most out of the time you spend with us.

1. Come to the Writing Center willing to learn. Writing Center staff are not the "writing police." We are here to help you become a better writer. This can only happen when you are willing to talk about your writing AND willing to listen to suggestions about that same piece of writing.
2. Bring the assignment with you. Your instructor has certain expectations for the paper you are trying to write, and those expectations can often be clarified by reviewing the assignment sheet during a consultation.
3. Bring everything you've done so far. By bringing notes, planning, and drafts, our consultants and specialists can see the journey your writing has taken and suggest where you might step next.
4. Bring any papers the instructor has returned to you with feedback. While the session will focus on the paper you are currently working on, it will be helpful to both the Writing Center staff member and yourself to review the comments your instructor has made on your past work. What has your instructor identified on these papers as needing improvement? You'll want to be sure that the paper you're working on *doesn't* repeat problems you've had in the past and that it *does* repeat the things you've done successfully.
5. Set a realistic goal for the session. What would you like to understand once the session is over? What bridge are you having difficulty crossing? What problem would you like to solve in a half an hour to an hour? Don't hesitate to relate your goals for the session to the Writing Center staff member you are working with; they will appreciate your taking their time seriously.
6. Think through the assignment. You can visit the Writing Center at any stage in the writing process - whether that be deciding on a topic, organizing ideas, writing an introduction, or revising a draft. Wherever you happen to be,



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however, you need to make a serious attempt at understanding the assignment. Be prepared to answer questions about the assignment and your writing.