Learning Contract

Contract Information

NAME ___________________________________________________________ Contract # ________

Address ____________________________________________________________ Begins on ________

Phone: Home _________________ Work _________________ Ends on ________

I. D. # _____________________________ Credit Expected ______________

Mentor _____________________________ Code: ________ Final Contract __

Center Genesee Valley Center Status __ Full-time __ Half-time

Give description of: (A) PURPOSES of this study; (B) LEARNING ACTIVITIES to be undertaken and (C) methods and criteria for EVALUATION. Use the underlined as headings for the three sections of the Contract.

A. PURPOSES

Theories and Practice of Teaching Writing 4 cr. Mentor: Shapiro, Herbert

Level: Advanced Liberal Indicator: Liberal lclib <ESC> to Exit

B. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The student seeks to learn the Theories and Practice that inform the Teaching of Writing, along with a better understanding of the writing process in order that he/she might be able to achieve two goals: 1) work as a peer tutor at Genesee Valley’s Peer Tutoring Writing Center, and 2) improve his/her own abilities as a writer. In addition to providing him/her with practical information and training, this study will encourage the student’s research and enable him/her to reflect upon various theories and principles of peer tutors and of writing centers, so that when she begins her own work as a peer tutor at the end of this study he/she will have at his/her command a critical sensibility of the options and choices he/she has to make in order to work effectively and ethically as a peer tutor.

Among the practical issues to be considered will be the parameters and defining qualities of professionalism in the context of a writing center; the varieties of tutoring tasks in which a peer tutor engages; the needs of basic writers and how peer tutoring can effectively address such needs; tutoring’s relationship to the writing process; computers and tutoring, specifically the appropriate use of Empire State College’s on-line Writing Center, Writer’s Complex; and learning how to be sensitive and accommodating to different learning styles.

Signatures

Student _____________________________ Date _________________________

Mentor _____________________________ Date _________________________

Center Director _____________________________ Date _________________________
This study has several components that combine both theory and practice. To give him/her a good understanding of the emergent field of composition and rhetoric as well as the role that peer tutoring and collaboration plays in this study, the student will begin by reading the following (this list is a provisional one, subject to change):

- **Cross-Talk in Comp Theory: A Reader** (edited by Victor Villanueva, Jr.)
- **The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors** (Christina Murphy and Steve Sherwood)
- **The Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors** 2nd Edition (Leigh Ryan)
- **The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook** (Gary Tate and Edward P.J. Corbett)

After reading these texts, the student will write two-three-page annotated summaries of all of the articles in **The St. Martin's Sourcebook for Writing Tutors**. These activities are intended to give the student a good overview of the major areas of the field of writing and tutoring, including the theoretical constructs, issues of interpersonal dynamics, and practical considerations, including how to respond to texts and to issues of multicultural diversity.

From **Cross-Talk** (Victor Villanueva), the student will write one-page annotated summaries of the following articles:

Flower, Linda and Hayes, John R. "A Cognitive Theory of Writing;"
Lunsford, Andrea. "Cognitive Development and the Basic Writer;"
Shaughnessy, Mina, "Diving In: An Introduction to Basic Writing."

From **The Writing Teacher’s Sourcebook** (Gary Tate and Edward P.J. Corbett), the student will write one-page annotated summaries of the following articles:

Bartholomae, David. The Study of Error;
Berlin, James. Contemporary Composition: The Major Pedagogical Theories;
Donald, Murray. "The Listening Eye: Reflections on the Writing Conference;"
Elbow, Peter. "Embracing Contraries in the Teaching Process;"
Emig, Janet. Writing as a Mode of Learning;
Flower, Linda and Hayes, John. The Cognition of Discovery: Defining a Rhetorical Problem;
Murray, Donald M. "The Listening Eye: Reflections on the Writing Conference;"
Odell, Lee. The Process of Writing and the Process of Learning;
Ong, Walter. Literacy and Orality in Our Times;
Parker, William. Where Do English Departments Come From?
Perl, Sondra. "Understanding Composing;"
Rose, Mike. Remedial Writing Courses: A Critique and Proposal;
Shaughnessy, Mina. Diving In: An Introduction to Basic Writing;
Sommers, Nancy. "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers;"
White, Edward. "Post-Structural Literary Criticism and the Response to Student Writing."

As a result of his/her reading and his/her research (familiarizing herself with the leading journals in the field, including College English and College Composition and Communication), the student will begin to map the field of composition studies as he/she identifies categories for possible further research and investigation. Such categories might include, but are not limited to: ESL, Feminist Theory, Laws of Copyright, The Psychology of Rhetoric, and basic Composition Theory, including research on the Writing Process. As a result of his/her research and reading, the student will create a bibliography by category, and then choose one subject area in which to do further research resulting in a final longer focused research paper.

For the practice of Peer Tutoring, the student will sit in on several sessions of other peer tutors, attend monthly peer tutoring training sessions and keep a journal of his/her observations of tutorial sessions. In addition he/she will participate in Orientation Day holistic scoring sessions of student writing samples.

Finally, the student will submit a personal narrative reflecting on the activities of this study in order to determine what works best in a tutoring session, and what he/she has learned as a result of her observation of tutoring session, Orientation Day writing sample reviews, and tutor training meetings.

C. METHOD AND CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

As a result of his/her readings and discussions with Mentor Herbert Shapiro, the student should be able to demonstrate a good overview of the field of composition studies in general, and the issues that inform peer tutoring in particular. He/She should be aware of the various approaches to teaching writing and the composing process. In addition, he/she should be able to demonstrate increased learning as a result of his/her observations of other tutorial sessions and from the participation in hands-on activities as described in the learning activities section.

The student’s own written work will be evaluated on the basis of his/her understanding of the readings undertaken, and his/her proficiency in establishing:

- a coherent organizational structure for all written assignments;
- fully developed ideas;
- correct use of grammar, punctuation, spelling, diction, sentence and paragraph;
- structures, including the ability to proof-read and edit his/her work carefully;
- sound research and proper documentation procedures, using the MLA format.