



Academic Support Center Newsletter

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Letter from the Director:

Marianne Tecun

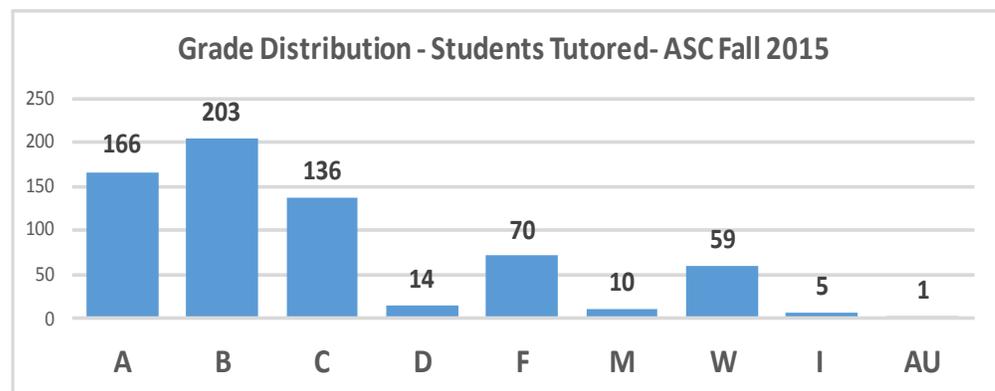


Remember report cards? Many of us dreaded them at times and other times we just couldn't wait to show them to the family. The Academic Support Center receives a report card too. In fact, it is the students that give us our grade!

Careful analysis is conducted at the close of each semester to measure how well we did. Some of the measurements include the number of students that came for tutoring; the feedback students had on the tutors; the courses tutored; the grades students earned in those courses; and the number of tutoring appointments held. The results of the examination determine the helpfulness of the ASC. The results also guide any changes to ASC services that might need to be made.

Here are some of the results from the ASC fall 2015 report card:

- 9, 241 appointments were held during the fall semester!
- 686 students came for tutoring in the ASC.
- 28 subjects were covered by the staff.
- 18 subjects were tutored in the Writing Center alone!



The numbers speak for themselves. Be part of the majority earning As, Bs, and Cs and make an appointment today. We look forward to working with YOU!



Karyn Smith, Writing Center Coordinator

“The Writing Center’s mission is to provide one-on-one tutoring to students in all subject areas.”

Letter from the Writing Center Coordinator: *Karyn Smith*

Welcome to this special edition of the Academic Support Center Newsletter, produced by the Writing Center tutoring team. We’ve tried to fill this edition with information that will help you be more successful in your mid-terms and beyond!

The Writing Center’s mission is to provide one-on-one tutoring to students in all subject areas. We’re here to help you succeed! But did you know that you can also play an instrumental role in your success? Here are a few tips to help you make the most of your time with your writing tutor:

Visit us at least one week before your assignment due date. We’re happy to help you at any point in the writing process. But the earlier you make an appointment, the more help we’re able to give you.

Arrive early. If we have a cancellation, or if a tutor happens to be free, we’re happy to give you some extra time.

Bring your books, your assignment instructions, and even your syllabus to your appointment. The more information we have about your professor’s expectations, the better we can help you to meet those expectations.

Try to start your draft before your appointment. Even if you just bring a freewrite or an outline, it will help your tutor better understand the direction your assignment is taking.

Take notes during your appointment. Research shows that writing information down is essential to learning that information. Plus, you might forget those great writing tips your tutor gave you by the time you get home!

Remember that we tutor more than just grammar! We can help you develop a thesis, improve your focus, structure your ideas, cite sources—in short, we can help you with any aspect of your paper and the writing process!



Writing tutors Stephanie Lemieux, Emily Petrizzi, Betzabeth Castro, Victoria Tomis, and Emily Beers gather together at the ASC’s annual December Holiday Party.

Quick Tips to Succeed in a Criminal Justice Class

By Emily Petrizzi, HCC Criminal Justice major and Writing Tutor

Pay attention to detail: Whether you are writing a traffic accident report or studying a case brief, paying attention to small details is important. Spelling, grammar, and punctuation can make all the difference in your understanding of the content!

Be on time and don't miss class: If a detective missed a day at work, he would fall behind on a case. If a lawyer was late for court, the judge would not be impressed. Getting used to good attendance and time habits will help you succeed in the future.

Stay up-to-date on current events in the news: Knowing the outcome of a highly publicized court case can help you in a future case of your own! Also, knowing the CURRENT laws of your state is crucial. Generally, statutes change often. Be "cutting-edge" when it comes to CJ knowledge.

Read your textbooks! Unlike many other courses, memorization will be your best friend. Example: Know your amendments (Do you know a person's 4th Amendment rights?) and famous court cases (Gideon v. Wainwright).



"Be 'cutting-edge' when it comes to CJ knowledge!"

Quick Tips to Succeed in a Theater Class

By Betzabeth Castro, HCC Theater Arts major and Writing Tutor

Pay attention: The instructor will always have some meaningful information that will always enhance your performance or your paper. The slightest piece of advice can do wonders if you choose to be alert and attentive.

Be willing to do it "wrong": New discoveries will happen when you're willing to fail. Striving for the "right way" will hinder you and stop the creative process because you're so focused on the "right answer."

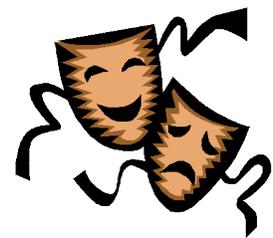
Acknowledge your insecurities: Theatre is all about truthfulness and to achieve that you have to be vulnerable. At some point, you will feel uncomfortable. I've learned that it's best to admit you're insecurities and acknowledge that they're there to jump over that hurdle.

Do more research: I don't think I've gone through one class without Professor Sheehan saying to research the play. Once you've found the given circumstances of a play (the facts given like location, time, and characters) go beyond that and seek even more details. This will enhance your understanding of the your character's world and may help you understand why they say what they say, why they take certain actions, and why they think certain thoughts.

Always ask why: Never stop asking yourself why a character says what they speak and why they take certain actions. Everything you say and do is deliberate and has a purpose behind it and finding that purpose is going to drive the story forward.

Do the warm ups: Acting warm ups are a great way to get your creative juices going and to open you up and align your body to create a "blank canvas" to form a character out of. They connect you with your imagination so you can get your mind used to finishing a story and believing the story you are telling.

Give each step it's own time: Don't rush through the process. Take the time that you need to get through each and every step of the process.



"New discoveries will happen when you're willing to fail."



“NoodleTools is a magical wonder of a citation generator!”

Use Your Noodle Tools!

By Stephanie Lemieux, Seasoned Student Researcher and Writing Tutor

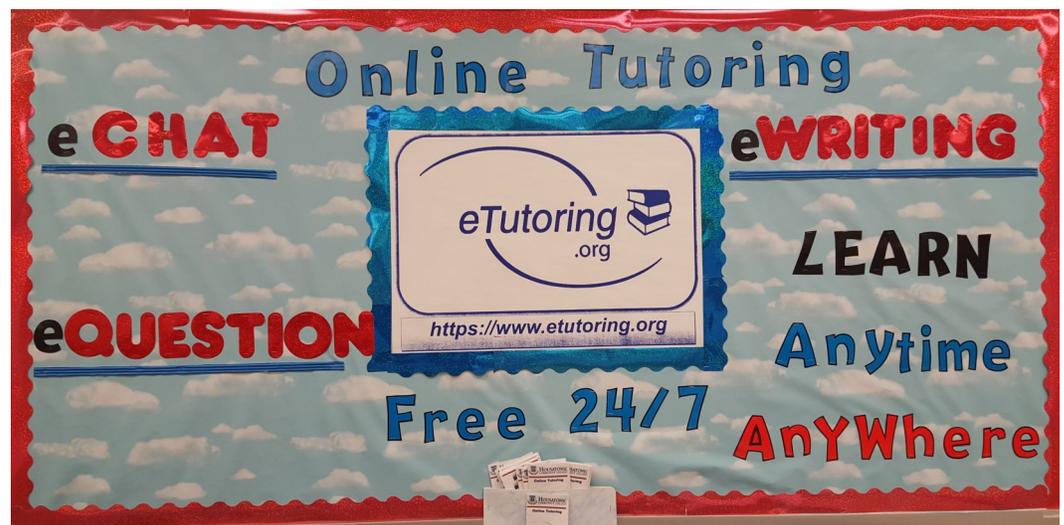
Formatting citations for research papers is a process that is often tricky at best, and a headache at worst. A Works Cited page with properly placed periods, parentheses, and quotation marks is too often the afterthought in academic writing; the final hurdle faced by students eager to catch an hour of sleep after an all-nighter.

But correctly crediting sources is a fundamental skill for academic success, and the importance of accuracy cannot be understated. Fortunately, helpful aids exist to save students from formatting frenzy, and my favorite among them is noodletools.com.

NoodleTools is a magical wonder of a citation generator that takes care of the tedium and pops out perfection. After clicking “NoodleTools Express” from the homepage, the website asks you to choose MLA, APA, or Chicago style. Next, you’ll choose what you are citing (whether it’s a book, website, magazine, etc.), input the necessary information, click submit, and then voila! A beautiful, perfect citation appears, ready to be copied and pasted into your document.

The best news of all? Housatonic Community College has paid for student access to Noodle Tools. You can find a link on the HCC Library website, or go directly to noodletools.com. Next time you’re writing a research paper, try it out and free yourself from technicality trepidation.

If you’d like help with setting up your account, make a tutoring appointment with me!



“You probably learned more in class discussion than in lecture: so that should be how you study.”

Mid-Terms And Beyond: Three Essential Study Tips

By Ed Fians, Philosophy Professor and Writing Tutor

Circle up: You’ve been sitting in the same seat for a few weeks now--at this point, you know who works and who doesn’t. You may have even made a pal out of a classroom neighbor. That person is your ticket to a better grade. Researchers have found folks score higher when they bond. So, form a circle of folks you work well with--maybe even just one other person. You probably learned more in class discussion than in lecture: so that should be how you study.

Voice over: Use your phone--yes, really. The record function is a great way to absorb a large amount of info while you’re doing something else. Press record and read your notes out loud; or, have someone else do it and buy them dinner in return if hearing your own voice is creepy. Then, while you’re waiting for the bus, doing dishes or laundry, or hanging out between classes, you can listen and learn! Your headphones are now a study tool. Don’t let anyone tell you that you don’t use your time wisely!

Don’t change: The worst thing you can do to your body--the thing that’s connected to your brain--is start messing with your routines. Eat like you normally do; don’t pig out to keep yourself awake. Drink the same amount of caffeine you always have. Don’t start or stop a vice. Sleep like you know you should. Don’t stay up to cram: you’re wasting your time. It doesn’t help as much as you think.

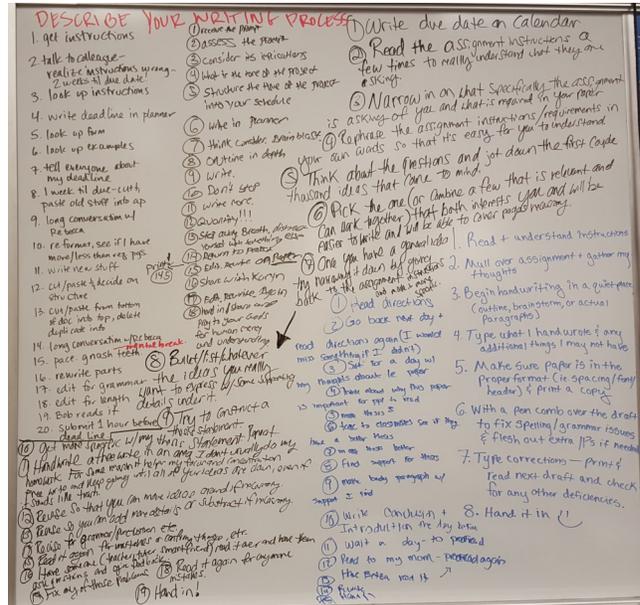
Examine Your Writing Process

On the last Friday in February, the writing tutors gathered together to talk about tutoring strategies. During that time, we all sat down and listed all of the steps in our writing processes, from the moment we get an assignment to the moment we submit that final draft.

Here are some of the things we learned:

- Writing down deadlines in our planners is an important step in all of our processes.
- We all tell people about our deadlines. Making deadlines “public” helps hold us accountable!
- We all need to talk out our ideas with friends or professors at some point during our writing process.
- We plan for breaks.
- We assess or annotate our assignment instructions to make sure we understand the task.
- Some of us love freewriting, while others need to start with outlines.

Try this exercise out for yourself, and let us know what you learn!



When Writing Is Hard

By Victoria Tomis, Editor-in-Chief of *Horizons* and Writing Center tutor

I did everything I possibly could to avoid getting around to writing this up. Procrastination isn't the right word for the *anything-but-writing* activities I was up to on a daily basis, whether it be while I was in the Writing Center organizing the tutee sheets, or while I was at home cuddling my cat Paco or scrubbing mysterious salsa splatters off the inside of the microwave, I was doing anything but putting pencil to paper (or fingers to keyboard) to write this darned thing.

"A paragraph. Just write a paragraph," my boss told me this evening. Not spoken with the exasperation of trying to placate an ornery child, but instead a simple, modest request that could translate to the fundamental saying: with oxygen you breathe, so too, with words do you write.

Instead, I was shrugging...no...*cringing* away from it. From what exactly? The not-knowing, the not-writing, the whole not-ness of the situation. I was so used to all of the papers I wrote coming together as tidy as a present wrapped and ribboned, slid underneath a Christmas tree.

Instead, after I was told I had to do this, that same feeling from before overcame me: "stranded". This "stranded" feeling is something that I've felt on more than one occasion and it's that very same feeling that kept me delaying writing this piece up. It's feeling like I'm trapped in place with my creativity left battered, bruised, and all dried up. I couldn't tap out any of the vitality or energy of my thoughts, I couldn't remotely reach into my inspiration.

Yes, even as a student-tutor, long time diary-keeper, creative writing fan, and English and literature enthusiast this *still* happens even to me. I know the ways around the written word. I have the mechanics and the understanding of writing and what I need to do, but it's the ideas that still occasionally elude me.

The myths of writing are that good writers just drop their pen onto the paper, and like an enchanted quill from the Harry Potter universe the words scrawl out like magic. In reality writing doesn't come out polished and perfect in the first draft. It's not always a poetic masterpiece. Sometimes the process is downright infuriating and teeth-gnashing and frustrating. Sometimes the final product is unsatisfying, to say the least. The gaping spaces of "not knowing" are what get me the most.

Some may call it writer's block, other say that they simply hate writing in a desperate last-ditch effort to save themselves from the torture. Really, it's that sometimes writing straight up SUCKS. There, I've said it!

"In reality, writing doesn't come out polished and perfect in the first draft. Sometimes the process is downright infuriating and teeth-gnashing and frustrating."



Fun Stuff



Rearrange the eight scrambled letters into three possible correctly spelled words. The resulting three words are called anagrams.

1. teaerrdc _____

2. neemsasl _____

3. natceerd _____

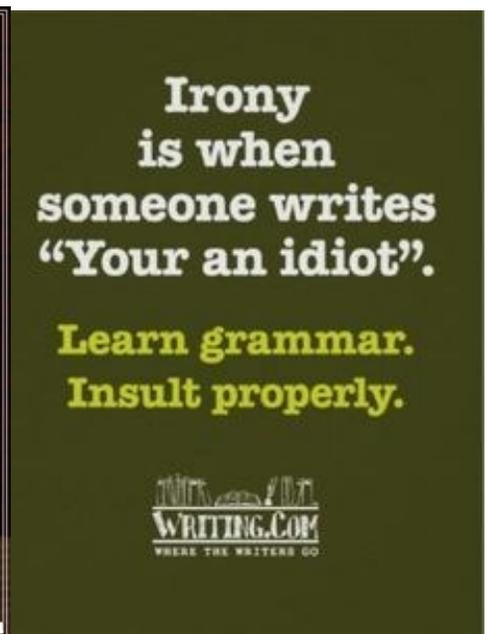
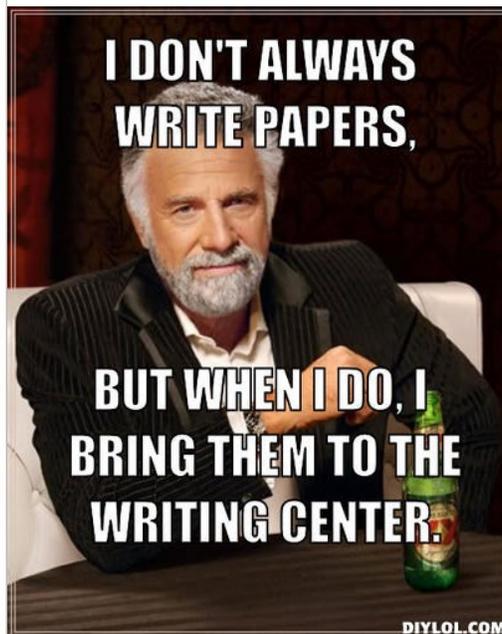
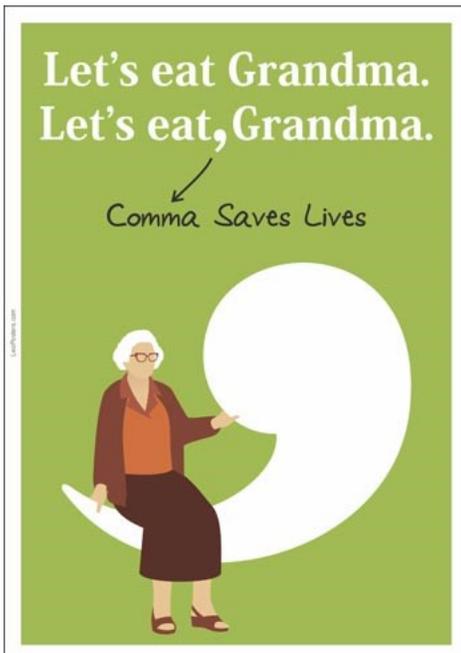
4. ripinsga _____

5. nutoersc _____

6. adteorrrp _____

7. tniarsp _____

8. setrerda _____



MEET THE SPRING 2016 ASC TUTORS



ACCOUNTNG

Robin Dilg

SCIENCES

Arian Pagan

Robin Smith

Janet Yarrow

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Emily Petrizzi

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Jiyan Bedawi

John Kalyondo

PSYCHOLOGY & HUMAN SERVICES

Laura Turiano

ENGLISH & WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Rebecca Adams

Lee Bayusik

Emily Beers

Pat Beers

Ed Bloom

Betzabeth Castro

Ed Fians

Terry Kozek

Stephanie Lemieux

Emily Petrizzi

Beverly Salman

Karyn Smith

Victoria Tomis

Laura Turiano

Cynthia Wolfe Boynton

MATH

Theodora Benezra

Blake Bennett

Thien Dang

Shawn Falbowski

Kevin Fontan

Thereza Kalangala

John Kalyondo

Stephen Kotsay

Harrison Mangines

Tajan Marshall

Marina Phillips

Sara Rahim

Richard Rizzi

ESL

Robin Dilg

Gigi Yanez-Hamberger

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Arabic: Driss Mellouk

Tarek Serri

French: Driss Mellouk

Claudette Constant

Spanish: Driss Mellouk

Gigi Yanez-Hamberger



Academic Support Center
Lafayette Hall
Rooms B116, B118, and B120

Tutoring Hours:

Monday through Thursday	10:00 a.m.—7:00 p.m.
Friday	10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Departments

Tutoring & Study Groups
Testing Services
The Writing Center
Disabilities Support
Center for Academic Progress (CAP)