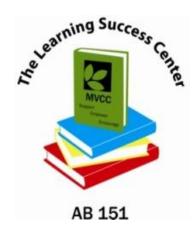


A GUIDE TO THE WRITING LAB

Making the Most of Your Tutoring Experience at the MVCC Learning Center





The writing tutors are here to help you become a better writer. We can offer one-on-one help that focuses on your particular writing needs. You can:

- Ask questions: Is there an area of writing that you struggle to understand? Do you often get papers back with "fragment" or "run-on" written on them? Do you know what a thesis is, or how you write one?
- Get Feedback Before You Receive a Grade: We can work with you at any stage of the writing process. Whether you need help getting started or you have finished writing your rough draft, we want to help you with your papers. Our tutors will provide feedback before you turn your paper in, which might help you improve clarity, grammar and organization.
- Improve Your Writing: We strive to help you learn strategies that will improve your writing. Our goal is to assist in the development of skills that will make you a confident and independent writer.
- Work on Your Weaknesses: Everyone has writing weaknesses. We will help you identify yours and focus on improving those areas. This can be done whether you have a specific assignment to complete or through sample exercises.
- Assistance with Any Course Papers: The Writing Lab can help you with transfer essays, scholarship essays, lab reports, journal critiques, and more. If your assignment is a *take-home exam*, you *must* have written permission from your instructor in order to seek tutoring. This can be sent to Kristen Raab via email at kraab@mvcc.edu, or brought to Kristen or to Ibrahim Rosic, the Director of the Learning Center.

How to Get the Most Out of Writing Tutoring

To help us best serve you, there are some guidelines you should follow.

- Schedule Your Appointment in Advance: Many students seek help from the writing tutors. We are extremely busy, particularly around mid-term and final exams. To ensure that you can see a tutor when you need to, make your appointment several days before you need to meet with the tutor. Please sign up here: http://tutoring.mvcc.edu:81/Default.aspx
- Don't Wait Until the Last Minute: Seeing a tutor 30 minutes before your assignment is due will not help you. We do not edit papers. You should allow yourself plenty of time to ask questions and consider the recommendations that a tutor provides.
- **Bring Everything:** When you meet with a tutor, it is best to have your assignment sheets, outlines, rough drafts, notes, and any other paperwork related to the assignment. We typically do not have detailed instructions about your assignments.
- **Have Questions:** No one knows your writing strengths and weaknesses as well as you do. If there is something that you struggle with, please ask us for help in that particular area. Tutoring is about addressing your needs.
- **Be Prepared to Talk:** Tutoring is not instruction. Tutoring only works if the tutor and the student work together. We will not spend 30 minutes lecturing you about grammar, spelling, or organization. We are here to guide you.



Image from: http://languagearts.pppst.com/writing.html



Our goal is to help students become confident, self-directed learners.



What does a writing tutor do?

- We read rough drafts and offer suggestions for organization and clarity.
- We answer questions about structure, development, and content when applicable.
- We guide students toward improving their grammar with handouts and examples.
- We discuss assignments at any stage of the writing process.
- We review outlines, concept maps, brainstorm activities, and other prewriting tools.
- We assist students with online library database usage.
- We direct students to MLA and APA citation guides and websites. We explain the format when necessary. We review completed citations.
- Writing tutors discuss literature with students, but we do not teach the material.
- We encourage revisions. Writing is an ongoing process, and students should work toward continuously revising their work.
- We provide basic computer assistance with the Microsoft Word Program. This help includes showing students how to double space, insert page numbers, change the font and margins, save and print documents. Other *general* computer help is also provided.
- We stress the importance of starting assignments early. The Learning Center is very busy, and students need to sign up early in order to receive the help they need.

What are some things that a writing tutor WILL NOT do?

- Write sentences or revise papers for students.
- Allow students to drop off or email papers for editing.
- Type papers for students.
- Complete student citations (MLA/APA).
- Help with exams or graded homework assignments.
- Tutor students in IS101 or IS102. Students in need of computer tutoring should meet with computer tutors.
- Act as a replacement for a missed class. Students must attend class and obtain missed work from their instructors.
- Predict a student's grade or an instructor's reaction to a paper.
- Make an assumption about the nature of an assignment. Please direct questions about assignment criteria to your instructors.
- Sit with students as they write/type entire drafts. We will help you get started and answer some of your questions.

