

From **Elizabeth Watness**

B.A. in International Studies, Spring 2013
W396: Fall 2008 – Fellow 2009-present

It's a tough job, trying to encapsulate all the ways that working in the Writing Center has affected me. I might offer up the multitude of marketable job skills that tutoring can develop: communication skills, teamwork/collaboration, prioritizing tasks in a busy work environment, and so forth. And while those are all valuable skills for any graduate, they are not the reason why I love working in the UWC as much as I do, or even why I chose to work here in the first place.

Meeting and working with even a fraction of the diverse student body here at IUPUI is one of the big reasons, but it's really the faculty and other undergraduate tutors who make working at the UWC such a rewarding experience. They are all so knowledgeable and passionate about writing, about learning, and about helping others. Their enthusiasm inspires me every day to be the best tutor and the best person I can be, and I'm proud to call them all friends as well as co-workers.

Finally, working as a writing tutor has helped me become a better writer. I love creative writing, and I've always been pretty good at it, but since taking W396, and in analyzing other people's writing so deeply, I've learned how to analyze my own writing on a deeper level. Writing for fun has become a bit more frustrating than in the past, because I'm so much more critical of my ideas, my organization, my word choice, etc, but it's also more rewarding, because I know my writing is better for it.

From **Josh Bernardin**

B.A. in Religious Studies and B.A. in Philosophy, Spring 2013
W396: Fall 2008 – Fellow 2009-present

When I began W396, I was terrified. I felt that I was a poor writer, a sloppy thinker, and undeserving of inclusion in the course. I did everything I could to quietly hide at the fringe of class discussion. However, as the semester wore on, I became increasingly comfortable around the other Mavens and discovered a desire to belong. I became gradually more motivated to participate, to contribute, and to challenge my insecurity. I developed confidence and have become a better person as a result. The best choice I made as a student was enrolling in W396. Take the class.

From **Heather McFall**

Creative Writing Major
W396: Fall 2005 – present
Winner: Outstanding Writing Fellow Award 2007
Winner: Outstanding English Major Award 2007

I really found a home for myself at the writing center. Until I began my training to become a peer tutor, I had no real feel for where I fit in at the university, and no clear idea of what I wanted to do after graduation. The writing center gave me both. During my time as a tutor, I have learned so much about myself as a writer, and I feel like I have accomplished something special every time a student leaves the writing center feeling a little less defeated and a little more confident in her ability to write. I am so thankful for this experience.

From **Ben Johnson**

B.A. in English 2003
W396: Fall 1999 - Fellow 1999-2003

I became a Writing Fellow because I wanted to improve my own writing. That might seem to be a selfish reason to tutor others, but one of the most important things I have learned is that writing is collaboration between writer and reader. Writing is a way of communicating with others; it is the

challenge of taking an idea and trying to convey it to others through words and language. Without a reader, writing is just a collection of meaningless marks on a page.

Without a reader, it is impossible to gauge whether or not a piece of writing is effective, to know if it is understood. That is where the Writing Center comes in, “because writers need readers.” I think the most important role a tutor plays is not that of a grammatical authority, but simply that of a reader – more importantly, a reader that the writer can talk to face-to-face. Writing does not exist in a vacuum. As a writer, the ability to talk to a reader about your writing, to see how your writing is perceived, is invaluable.

That is what I have realized about my own writing process. It is impossible to create the perfect first draft, to craft a piece of writing that perfectly expresses my intent as a writer to ALL of my readers. Without the Writing Center, I would not have a place to talk about my writing and the writing process. At the Writing Center, the process flows two ways: from writer to reader AND from reader to writer. As a tutor, I learn as much about the writing process from the students as the students learn from me.

From **Amber Lane**

B.A. in English - Writing and Literacy, December 2011

W396: Fall 2008 – Fellow 2008-present

W396 is the most influential class I have taken, as it allowed me to work at the University Writing Center. The benefits of working at the UWC are vast; I have learned about myself as a writer and as a person, and my self-confidence concerning writing has increased ten-fold. The experience is also my ace-in-the-hole for job interviews, as I can talk about all the valuable interpersonal skills, organizational skills, and communication skills that I have honed during my time here.

From **Heather K. Barker**

B.A. in English and B.A. in Philosophy, May 2012

W396: Spring 2009 – Fellow 2009-present

I took W396 because it was a challenge. I wanted to be a tutor because I knew it would take me out of my comfort zone. I am a quiet person by nature, so the UWC has helped me develop another part of myself. In addition, of course, the UWC gave me the opportunity to explore my academic interests as well. For me, tutoring has been a continual learning and growing experience.

From **Lauren Carter**

B.A. in English

W396: Fall 2010 – Fellow 2010-present

No other class at IUPUI will teach you as much about yourself and about writing. W396 is invaluable— not just for those hoping to tutor, but also for a student from any discipline wishing to experience the sense of community that many feel the university is lacking. If you are considering W396, you can probably write. You can probably construct a cohesive essay and eliminate wordiness in your own work. But W396 will teach you how to guide others through the writing process and will open you up to all the joys and fulfillment that tutoring brings. Not to mention, it will help you develop the skills necessary to be successful in any career: self-direction, leadership, communication and more.

From **Allison DeVaney**

Graduate Writing Certificate Program, Fall 2012

W396 (W609- graduate class): Fall 2011 – Fellow 2011-present

I was introduced to the Writing Center in the Spring of 2011 when I brought in a research paper as a student. I was tentative to use the UWC as a resource because, as a graduate student and faculty member, I was self-conscious about admitting my lack of confidence in the writing process. Initially, I

enrolled in W609 to become more confident working with writing students. However, this class taught me the importance of sharing my own writing and the reciprocal value in learning from other students' writing. This class has given me the confidence and skills I need to understand the writing process intimately and tutor students effectively. Continually sharing my writing process and assisting tutees with their writing has helped me grow as a student and an educator. A lesson I have learned from my experience in the UWC and in W609 is: Writing is an interactive and recursive process that is meant to be shared. And, it is my responsibility as an educator and a tutor to not walk in front of students in their literacy journey, but to walk alongside them to share in their growth as readers and writers.

From **Michele Wade Douglass**

Vice-President, Galileo Media

Portland, Oregon

B.A. in Anthropology 1997

W396: Fall 1994 - Fellow 1994-1997

Many years ago, I had the pleasure of working as a writing fellow in the University Writing Center at IUPUI. While at the Center, I met another writing fellow with similar interests. Together, we are now running our own corporation focused on business media, and we are enjoying success.

I have often paused to reflect on how lucky I was to have worked in the Center. I make a living off what I learned as a writing fellow. I see experienced technical writers meander from point to point with no compass or anchor. And, every day, I am grateful for my understanding of the writing process. I am grateful for the tools my experience at the Center gave me.

Galileo Media now models our training of new employees after the W396 fellows class. Using the management of the Center as a guide, we have created an exciting and rewarding work environment for ourselves and for those we work with. The project managers at Galileo work as coaches, team members, and supporters. We avoid appropriating the work of others. We listen more than we talk.

My ability to support myself on the skills learned in the writing center are testament to the value of the University Writing Center and the fellows' seminar. I took a lot of writing classes in college; I did a lot of extra-curricular writing as well. I was a good writer long before I enrolled in W396. But, none of my previous experience compares to what I learned in the Center. The experience not only made me a better writer, it also made me a better teacher and a better manager. Take the class.

From **Tiffany Harazinova**

B.S. in Psychology 2000

W396: Fall 1997 - Fellow 1997-2000

Coming into the program as an "outsider" gave me an advantage when contributing to the UWC. I was able to consider the particular needs of psych majors when they come to the writing center. That led me to write a handout called "Structuring an APA Style Research Paper" to help other tutors in the UWC cater to this population as well. As a psych major, it was also interesting to see the kinds of issues or "baggage" writers bring to the tutoring table during a session. Also, for someone who wants to teach later in life, seeing these issues gave me a broader perspective of how challenging teaching is and I will forever carry the words of tutees with me so that I remember the needs of students.

On the whole I also must say that my experience in the writing center made me an "expert" at writing. And by "expert" I do not mean that when I write a paper, it is perfection on the first draft. I am an "expert" writer because I have gained writing confidence, am open to critique and suggestion, and even seek it out. I am an "expert" writer because I know where to go for help (i.e., reference materials, faculty, UWC tutors) and I have knowledge on writing across disciplines. I would have gained none of these strengths without my writing center experience.

From **Mical Masterson**

B.A. in English Education, Spring 2010

W396: Fall 2007 - Fellow 2007-2010

The UWC changed my life! May sound dramatic, but it really did! There have only been a handful of experiences in my life that have brought about REAL change in me and my continual training in the UWC changed me ('cause even after W396, you are being TRAINED in many, many ways).

Going into W396, I was a total wreck, super insecure as a writer, a reader, and even a person. But the experiences, training, interviews, conversations, and hands-on experience as a teacher, tutor, employee, and even secretary that I've had during these last three years have transformed my level of confidence in myself in all of these areas. All I know is that confidence is the key to success—not only as a tutor, but as a person and beyond.