

Sample Academic Proposals from the Purdue OWL

Conferences

Sample 1

Anna Seghers' Seductive But Impotent Haitian Politics

By Martina Jauch

Utilizing the exotic locale of Haiti, German author Anna Seghers, at first glance, perpetuates mechanisms of gendered otherness that were employed as a cliché since the early nineteenth century. Reflecting upon questions of political order, Haiti is designed to resemble a utopian Europe, in which Seghers improves the experiences of deceit and a failed socialist revolution in the wake of the 1789 French upheaval. Since “the writer must be the pathfinder for the struggling masses”, Seghers’ “The Revolt of the Fishermen of Santa Barbara” (1928) features a passionate protagonist who is yearning for revolution almost out of boredom and feelings of lack. Ultimately, however, the collective community of fishermen becomes one single type, whose hunger for life and social indignation translates into a sexual desire for “ugly, skinny girls”.

Once Seghers establishes the sexual paradigm as a component of revolution, she clings to beauty and perception as valuable political assets in women. Even though these black slaves are relegated to the side and remain silenced, their exploitation as characters mirrors the failure and impotence of Seghers’ revolutionaries. Moreover, their existence furnishes the plot with intricate details on the procreation of power, biological heirs, and the escape from a literally portrayed Garden Eden, through tropes of submission and mastery. “Three Women from Haiti” (1980), then, moves them to the forefront as narrators, but continues the conflation of sexual and racial body politics in an attempt to seduce the reader into the cause of socialism. My project, thus, attempts to tell the stories of these tabulae rasae through Judith Butler’s concepts of subjection, conscience, and the fabrication of subjectivity, which is, in fact, even fostered, by these women’s apparent invisibility.

Sample 2

To establish a context for the sample conference proposal below, we have included the original CFP.

2009 East Central Writing Centers Association (ECWCA) CFP

Writing Center Ecologies: Developing and Sustaining Our Resources

The term “ecology” has many associations, from nature and the environment, to more recent applications of information ecology and media ecology in rhetoric and composition.

The metaphor of ecology can be applied to the relationships among various projects and working groups within writing centers, and to the relationships among writing centers, writing programs, English Departments, WAC initiatives, strategic plans, etc. Tutors, writing center administrators, and others involved with writing center work are invited to submit proposals related—but not limited to—the following topics:

- Consider the politics of ecology and the idea of ecologies as systems. How does your writing center function as an ecological system? What are the ecologies of your department and your campus?
- How do you ensure the sustainability of your writing center? How will you address challenges to ensure sustainability?
- What kind of partnerships, relationships and/or infrastructure have you used to develop and enrich your resources? How can you extend existing partnerships and cultivate new ones? What does your writing center bring to these partnerships?
- How do writing center theories sustain both in-house environments and larger, public spaces? How do writing centers perform “public scholarship” that sustains us and the community?
- How do you build a self-sustaining ecology in your writing center through policies, practices, and relationships?
- What are the environmental issues facing your writing center? How can you develop a “green culture” in your center? What are some creative solutions you have for making your writing center greener? Why should writing center tutors and administrators be concerned with environmental issues? How does technology fit into your ecology?
- In what ways can globalization and diversity affect the ecology of your writing center?

Session Formats

Presentations: Single presentations will be 15-20 minutes in length. If you submit your proposal alone you will be placed with like presentations for a session.

Panels: Consist of 3-4 presenters who are coordinating their presentations around a central theme. Each presentation will be 15-20 minutes in length.

Roundtables: Round tables are talks designed around a specific theme and are often highly audience interactive. Several speakers will address a central question from a variety of angles, and then open the question to the audience and answer audience questions.

Workshops: These sessions are designed to be fully interactive with the audience and facilitate the audience in gaining material, hands-on knowledge around the given topic.

Posters: These presentations are designed to be stand alone posters which are informative and meant to be viewed at anytime during the conference. There will also be a dedicated time and space for the authors of the poster to answer questions and interact with conference goers about their topic.

2009 East Central Writing Centers Association (ECWCA) Presentation Proposal

Growing Community Connections: Writing Center Engagement and Public Scholarship

Interactivity is essential. Please describe how this session will be interactive:

This session is split into three 15-minute sections: two presentations and a short workshop. During the workshop, panelists and attendees will brainstorm in small groups with engagement heuristics to develop ideas for creating and maintaining community connections at their institutions. The brainstorming groups will reconvene to produce an “engagement idea map” that visually records the results of small-group discussions. The idea map will be photographed and distributed via email to all participants after the workshop.

50 word session abstract for the presentation:

The presentation describes an engagement project between a writing center and an adult basic education organization that develops resources to improve literacy skills in marginalized populations. Panelists argue for empirical and participatory methods to help establish engagement as viable scholarship and to address issues of funding, institutional cooperation, and assessment. (Word count: 50)

250 word session description:

A large amount of scholarship in writing center theory highlights the benefits of community connections between colleges and local organizations. However, topics that have been neglected are the challenges of funding, institutional cooperation, and assessment. This panel discusses an engagement project that addresses these obstacles by incorporating empirical research and participatory design. Panelists will explain the theories, research, and practice driving the project and present findings after two years of work. The panel will describe how empirical methods and participatory design can help writing centers foster sustained community-based research to establish engagement as viable scholarship. The panel will also provide resources attendees can use in their own programs.

Overcoming Administrative Challenges in Writing Center-Community Partnerships

Speaker one discusses administrative challenges presented by engagement. The panelist describes differences between community literacy organizations and writing centers in goals and strategies, funding, staffing, and scheduling. The presentation offers strategies writing centers can use to manage these differences and work toward better partnerships with community organizations; these strategies are based on the project's research findings. The presenter argues that empirical research is necessary to establish administrative expertise for engagement.

Engagement Scholarship: Usability Research and Participatory Design in College-Community Collaboration

Speaker two discusses how usability research and participatory design in engagement scholarship contributes to professionalization and institutional support and explains how empirical methods can help foster collaboration between communities and writing centers. Speaker two argues that replicable, aggregable, data-supported research should guide engagement because it contributes to tenure work, organizational cooperation, and participatory partnerships.

Articles

Sample 1

Minna, Autio. "Narratives of 'Green' Consumers – the Antihero, the Environmental Hero and the Anarchist." *Journal of Consumer Behavior* 8.1 (Jan/Feb 2009): 40-53.

"Environmental policy makers and marketers are attracted by the notion of green consumerism. Yet, green consumerism is a contested concept, allowing for a wide range of translations in everyday discursive practices. • This paper examines how young consumers construct their images of green consumerism. It makes a close reading of three narratives reflecting available subject positions for young green consumers: the Antihero, the Environmental Hero and the Anarchist. • It reveals problems in the prevailing fragmented, gendered and individualistic notions of green consumerism, and discusses implications for policy and marketing practitioners."

Sample 2

Simmons, Aaron. "Animals, Predators, the Right to Life, and the Duty to Save Lives." *Ethics & the Environment* 14.1 (Spring 2009): 15-27.

"One challenge to the idea that animals have a moral right to life claims that any such right would require us to intervene in the wild to prevent animals from being killed by predators. I argue that belief in an animal right to life does not commit us to supporting a program of predator-prey intervention.

One common retort to the predator challenge contends that we are not required to save animals from predators because predators are not moral agents. I suggest that this retort fails to overcome the predator challenge. I seek to articulate a more satisfactory argument explaining why we are not required to save wild prey from predators and how this position is perfectly consistent with the idea that animals have a basic right to life.”

Sample 4

To provide a context for the sample article abstract below, we have provided the journal’s submission requirements.

Journal of Technical Writing and Communication

Submit manuscript to: Dr. Charles H. Sides
P.O. Box 546
Westminster, MA 01473
e-mail: csides@admin.fsc.edu

Manuscripts Submit manuscripts to the address above in triplicate, typed or printed (letter quality or better), and include return postage. Since we prefer to communicate electronically, be sure to include your phone and FAX numbers and your INTERNET addresses on your cover letter. You may also send your MS on 3.5 inch, double-sided disk, formatted for either Macintosh or IBM. You may communicate with the journal electronically through this email address: csides@admin.fsc.edu. We normally acknowledge Ms. receipt within 3-4 weeks and try to notify authors of acceptance within 8-10 weeks. We frequently accept articles conditionally, asking authors to consider reviewer suggestions for revision. Publication normally occurs within 12 months of acceptance.

Originality. This journal publishes only original material. Authors certify by submission, therefore, that neither the article submitted nor any version of it has been published—or is being considered for publication—elsewhere.

Prose. Write in clear, concise, coherent prose, using the active voice whenever possible. Please be sure to include a generous quantity of intertextual headings and subheads throughout your text. The Journal supports NCTE guidelines for avoiding sexist language. We will return manuscripts not conforming to our style.

Abstracts. Include an abstract of 100-150 words on your first page in the following order: Title; your name and place of work; abstract; first heading; first paragraph of your article.

Footnotes. Use footnotes only when necessary, limit to three lines, and place at bottom of each page. Use conventional arabic superscripts, in numerical order, to identify each.

References. Attach a list of references to your manuscript, arranged to present each source in the sequence to which you refer to it parenthetically [2, p. 364] in the text. Include in each entry its number; author's name in normal order; title of piece cited (use no quotation marks); editor's name, followed by (ed.); title of book or periodical in italics (for a book add publisher and place of publication); volume and issue numbers; pages cited; and year of publication.

1. W. F. Dater, Writing Is All of a Piece, in *Essays on Technical Communication*, J. C. Pratt and F. Kiley (eds.) Peter F. Moody Associates, Strasburg, Pennsylvania, pp. 24-34, 1973.

2. M. E. Johnson, The Role of Organizing Principles in PC Documentation, *The Software Journal*, 1:4, pp. 174-191, 1968. (or pp. 174-181, Spring 1968).

Use a bracketed citation before the period in the appropriate sentence to refer to the list of references [1, p. 27]. A subsequent citation might appear [1, pp. 28-32].

Figures and Tables. Submit only original line art, in black ink, or camera ready quality, scaled to our page size with each new figure or table on a separate sheet. We welcome computer generated graphics at resolutions of 300 dpi or better. Provide each figure or table with a descriptive, first order heading centered at its top in 8 point type. Place a brief descriptive caption beneath each graphic preceded appropriately by Figure 1., Table 2., etc. Indicate placement in the text as follows:

- - - insert Figure 5. here - - -

Authors will receive twenty complimentary reprints of their published article. Additional reprints may be ordered.

JTWC Article Abstract

Stasis Theory as a Strategy for Workplace Teaming and Decision Making

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Abstract

Current scholarship tells us that skills in teaming are essential for students and practitioners of professional communication. Writers must be able to cooperate with subject-matter experts and team members to make effective decisions and complete projects. Scholarship also suggests that rapid changes in technology and changes in teaming processes challenge workplace communication and cooperation. Professional writers must be able to use complex software for projects that are often completed by multidisciplinary teams working remotely.

Moreover, as technical writers shift from content developers to project managers, our responsibilities now include user-advocacy and supervision, further invigorating the need for successful communication. This article offers a different vision of an ancient heuristic—stasis theory—as a solution for the teaming challenges facing today’s professional writers. Stasis theory, used as a generative heuristic rather than an eristic weapon, can help foster teaming and effective decision making in contemporary pedagogical and workplace contexts.

Book Chapters

Proposal for *Marginal Words, Marginal Work? Tutoring the Academy to the Work of the Writing Center*

Chapter Title: **Dialogue and Collaboration: A Writing Lab Applies Tutoring Techniques to Relations with Other Writing Programs**

Linda S. Bergmann
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Dialogue and Collaboration: A Writing Lab Applies Tutoring Techniques to Relations with Other Writing Programs

We propose a 5-7 page narrative describing how we initiated dialogues with our colleagues in the English Department, what we learned from them, and how they changed our relationship with other writing programs. We will append copies of the materials used to initiate these dialogues.

One fundamental approach to writing center tutoring is collaboration: the idea that tutoring is a dialogue, not a monologue, and that students need a definite personal stake in the agenda of a tutoring session. Recent changes in our school (Liberal Arts) and department (English) have led us to re-envision our interactions with our colleagues to more clearly reflect the dialogical practices that we apply in tutoring students. When administrators began promoting new priorities and a new mission, including collaboration among departments and programs and increasing research productivity, we decided to reach out to our colleagues to find grounds for larger collaborations, avoiding monological discourse like merely outlining the services we offer. Our narrative will describe three initiatives for listening and exchanging ideas, and demonstrate how these conversations led to new and altered practices, while maintaining the integrity of our writing center work.

Our first initiative involved the relationship between undergraduate peer tutors and the Introductory Writing Program. This program dropped the basic writing course that had formerly used undergraduate peer tutors, mandated work in online writing, and established a student-teacher conferencing component. We will describe our discussions and dialogues with the WPA and the committee that oversee the course and with instructors (largely graduate students) who teach it, and we will outline the results of those discussions.

The second initiative reached out to the Professional Writing (PW) program, also part of the English Department. In the past, the Writing Lab and the PW program rarely interacted or collaborated, and as a result, the Writing Lab did not have many visits from students in the PW program, even though the Lab offered and advertised business writing services. Again, we met with faculty and students in the program to ascertain what they needed and what they thought about our work.

The final and most recent initiative concerns the Writing Lab's relationship with the Creative Writing program. Like many other writing centers, our Writing Lab has not offered support specifically for creative writers. But after conversations with and guest lectures by Creative Writing faculty, we have established channels for feedback and assistance from our colleagues in the Creative Writing program, and begun to respond to their needs by teaching tutors how to work with creative writers.

This narrative will describe each of these collaborative initiatives between the Writing Lab and other writing programs within our English department, with the goal of demonstrating how collaboration and communication between programs can be effective in promoting writing center work. Through these dialogues, we have gained colleagues who better understand and support the mission of our Writing Lab, but more importantly, we have learned more about our colleagues' disciplinary writing needs. These initiatives also led to changes in our tutor and in-service training programs and to new administrative opportunities for students. Our narrative will demonstrate, from an administrative perspective, what it means to work together with our colleagues and to be invested (jointly) in writing instruction.