ABSTRACT

EMBEDDING THE CONSULTANT: A NNES CASE STUDY

by Lucy B. Manley

This thesis is a teacher-research case study assessing the effectiveness of an embedded writing center consultant in a nonnative English speaking classroom using a qualitative methodology with data collected from surveys, interviews, student writing samples, and field notes. The results show participants’ overall positive reaction to the embedded consultant program. The embedded consultant facilitated student learning and acted as a cultural informant in the class. The ways the NNES students talked about their writing (as modeled by the embedded consultant) proved to increase the quality of writing produced and a better understanding and engagement with the writing process. Following perspectives of the program from all case participants: students, embedded consultant, and instructor, the thesis concludes with recommendations for embedding a writing consultant in an NNES only classroom.
EMBEDDING THE CONSULTANT: A NNES CASE STUDY

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Lucy Blake Manley
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Advisor_________________________________
(Tony Cimasko)

Reader_________________________________
(Kate Ronald)

Reader_________________________________
(LuMing Mao)
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Chapter 1
Embedding the Writing Consultant: A NNES\(^1\) Case Study

The Institute of International Education 2013 Open Doors data reports 819,644 Chinese students studying at American universities (Chow & Bhandari). This number is a 21.4% increase from 2012. The large volume Chinese students and students from other countries arriving at U.S. universities present many challenges for not only the institutions and instructors, but also the students themselves. Understanding and addressing these challenges is important for student success especially because the academic practices can be vastly different from an international student’s home country. As Fersten (2008) argues, reading and writing are “social and cultural processes” (p. 45) and students’ home cultures conflict with the academic discourse. In her case study, Fersten shows a confident ESL speaker struggling to find her “voice” in writing therefore lowering her self-image as a writer. L2 students are often given an equivalent label as “basic writers” (Harris, 1997) reinforcing their marginalization to the American academic community.

One of the first steps American universities take to combat this marginalization is helping students orient to the university, including an introduction to the academic culture. A major part of university orientation programming across the country is introducing international students to American academic conventions with a major emphasis on writing. Miami University, for example, offers a two-week, three-credit bridge program for international students. This bridge program called Pre-Semester American Academic Culture Program (PAAC) advertises teaching international students “what to expect in classes at an American University…[and] sharpen English writing skills” (Pre-Semester Academic American Culture Program, 2014). Part of a university’s orientation for international students also includes a special session on academic integrity and plagiarism, which often differs among cultures. Nonnative English speaking students are conflicted with cultural writing differences, such as language use, organization, and presentation (Krampetz, 2005). Kaplan (1966) discovered that writing patterns differed among writers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds than their western counterparts. As students engage this conflict, they struggle between two cultures: who they are as students, and who they are as writers, in turn discouraging students affecting not only their academic performances, but also their well-being. One goal of this study is to help NNES students bridge the academic cultural gap by assessing a program that could better support L2 writers.

English composition departments must administer writing programs that include the nonnative English speaking population. In her article “ESL Composition Program Administration in the United States,” Jessica Williams (1995) conducted a nationwide survey of Writing Program Administrators and how they address NNES students within their composition programs. Despite the International Association’s TESOL Committee on Professional Standards’ resolution (1988) “calling for the end of the separate and unequal treatment of English as a second language (ESL) courses” (p. 157), Williams reports apparent “ghettoization” of NNES students by forcing them to enroll in separate English composition courses. What this means is universities often offer two of the same course, one section for NES students and the other is for NNES students. Those who argue for separation of NES and NNES students in composition classrooms claim that NNES students are ill-prepared for American academic writing and therefore need the extra support at the beginning of their college career. Silva (1993) agrees because he found a number of differences between L1 and L2 writing processes, text

\(^1\) Throughout this manuscript I use the terms/acronyms Nonnative English speaker (NNES), second language (L2), and English as a second language (ESL) interchangeably.
features, and structures. For example, Silva explains, L2 writers rely less on the planning stage of the writing process, but more time referencing an outline or writing prompt. Additionally, he reported the structure of a writer’s argument varied based on his/her linguistic and cultural background. However, Williams challenges this separation saying, “Undoubtedly, the needs of the two populations do differ, and it would benefit no one if these students were simply mainstreamed into [NES] composition classes taught by instructors with little knowledge of the problems of [NNES students]” (175). In her article, Williams provides suggestions to end this “ghettoization” noting, “it is possible that native speakers and NNES could benefit from learning together” and she adds, “by joining, rather than separating, these two populations the [NES] students might be seen as a resource in the university community, where diversity and multicultural experience are increasingly being stressed” (p. 175). A second goal of this study is to ameliorate the ghettoization of NES and NNES students in the first-year composition classroom by supporting instructors in the English composition department.

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in their Conference on College Composition and Communication’s (CCCC, 2009) revised statement on Second Language Writing and Writers agrees saying, “Many institutions provide intensive language programs and ‘sheltered’ sections of second language composition. But,” they emphasize, “Students may be crowded out of such courses or may elect to take ‘mainstream’ writing courses.” The CCCC statement continues to support NNES writers by recognizing their unique “cultural and linguistic backgrounds and educational and other social experiences” can add to the academic culture in which they study. NCTE stresses the importance of NNES students utilizing their first language within writing and how writing teachers should celebrate NNES students’ diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As NNES students are mainstreamed into the academic community, instructors need support and training to effectively teach in multicultural and multi-linguistic classrooms.

Furthermore the CCCC’s (2009) statement calls for writing program administrators to “recognize and take responsibility for the regular presence of second language writes in writing classes, to understand their characteristics, and to develop instructional and administrative practices that are sensitive to their linguistic and cultural needs.” Williams (1995) refers to combined NES and NNES writing courses taught by specially trained instructors. Indiana University of Pennsylvania was one of the first TESOL graduate programs to offer degrees in 1975 (IUP Department of English, 2014). Since then, many universities have followed suit and their English graduate programs have an ESL component or course offered as electives. Additionally, colleges and universities offer workshops for faculty teaching NNES students.

The need for both the inclusion of NNES students into the American academic community and faculty support to meet the needs of a diverse student population has forced university resource services to reevaluate ways in which they help students and faculty. One example of a university support service that has evolved as student demographics change is the campus writing center. Evidence of this evolution arrived with the onset of open admissions in the 1960s (Carino, 1996). During this period, Carino explains, writing “labs” opened quickly to support underprepared students, but by the 1970s, writing center professionals established themselves as a place with “innovative student-centered writing pedagogy” (p. 31), rejecting the idea of a remedial supplement responsible for improving grammar. The evolution continues today with the influx of international students, mostly from China, to U.S. universities. From 2010-2014, WCcenter, the writing center online discussion group, documented over 200 conversations about tutor training, faculty support, and professional staff in regards to ESL, L2,
and NNES writers (WCenter, 2014). Discussions range from percentage of ESL writers using the writing center to tutor training to conversations groups for ESL students. A recent thread is defining newly created professional staff positions to work specifically with the NNES population in writing centers. For example, a writing center director from a college in Mississippi writes, “I’m preparing to write a formal description and ad for an ESL specialist. Does anyone have a position of this sort at their institution, and if so, would you be willing to share?” The director received over 25 responses within three days of emailing the Listserv (WCenter).

Muriel Harris (1995) describes writing centers as a place where tutors “inhabit the middle ground” (p. 37) between students and teachers. With the huge influx of NNES students, particularly from China, arriving each year, Williams’ (1995) idea of specially trained instructors for combined courses is not practical at most universities. Therefore, I argue that the campus writing center provides a space for such “learning together” to happen. After all, a writing center is “a place where people get together” (Leahy, 1990, p. 43). Furthermore, I propose embedding writing consultants in the NNES classroom creates a place for writers and consultants to learn from each by other bridging the gap between NES and NNES students.

This study used a mixed method approach, leaning heavily toward the qualitative end of the research design continuum (Newman & Benz, 1998). The qualitative aspect helps reach the study’s goal to develop a more complete understanding of a particular group (Creswell, 2009), or in the case of this thesis, particular groups: students enrolled in the composition course with an embedded consultant, the embedded consultant, and the teacher of the course. As a means of “qualitative inquiry” (Stake, 2005), the research is presented as a case study. As Stake describes, “For a qualitative research community, a case study concentrates on experiential knowledge of the case and close attention to the influence of its social, political, and other contexts. For almost any audience, optimizing understanding of the case requires meticulous attention to its activities” (p. 444). He continues to list the requirements of a case study as: issue choice, triangulation, experiential knowledge, contexts, and activities. This thesis addresses Stake’s requirements in a case of NNES students and their teacher with an embedded writing center consultant in their fall 2013 English composition class.

The research project took place at Miami University, a public university located in rural, southwest Ohio during the fall 2013 semester. A total of 1,324 international students enrolled in Miami University during the fall of 2013. This number includes 916 undergraduates at Miami’s main campus, 110 of those students are enrolled in the intensive English program, and an undergraduate population of 887 from China (Statistical Information for International Students, 2013). Miami University’s Howe Writing Center employees 40 student workers, 30 of which are undergraduate writing consultants. In the fall 2013 the writing center completed 2,323 consultations, 884 of which were with undergraduate international students. So although 5% of Miami’s undergraduate population is international, 38% of the writing center consultations are with international undergraduate students. In addition this case of an embedded consultant in a NNES class, the university’s writing center piloted the embedded consultant program in three other courses on campus. The primary enrollment for the other three courses was domestic students. This thesis is a part of the pilot program assessment.

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2 An embedded consultant is a classroom-based writing center tutor. I go into more detail defining this role in Chapter 2.
Miami University’s English Department chooses to offer separate writing courses for NNES students. At the time this study was conducted, students placed into varying levels of English courses based on a standardized English test score submitted with their application. See Table 1 for placement based on test scores.

Table 1
Miami University’s ESL Course Placement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Course Placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL 500-550; iBt 80-92; ILETS 6.5 or successful completion of ACE</td>
<td>ACE: American Culture and English program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL 550-579; iBt 93-99 or successful completion of ENG 108</td>
<td>ENG 109: Composition and Rhetoric for L2 Writers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILETS 7.0 or ENG 108 instructor recommendation</td>
<td>ENG 111: Composition and Rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful completion of ENG 109 or ENG 111</td>
<td>ENG 112: Composition and Literature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(English Language Proficiency, 2013)

Students who do not score high enough on their TOEFL exam are conditionally admitted to the American Culture and English (ACE) program, Miami’s semester-long intensive English program. Students who pass ACE or those students that score high enough on TOEFL to be fully admitted, take a placement test to begin their English composition sequence required for graduation. The first level is English (ENG) 108: U.S. Cultures and Composition for L2 writers. The second level is ENG 109: Composition and Rhetoric for L2 writers, which serves at the equivalent for ENG 111 required of domestic students. The third and final level is ENG 112: Composition and Literature. This third level is not offered separately for NNES students, but rather combined native English speaking (NES) and NNES students, however, the domestic students significantly outnumber the international students in the ENG 112 sections.

As defined in the previous paragraph, ACE is Miami University’s semester-long intensive English program (IEP) for conditionally admitted students with a TOEFL score between 65-70 or an IELTS score between 5.5-6.0. ACE students enroll in 15 credit hours:
- ACE 112: Advanced Communication Strategies (5 credits)
- ACE 113: Reading and Writing in Academic Contexts (4 credits)
- AMS 205: Introduction to American Studies (3 credits)
- Elective taken outside of ACE with general undergraduate population (3 credits)

To matriculate to a regular admittance, ACE students must earn a B- or higher in the ACE courses and pass the American Studies course (American Culture and English Program). In addition to the required courses, ACE students participate in a variety of excursions, social activities.

3 Beginning in the spring 2014 semester, the ESL faculty committee designed began administering writing and speaking tests to be considered with TOEFL for a more accurate student placement in ESL courses.
4 Tests accepted for admission to Miami University are: (1) Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) paper-based and internet-based (iBT); (2) International English Language Testing Program (IELTS); and (3) Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE). The majority of international students admitted to Miami take either TOEFL (paper or internet based) or IELTS.
events, and cultural activities, including the opportunity to be paired with an American student as a “conversation partner.” ACE students and their conversation partners meet weekly, one-on-one, as well as participate in ACE and university sponsored events. During the initial semester ACE was offered, one of the ACE 113 instructors also partnered her students with American students studying in the teacher education department as tutors. As the ACE program increased enrollment and employed a more permanent staff, the writing center established a satellite center in the ACE learning space.

In the spring of 2011, I conducted a small research project surveying and interviewing the “graduates” of the first ever cohort of ACE. While the initial goal for that research project was to gain a better understanding of how the ACE program benefits its students academically, culturally, and linguistically, a major finding was the prominent relationships students built with each other, their instructors, their conversation partners, and their tutors while participating in the program. According to the survey and interview questions, students do not come to the U.S. for post-secondary studies to “make friends”; instead they were primarily motivated by the educational opportunities an American university provided, as well as developing their English language skills. However, when asked specific questions about their experiences during the ACE Program, the relationships students built seemed to have the most profound effect on the outcome of the language learning and overall impression of the program because in all three interviews, as well as all of the open-ended survey responses, students discussed their various relationships and how meaningful these relationships were to them. The relationship that stood out the most was the one students built with their tutors. The undergraduate, peer tutors were not only enrolled in Miami’s teacher education program, but also taking classes to add the teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) endorsement to their state teaching license. All the interviewees discussed positive outcomes in their relationship with their conversation partners and tutors. One ACE student observed:

Conversation Partner is good for improving English skill, but I suggest the program to choose the person who are study education…they know how to teach people, and give them advise. It is also a good chance to give those group of student a chance to practice their skill, and help them have more experience to write in resume.

This student sees the value for both parties. The ACE students can learn from peer experts, while the pre-service teachers gain practical, professional experience working and learning from NNES students. This observation, in addition to other survey and interview feedback I received from the ACE graduates motivated my research into embedding a writing center consultant in an NNES classroom.

Chapter two presents a review of the literature regarding embedded consultants, NNES writers in the writing center, and ESL pedagogy. While embedded consultants have been and continue to be a part of the first-year composition courses and basic writing classes, one important component missing from the literature, however, is embedded consultants in an ESL classroom. At the onset of collecting data for this research project, I was interested to see how other universities are currently administering their embedded consultant programs especially regarding ESL-only classes. To obtain this information I sent out a survey (see Appendix A) to writing center administrators via WCenter. Forty-six writing center administrators participated in the survey that asked administrators to describe their classroom-based tutor program.

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5 These tutors were in addition to the conversation partners assigned by the ACE program director.
6 The participants for the study were the graduates, which included 37 students. Of the 37 students, 12 completed the survey I administered and three participated in an interview with me.
Although approximately 60% of the writing centers that responded offer classroom-based tutoring for basic writing courses, none sent their embedded consultants or writing fellows to ESL only classes. Because the CCCC’s statement on second language writing and writers calls for researchers to “investigate issues surrounding second language writing and writers in the context of writing programs, including first-year writing programs…and writing centers,” I proposed the investigation of an embedded consultant in a first-year, ESL writing classroom.

Chapters three, four, and five depict the case of an embedded consultant in an NNES composition classroom from the perspectives of the students in the class (Chapter 3), the embedded consultant (Chapter 4), and the instructor (Chapter 5). The thesis concludes with implication for teachers and writing center administrators, as well as suggestions for further research. It is my goal that this thesis not only “develop[s] instructional and administrative practices that are sensitive to [NNES] linguistic and cultural needs” (CCCC, 2009) but also, encourages collaboration and an interdisciplinary environment where we “get together” (Leahy, 1990) and learn from each other.
Chapter 2

Working Together: Embedded Consultants and the NNES Classroom

This literature review is divided into three parts: embedded consultants including their relationship with the writing center, English as a second language (ESL) pedagogy, and finally, how these two things work together: embedded consultants in a NNES classroom.

Before delving into NNES writers, embedded consultants, and writing center scholarship, it is necessary to define the terms used in this research because different writing centers use different terms and programs to describe their classroom-based tutoring. A writing center consultant can be interchanged with the term writing center tutor as they both are defined as the peer employee working with student writers in the writing center. While many writing centers across the country employ both undergraduate and graduate consultants, for the purposes of this thesis, the writing center consultant or embedded consultant will always refer to an undergraduate peer unless otherwise noted. Throughout this essay I used the term consultant, instead of tutor, as the institution’s writing center with which I work and conduct research uses that term; however, when quoting scholarship I maintain the integrity of the researchers’ writing center’s vocabulary, therefore consultant and tutor may be used interchangeably. I offer more detailed definitions and examples of embedded consultants and writing fellows later in this chapter. Although much scholarship often uses these two terms interchangeably, I describe the difference as the embedded consultant actually attends the many class sessions in which s/he is embedded within, while writing fellows provide written feedback on student writing without physically going into the classroom. Depending on the program, both embedded consultants and writing fellows may meet with students outside of the classroom and often in the university’s writing center.

Embedded Consultants

History of writing fellows. Carino (1995) reports in-class writing instruction on a one-to-one basis as early as 1904. However, these tutors were in fact faculty, not peers. Instead of office hours, the instructors would be available for writing tutoring for all students, much like writing centers today. In the 1982 the first writing fellows program began at Brown University as a response to institutional Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) initiatives. Built by Tori Haring-Smith (1992), the goals outlined for the writing fellows program were to improve student writing and assist faculty with the teaching of writing. As WAC was being introduced at Brown, Haring-Smith recognized a need for “a program that would address student as well as faculty attitudes toward writing” which also focused on the writing process by stressing feedback. (p. 176-177). Zawacki (2008) adds “the central underlying goal of writing fellows programs is that fellows will act as change agents in writing courses across the curriculum” (1). Therefore, Haring-Smith argued for a writing fellows program so students could receive peer feedback, while maintaining authority of their writing, and provide a space to discuss their writing as they revised and rewrote. She developed the writing fellows program at Brown University from the writing center and believed that with the exception of foreign language classes, writing fellows would be attached to a class outside their major without having heavy content knowledge. “Assigning peer tutors to courses outside their majors became an important part of the Brown credo” (Soven, 2001, p. 209). The rationale behind this philosophy was the writing fellows could respond to written communication, not course content. Haring-Smith believed writing fellows gave writers more effective feedback for improvement by acting as “educated lay readers”
While many writing fellows programs developed and grew based on Brown’s model during the 1980s, the programs evolved in the 1990s to be more responsive to research on student writers and instructors needs (Soven, 2001; Severino & Traschel, 2008; and Kiedaish & Dinitz, 1993). Kiedaish and Dinitz, for example, discovered that tutors working outside their majors struggled with both asking the best questions to help writers improve, as well as, understanding specific genres with which they were inexperienced. In their research at the University of Iowa, Severino and Traschel note the advantages of writing fellows responding to instructors needs in a WAC learning environment. For example, instructors are trained to be content experts, not writing experts, and a writing fellow can assist instructors by responding to student writing before it is submitted for a grade. Severino and Traschel also found instructors giving similar writing assignments across the disciplines concluding that a generalist, one who is not working within his/her major, writing fellow can effectively respond to student writers and work with instructors in a variety of disciplines. Surveyed instructors at the University of Iowa say, “Writing fellows helped them reach other writing-specific goals…such as thesis-driven, organized arguments [and] clear prose” (p. 12). Soven (1993) found the evolution of Haring-Smith’s model varies from campus to campus. The Brown model works at Brown, the Iowa model works at Iowa; programs changed and continue to change as students, instructors, and universities writing requirements change.

A number of universities followed Brown’s writing fellows lead to develop their own version of the program. A 1993 article published in WPA: Writing Program Administration describes a national survey conducted by Margot Soven, in which she surveyed 95 schools that had “either requested information from Brown University or had participated in workshops on [writing fellows] programs held at CCCC in 1988 and 1990” (Soven, 1993, p. 59). Soven reported that of the 26 surveys returned, 18 had some sort of curriculum-based writing tutor program. According to her 1993 article, many of the writing fellows are available to courses in all departments at their respective universities. The highest served populations were both the first-year composition courses and developmental reading and writing programs. For examples, Illinois State University at-risk students are placed into an introductory to composition course with a writing tutor attached to the class.

As popularity of classroom-based tutoring grew, writing center scholars began to take note and publish articles describing their own programs so that others could replicate in the context of their own colleges and universities. In her article from The Writing Center Journal, Mary Soliday (1995) describes how in-class tutors are attached to all the first-year composition sections at City College of New York. She described the project as “assigning writing center tutors to work directly with instructors in composition courses” (p. 59). Since Soliday’s 1995 chapter classroom-based writing tutors “not only expanded to other disciplines as WAC programs grew, but some also incorporated activities beyond reading drafts and conferencing” (Soven, 2001, p. 204). Another writing center with a well-developed writing fellows program is the University of Wisconsin-Madison which began in 1998. According to Jennifer Corroy (2003), writing fellows at UWM take a semester long training course before working with up to 20 students in a course by extensively commenting on student drafts as well as meeting individually with the student writers. While the program did not set out to change the rhetoric of writing at the university, “some of the program’s participants, particularly its founders and fellows, believe that significant institutional change occurs on campus as a result of the work they do” (26). This institutional change she describes is both in practice, professors creating clarifying assignments, for example; and potential change, as in instructors sharing writing
pedagogy ideas as they walk together across campus. When her chapter about writing fellows was published in the 1992 book *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs*, Haring-Smith reported over 100 universities and colleges with some version of the writing fellows program. She notes that a writing fellows program is successful at many different types of institutions saying, “Neither the size of the institution nor the selectivity of its admission criteria seems to affect the success of the writing fellows program” (p. 182). In 2001 *WAC for the New Millennium: Strategies for Continuing Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Programs*, Margot Soven wrote a chapter called “Curriculum-Based Peer Tutors and WAC” explaining curriculum-based tutors are “descendants” of Brown’s writing fellows program (p. 201).

**Writing center relationship to embedded consultants.** In his keynote speech at Brown University’s national peer tutoring conference in April 1993, Kenneth Bruffee emphasized the relationship between peer consultants and faculty saying, “peer tutors as a group, acting collaboratively, are potentially the most powerful agents for educational change” because they cross boundaries between communities on campus (Bruffee, 1993). Classroom-based tutors are students themselves, tutors working with peers, and fellows to a class to work with a faculty member. Soven's (1993) survey reports positive reactions from faculty members in regards to both student grades and overall improvement in the quality of the products submitted by students. Corroy (2003) presented a case study in which one professor reveals how the writing fellow helped her to write better assignments “specifically…the importance of preparation, organization, and clarity” (p. 33). Using a similar “boundary crossing” metaphor, Soliday (1995) describes the program at City College of New York, admitting she “think[es] the successful tutors…assimilated critically into classrooms, taking on more teacherly kinds of authority without losing sight of a tutor’s special purpose” (p. 68-69). A main emphasis on the classroom-based writing tutor is relationships: with students and with the course instructor. Soliday also argues that the writing center is a place “positioned to act as a translator across conflicted boundaries in the university” (p. 70). In the case presented by Soliday, tutors worked both in the classroom and the writing center. While Haring-Smith (1992) developed Brown’s writing fellows program out of the university writing center, fellows only use the space to meet with the students in the course to which they are fellowed.

Corroy (2003) confirms Bruffee’s declaration in her article, “Institutional change and the University of Wisconsin-Madison writing fellows program.” The University of Wisconsin-Madison began their writing fellows program in 1997 and defines its program goals as assisting faculty in the teaching of writing, providing student writers with useful feedback, and creating leadership and teaching opportunities for the writing fellows. However, as Corroy explains, Bill Cronon, history professor at UW-Madison claims, “the Writing Fellows Program is ultimately about changing the culture of undergraduate education at UW-Madison” (29). As evidence of this institutional change, Corroy presents two faculty interviews. A professor of Scandinavian studies admitted that her feedback and grading changed after observing the writing fellow work. “Professor Duames now emphasized the effects of style on structure and argument presentation, where before she focused solely on content” (p. 35). On the other hand, what the writing fellow learns in the program can have a profound impact on the institution as well. “Writing Fellows not only gain [Professor’s] insights, but also see professional examples of how some of the teaching theories that they have studied come into practice” (Corroy, 2003, p. 40-41). The professor’s mentorship helps to develop the program, not just single cases.
Based on the specific program, classroom-based tutors may or may not also work in the campus writing center. Cairns and Anderson (2008) document a case at Miami University in which faculty members in the school of education took on “writing associates” for the semester. In describing their study, faculty members “recruited the four undergraduate participants who served as WAs…[and] students who previously had taken the course” (p. 3). Cairns and Anderson’s approach differs greatly from many classroom-based tutoring programs in that the faculty selected their writing associate, or writing fellow. Most documented classroom-based programs assign their trained student employees to a faculty member who has applied or volunteered to participate in the program (Liu & Mandes, 2005; Ottery, Petrolle, Boczkowski, & Mogge, 2005; Soliday, 2005). In these situations, students are trained in writing center pedagogy, and then sent into classes. Some universities, such as those with classroom-based tutors that also work in the campus writing center (Manley, 2014) while others, such as Eastern Connecticut University, do not have a centralized writing center but offer classroom-based tutoring from a “writing center(ed) program developed by the English department” (Liu & Mandes, 205, p. 88). As Soven (1993) reported in her national survey, most classroom-based tutors are assigned to a class and that class only. If they are working in the writing center, it is only to meet with students from that individual class (p. 60). Whether or not individual writing centers require their classroom-based tutors to work in the writing center, a common theme for the success of embedded consultants is their solid training in writing center theory and pedagogy of asking questions, giving feedback, and acting as an audience for writers.

**The role of embedded consultants.** In the introduction to their edited book On Location: Theory and Practice in Classroom-Based Writing Tutoring, Candace Spigelman and Laurie Grobman (2005) describe their rationale for the title “On Location” using a film metaphor as when actors work “on location” and away from or outside the traditional studio. Likewise, classroom-based writing consultants venture out of the writing center and are “on location” in classrooms across campus.

An embedded consultant is a peer, writing tutor embedded within a class. Spigelman and Grobman (2005) and Soliday (1995) prefer the title classroom-based writing tutor. Regardless of the term, embedded consultant or classroom-based tutor, this position differs from a writing fellow, or as Leahy (1999) uses for “The Write Project” at Boise State University, writing assistants. He explains:

> As in typical writing fellows programs, we assign writing assistants (WAs) to classes in various disciplines. In a participating class, students submit drafts of their papers, the WAs read them and writing suggestions for revision, and then the students revise the drafts and submit them to the instructor for grading. (p. 72).

On the other hand, the classroom-based writing consultants assist the instructor with students’ writing needs, which includes but is not limited to in-class writing workshops, peer writing groups, individual writing conferences, presenting writing related instructional materials, and developing writing assignments (Spigelman & Grobman, 2005). Severino and Knight (2007) report their writing fellows at the University of Iowa act as “ambassadors” (p. 21) for the writing center giving “reluctant students who are ‘fellowed’ a taste of what the writing center offers, which may encourage them to make use of the center” (p. 27) Soliday (1995) lists the embedded consultant’s role in the classroom:

- Consultant introduces him/herself to the class.
- Consultant is named on class syllabus.
• Consultant is an active member of the class, participating in discussions, thus dealing with course content.
• Teacher negotiates consultant’s role with him/her.
• Writing conferences occur during class time.
• Consultant meets with students in the writing center outside of class time. (p. 67)

Established writing fellows programs across U.S. universities are often administered through the university’s writing center and responsibilities of embedded consultants may also include responding to student writing, one-to-one or group writing tutoring, and giving presentations to the class (Decker, 2005). In fact, Spigelman and Grobman (2005) note that embedded consultants are a “natural next-step to one-to-one peer tutoring arrangements” (p. 5).

Multiple case studies outline various other roles that embedded consultants may have. For example, Ottery, Petrolle, Boczkowski, and Mogge (2005) explain how writing consultants at Columbia College in Chicago follow what students do in class such as completing the assigned readings, maintaining a learning journal, and participating in class discussions, so that they are better resources for the students. Ottery, et. al. also describe consultants taking on more of a teacher role as consultants regularly met with and planned with the course instructors. Liu and Mandes (2005) provide guidance for classroom-based consultants-in-training by teaching methods for approaching writers. Many consultants feel it is ineffective “to simply sit down next to a writer and immediately ask to see his current progress” (91). On the other hand, Liu and Mandes emphasize the importance of the consultant maintain a level of professionalism not found in a peer-to-peer relationship.

Benefits of embedded consultants. Spigleman and Grobman (2005) provide many benefits of classroom-based writing tutoring to students, consultants, instructors, and writing centers in forms such as collaboration, increased learning (by students, tutors, and teachers), writer access to immediate feedback, better faculty understanding of writing centers. “On-location tutors encourage collaborative conversation among writers and responders” (7). An embedded consultant in a classroom promotes dialogue, relationships, and collaboration among students. We may be alone while writing but, writing itself is social: our writing has an audience. An embedded consultant provides an immediate audience, other than the instructor, with immediate answers, such as thesis statement construction or paragraph organization, to writing questions students may have. In their case of a developmental writing class, Liu and Mandes (2005) emphasize the benefit of teaching students to talk about their writing and to establish a professional relationship with the writing consultant to understand expectations. Once this rapport has been built, writers are more likely to choose to come to the writing center on their own rather than the consultant coming to them in class. Furthermore, an embedded consultant stresses the importance of the writing process meeting one of Haring-Smith’s (1992) aims to associate writing with learning (p. 176). “Writing as a mode of learning involves much more than two sets of drafts and revisions as required in a writing fellows class” (Leahy, 1999, p. 73). Embedded consultant and writing fellows programs are designed around revision, which promotes students writing to learn thereby gaining a better understanding of course content.

Working as an embedded consultant benefits the consultant as well. Individual embedded consultants benefit by improving their own writing and developing communication and leadership skills. Ottery, Petrolle, Boczkowski, and Mogge (2005) agree in that a classroom-based tutor program lends itself well to professional development as consultants. In their case at Columbia College, consultants report improved active listening skills, and consequently improved active teaching skills.
While initially, negotiating the embedded consultant’s role would be more work upfront, once the program was established, an embedded consultant could help to reduce the workload for an instructor in a writing heavy course. “Combining writing centers with classrooms retains the more obvious benefits of peer tutoring and provides much-needed help to overworked instructors, but leaves the political and social energy of the autonomous writing center behind” (Decker, 2005, 22). The embedded consultant could be responsible to read and help students with early drafts and because the consultant is in communication with the instructor, s/he knows exactly what the assignment (and the instructor) is asking the writer to do. Likewise, as the instructor collaborates with the embedded consultant, the instructor may learn new innovative pedagogy as s/he is introduced to writing center practices. For example, a professor reflects on his experience reading a writing fellow’s comments on his students’ essays and discovers new ways to elicit improved writing from students (Corroy, 2003). The teacher could also be better informed about his/her students from their peer’s perspectives. Decker “suspect(s) that tutors facilitating peer response groups may ultimately bring the more revolutionary aspects of the writing center into the classroom, showing students that even the most entrenched site of the academic hierarchy can be subverted—within its own borders—and all with the approval of the instructor” (30).

In its history, and even today, writing centers are often seen as remedial to many faculty on campus (North 1984; Severino & Knight, 2007). In fact, North makes a bold declaration about faculty, particularly English faculty, saying, “They do not understand what happen, what can happen, in a writing center” (433). An embedded consultant program could dispel myths about writing centers, such as fixing grammar or being for struggling writers only, and help promote faculty understanding of what a writing center does and does not do, could and could not do. Leahy (1990) agrees comparing faculty’s perception of writing centers to the six blind men who felt an elephant and described a wall, spear, snake, tree, fan, and rope. He argues, “The most persistent image of writing centers is that they are remedial facilities for students with ‘special problems’ in writing” (44). Leahy pleads for faculty and administrators to unlock the potential that their campus writing center has for them, their students, and their disciplines. Embedded consultants can be informants about this potential. Likewise, student embedded consultants could build relationships with faculty and gain a better understanding of what they expect from their students. Embedded consultants promote cross-campus and cross-disciplinary communication.

ESL Pedagogy

Paul Kei Matsuda (1998) argues that ESL is cross-disciplinary: composition studies, applied linguistics, and teaching English as a second language, which, according to Matsuda, have unfortunately been historically separate. However, his push to unite these related disciplines gives way for ESL to have a positive relationship with writing centers. Silva and Leki (2004) agree saying, “[applied linguistics and composition studies] are both interdisciplinary by nature and definition” (p. 9). Matsuda emphasizes the need for universities to develop pedagogy that will respond to ESL writer’s unique needs. Additionally, he calls for further research of ESL writing as it relates to other fields, and in the case of this thesis, the relationship between L2 writing and writing centers.

Leki (1992) admits teaching NNES students is “not radically different from teaching writing to native English speakers” (xi); however, there are linguistic and cultural differences among NNES and NES students. Silva (1993) confirms the student differences in his report on
72 empirical research articles comparing L1 and L2 writers in which he found significant differences between the two writers. “Though general composing process patterns are similar…it is clear that L2 composing is more constrained, more difficult, and less effective” (p. 668). Silva explains differences among argument structures based on the writer’s native language. For example, he cites native speaking Korean students use indirect strategies to move from evidence to conclusion in an argument essay. Reid (1993) writes that NNES students bring a different set of “needs, backgrounds, learning styles, and writing strategies” (vii), often culturally based, to the classroom. Likewise, Yang (2010) offers pedagogical approaches to teaching English with an emphasis on the cultural differences. He says separating the teaching of English is impossible from the teaching of culture. Thus, the ESL classroom should not only foster the teaching of language (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, idioms), but also the teaching of culture (how language reflects ideas, customs, and behaviors in a particular society).

Cultural and rhetorical differences. Kaplan (1966) introduced language and rhetorical scholars to different patterns of thought among different cultures. While there are critics of Kaplan’s work (Connor, 1996; Roy, 1988), he brought about an important awareness that L2 writers connect ideas differently than native speakers, essentially using different rhetorical strategies in different cultures. These organizational differences cause readers to dismiss the validity of the written content. For example, Land and Whitely (1989) conducted research about the evaluation of L2 essays. NES essays were consistently scored higher than NNES essays, despite errors being removed from the NNES essays, proving that the rhetorical choices made by native speakers were preferred over those made by NNES writers. Rubin and Williams-James (1997) discuss how teachers’ attitudes and ratings are influenced by not only the cultural identity, like ethnic background of the writer, but also students’ names and physical attractiveness. In their analysis of 33 graduate assistants and adjunct teachers, Rubin and Williams-James found the opposite, that Asian ESL writers’ essays were evaluated less harshly than U.S. writers, especially in terms of grammar. The researchers hypothesized this was because the native English-speakers “should have known better” (p. 359) than to make grammatical mistakes so readers were less forgiving. Although Rubin and William-James’ findings contrast with Land and Whitely’s, both studies prove NNES writers are evaluated differently than their NES, American counterparts.

Describing the recently developed field of contrastive rhetoric, Ulla Connor (1996) believes L2 composition is influenced by a variety of factors and that a writer’s culture and language gives them a framework as they develop their rhetorical style. A major component of academic composition in the United States is argument-based. By collecting perspectives from L2 writers through interviews, Wei Zhu (2001) explains students found a major challenge to be rhetorical concerns, such as organization and development of arguments. Zhu’s research supports Connor’s argument that cultural and linguistic backgrounds do indeed influence writers’ rhetorical characteristics. Additionally, Zhu discovered the variety of strategies, such as topic selection, planning, drafting, and connecting the writing task to prior knowledge, that her participants used. Matsuda (1998) confirms saying that while cultural and linguistic backgrounds are relevant, multiple factors play into the organizational and rhetorical choices of L2 writers.

Feedback for NNES writers. A major debate in ESL pedagogy is providing feedback to NNES writers (Ferris 1999, Truscott, 1996). At the center of the debate lays corrective feedback and whether or not correcting grammar helps or hurts writers as they compose in a second language.
The cross-disciplinary nature of this debate draws opinions from experts in second language acquisition specialists, linguists, compositionists, rhetoricians, and educators (Ferris, 2010). Writing centers studies, like L2 scholarship, is also interdisciplinary. Writing center scholarship emphasizes a nondirective approach to providing feedback to writers.

**NNES Writers in the Writing Center**

Often many international students find themselves seeking academic help in university writing centers. Nationally, writing center administrators report anywhere from 40-75% of the writing consultations that take place are with NNES writers (WCenter Electronic Mailing List Archives, 2014). With the influx of international students to U.S. universities in recent years, writing center research has responded in the forms of understanding NNES writers, offering training solutions for consulting with NNES writers, and initiating special programs and outreach to the NNES student population.

The primary writing consultant training text, *The Longman Guide to Peer Tutoring* by Paula Gillespie and Neal Learner (2008), devotes one chapter, ten pages to be exact, to “Working with ESL Writers.” In it, Gillespie and Learner dispel myths about ESL writers for example, NNES writers do not have enough of the “basics” to complete substantial academic writing or that consultants need to focus on “cleaning up” grammar in NNES writing. They conclude the chapter with tips for consultants working with NNES writers such as being patient, addressing higher-order concerns (such as organization affecting the revision process, as opposed to lower order concerns like punctuation that relate to editing) first, and urging NNES writers to “do as much reading as they can and to make American friends” (p. 126). While dispelling myths and providing consulting strategies is useful for writing consultants and embedded consultants, this type of training still pushes an “us” versus “them” binary; and making “American friends” is not always as easy as it sounds.

“International students have a great deal in common with basic writers in that they are outsiders to the academic discourse community” (Thonas, 1993, p. 22). Unfortunately this attitude toward NNES writers gives way to the assumption that NNES writers are “basic.” Blau and Hall (2002) admit frustration among their peer tutors when discussing tutoring NNES writers. In their analysis of a peer tutoring guidebook, Blau and Hall criticize the author for encouraging consultants to commit to the “slow” and “tedious” work of tutoring NNES writers. However, in their article, the authors argue for writing center staff to acknowledge ESL students’ concerns for lower order concerns, such as grammar or word choice, and “interweave” global and local concerns to help put anxious writers at ease.

**Embedded consultants in the NNES classroom.** The second major finding of Jessica Williams’s (1995) ESL Program Administration survey was the faculty’s need for institutional support. Another way for NES & NNES students to “learn together” and for institutional support is by embedding a consultant into a NNES writing course. Embedded consultants create a community of learners that benefits the students in the course, as well as the consultant. An example of this can be found in Ottery, Petrolle, Boczkowski, and Mogge’s (2005) study of a Summer Bridge Program for at-risk students. “The problems that most of these students had in high school often had little to do with their literacy skills and more to do with social situations that placed them at risk” (69). The community that was created between the students, the consultants, and the teachers gave the students a space to increase their learning and overall success as college students. The same situation can be applied to international, NNES students because although they find themselves in very different social situations, they too are at risk of
alienation. Rubin and Williams-James (1997) agrees, “NNES students experience loss of confidence and increase in alienation in mainstream English composition classes” (p. 139). Cultural adjustment is difficult for many international students and this alienation leads to not only poor academic achievement and lowering retention rates, but can also have more serious consequences affecting students’ emotional and physical health (Gebhard, 2010).

As stated earlier, the influx of NNES students has posed unique challenges to American universities and while there is research on effective writing center consulting strategies with NNES writers, there are no documented examples of embedded consultants or writing fellows in NNES classes. Ann Johns (2001) describes the linguistic diversity among NNES students listing proficiency level of first language, proficiency level of English, academic expectations, and professional goals. Ruth Spack (1988) agrees saying, “there is most often a large gap between what students bring to the academic community and what the academic community expects of them” (30). For example, Gebhard (2010) notes the challenges with reading and writing that international students experience in the U.S. academic setting. He quotes a graduate student that explained:

In Hungary we don’t write many papers really, not like here in the U.S. We read and listen to lectures, but we might have oral exams. I can easily talk about what I study, but when I have to write it down, everything slows down, especially when I have to write a formal library research paper. (p. 12)

An embedded consultant in a NNES composition classroom facilitate NNES learning because the consultant can help bridge the gap between discourse and culture supporting Zhu’s (2001) findings that a student’s culture and language heavily influence the rhetorical characteristics of a L2 writing.

Catherine Tang (1998) argues that Confucian-influenced cultures emphasize “inter-relatedness, resulting…in a society with a strong sense of collectivism” (183) which seemingly supports the notion of peer tutoring. However, as Tang explains, Chinese education has a highly regimented infrastructure in place, promoting individual achievement. Western research finds collaborative learning to be more effective in student learning than a competitive, individually achievement based system (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1998). While many students are coming to the United States from competitive, individualistic education settings, learning how to work cooperatively with classmates will help ensure students’ academic success. An American embedded consultant can help facilitate group work in the NNES classroom by providing a peer’s perspective on the value of collaboration in the American academic discourse.

Additionally, faculty may be ill-prepared to work with NNES students as they have designed their courses for American, English-speaking students. In her article addressing ESL concerns for writing program administrators, Alice Roy (1988) admits finding instructors to teach L2 writers can be tricky.

There is a tendency among administrators and English Department faculties to look for linguists and ESL specialists to “deal with” second language writers…It is hard to find instructors who are knowledgeable in both writing and language, and therefore some investment for in-service training is necessary. (p. 20 & 23)

A specially trained writing consultant embedded in a course with NNES students can help the teacher negotiate the academic cultural differences, like organizing arguments or audience awareness that manifest in student writing.

**ESL and WAC.** The initial writing fellows at Brown University developed out of a response to university Writing Across the Curriculum initiatives (Haring-Smith, 1992), so it is
important to discuss the intersection (or lack thereof) between WAC and ESL. In her extensive review of 26 articles about L2 writers and WAC, Michelle Cox (2011) argues “WAC has increased emphasis on writing across undergraduate programs without creating mechanisms that help L2 students succeed as writers and without creating faculty development programs that offer training in working with L2 writers” (p. 5). Because WAC programs primarily work with faculty and not students, the L2 writers have been left out of the WAC conversations both on individual campuses and in scholarship (Zawacki & Cox, 2011). Cox’s 2011 article revealed little research on NNES writers in WAC scholarship. She urges Writing Program Administrators to learn from previous L2 writing research and include the demographics of linguistic diversity when conducting program assessment.

Patton (2011) agrees, noting a gap in L1 and L2 writing research especially in WAC. A big complaint from faculty, she reported, is the underpreparedness of the ESL students and the lack of support they felt in teaching NNES students. Patton emphasizes, “when teachers of L2 writers fail to employ even the most basic WAC principles…it is a cause for consternation.” Since writing fellow grew out of a faculty need for WAC support for their students, a writing consultant in a NNES classroom or WAC class with L2 writers could not only provide faculty support but also give a voice to the students left in the gap of the administrative conversations.

**Bridging the Gap**

The literature presented in this chapter shows ways to bridge gaps in the American academic community, especially when referring to NNES students learning in that discourse. An embedded consultant can not only bridge the aforementioned gap between NNES writers and WAC, but also students and their teachers, L1 and L2 writers, and writing centers and faculty. The following three chapters present a case of an embedded writing center consultant in a NNES classroom attempting to build a bridge.
Chapter 3
Our Big Family: Students’ Perspectives of the Embedded Consultant Program

CCCG encourages writing teachers and writing program administrators to “include second language perspectives in developing theories, designing studies, analyzing data, and discussing implications of studies of writing” (CCCG, 2009). That portion of the CCCG’s statement should include the second language writers’ voices. The student perspective is important to include in this particular case study because “qualitative research can reveal how all the parts work together to form a whole” (Merriam, 1998). As the students and as the writers, their voices differ from that of the embedded consultant and that of the instructor because they are the ones processing new information and a new culture all in a language that is not their native one. According to Kottak (2006), an emic approach to anthropological research is one that takes the local or native perceptions central to investigation. The addition of an emic perspective allows for what LuMing Mao (2003) calls “reflective encounters.” He explains:

The whole aim of reflective encounters is to develop a creative understanding of different rhetorical traditions. Such an understanding is a result of studying other traditions on their own terms and of developing an ongoing dialogue between these other traditions and Western rhetorical tradition. (p. 418)

This thesis set out to investigate the effects of an embedded consultant in an NNES writing classroom, and the different cultures within that classroom; therefore, it is essential to include the NNES students’ opinions.

Methodology

Participants. The participants in the research were the 15 students enrolled in one section of ENG 108 with an embedded consultant during the fall 2013 semester. Twelve students were from China, one from India, one from Inner Mongolia, and one from Taiwan. They were mixed genders from a variety of academic majors. Although ENG 108 is listed as a first-year course at Miami University, the survey participants included 9 first-year students and one sophomore. Two of the first-year students were in their second semester as they completed the ACE Intensive English Program the semester prior and one student transferred from a Chinese university, elevating her academic status to sophomore. Of the 15 students, 10 completed the survey (Appendix B). Five students participated in the interviews (see Appendix C for notional interview questions): four females and one male. All five are from China and speak Mandarin as their primary language. Four of the five speak English as a second language and one of the students speaks French as a third language, having studied French since elementary school. Finally, 14 of the 15 students consented for their writing samples to be used in this study.

Data collection and analysis. Data were collected from three primary sources: survey, interview, and student writing samples. I created an online student survey based on the embedded consultant program outcomes and previous literature about classroom-based tutoring programs (Soliday, 1995). In addition to asking basic demographic questions, the survey measured student perception of the embedded consultant’s class participation, attendance, and usefulness to student writing. There were also three open-ended questions regarding the student’s experience with the embedded consultant, advice for future embedded consultants, and experience with the writing center. The one-on-one, face-to-face interviews lasted 20-minutes each and were conducted as a follow-up to the surveys because “interviewing is one of the most
common and powerful ways in which [researchers] try to understand” other people (Fontana & Frey, 2005, pp. 697-698). The interviews gave the students a voice in their assessment of the embedded consultant program. Finally, I used the reflective writing samples to triangulate a more accurate, comprehensive perception of the students’ experiences with the embedded consultant and writing center as those were completed at different times throughout the semester while the survey and interviews were completed at the conclusion of the semester and into the beginning of the next semester.

Survey. Upon receiving permissions from the Howe Writing Center manager, the Director of ESL Composition, and the Miami University's Institutional Review Board, 15 students who completed ENG 108 with an embedded consultant during the fall 2013 semester received a recruitment email. The email was sent during the second week of classes in the semester following the class with the embedded consultant. The email directed students to an online survey (Appendix B), which included an electronic consent form. Once the survey was complete, the answers of each individual question were combined by tallying the responses that were the same and listed responses as quotes to the open-ended questions to look for themes and commonalities.

Interview. The conclusion of the survey asked for volunteers to participate in a 20-minute interview about their experience with the embedded consultant in ENG 108. Five students volunteered. After signing a consent form, the five students participated in a one-on-one semi-structured interview. All interviews were conducted in English and because I was the students’ teacher the interviews were conducted by my colleague at the writing center. Upon completion, interviews were transcribed and then student responses were coded thematically. I used a three-part coding system that sought out student responses related to the embedded consultant and writing in the classroom, the writing center and other academic writing outside of the ENG 108 classroom, and advice for the future of the embedded consultant program especially related to NNES students.

Writing samples. During the final week of classes, a writing center colleague discussed the research project with the students and asked for permission to use their writing samples in the study. She read a script outlining the project and distributed the consent forms. Students were directed to sign the form if they choose to participate or not and the directions emphasized that not only would their participation have no effect on their grade, I would not know if they chose to participate until after grades had been submitted and distributed. The day the students signed the consent forms, one was absent, therefore I did not have permission to use that student’s work.

Results

Survey. Students responded to a Likert scale on their level of agreement for the first four questions. Table 2 lists the four questions with student responses.
Table 2  
Student Survey Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My teacher introduced the embedded consultant and provided her hours at the writing center.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The embedded consultant attended enough classes to understand the writing assignments for this class.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The embedded consultant participated in our class discussions.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Having an embedded consultant was useful to writing I did in this course.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question five asked for specific examples of how the consultant participated in the class. Student responses included:

- “How to edit an essay”
- “Helped to solve problems”
- “Answering questions”
- “Checking everyone’s status”

One student made note that the embedded consultant participated in class “like us” because she did the same presentations they were assigned to do. Similarly, students responded with specific examples for question six which asked, “In what ways did the consultant personally help you?” Multiple students answered with how helpful having a native speaker in the class was especially when they were conducting research. She “help me to get to some specific website” and “helped us a lot on writings” by sharing her ideas with everyone “which was helpful to me and everyone” in the class.

Because the embedded consultant is also an employee of the writing center that meets with all students, not just limited to students in the class with the embedded consultant, I asked students about their experiences with the Howe Writing Center. Ten students reported making appointments at the writing center during the fall 2013 semester. Six of those ten students scheduled consultations for not only ENG 108, but also for other courses in which they were enrolled. These other courses included Architecture, Chemistry, Computer Science, Educational Leadership, and Geology. When attending consultations at the writing center for ENG 108, students reported working on the following with Carson:

- “Paper”
- “Research essay”
- “Assignment drafting”
- “Brainstorming”
- “A group project. She helped us check if we meet all the requirements and gave us advice while we cannot make decisions.”
- “For paper, I need some help on grammar”

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7 Carson, the embedded consultant in my ENG 108 course during the fall 2013, elected to use her given name in this research report.
Two surveyed students reported visiting the writing center six or more times, five students went 3-5 times, and three students went 1-2 times.

Finally, I asked students for advice for the future of embedded consultants. Two students responded with:

- “I suggest future embedded consultants that talk about the things that instructors forget to mention.”
- “Consultant can help us more on presentation parts.”

According to the survey results, the overall impression the students had of the embedded consultant program was positive. They reported the inclusiveness of Carson in the class and her helpfulness during the writing process both in the classroom and in the writing center.

**Interviews.** The interview data are organized by each of the five participants: Yina, Winnie, Flora, Siyuan, and Cassie.

**Yina** is a sophomore education major. While she was in her first semester at Miami, she transferred from a university in China. According to her count, Yina visited the writing center approximately ten times during the fall 2013 semester for not only ENG 108 but also her music and art history classes. During these visits she tried to meet with Carson if she was available, but their schedules didn’t always match. However, Yina says she prefers to meet with Carson and purposely schedules consultations with her during the spring 2014 semester. She explains “I want to choose Carson because she teaches me—she taught me before, so she knows my—some my mistake or my level like that…every time I meet her, she can always solve my problems, solve my question.” In reflecting on her experience with an embedded consultant in ENG 108, Yina gives a positive reaction to Carson’s presence in class. If she felt confused by my instructions as the teacher, Yina asked Carson and felt as if she could better explain the directions. A particular part of her writing that Yina said Carson really helped her with was adding more details to help readers understand what she wanted to say. “[Carson] looked around my paper and helped me be specific…Like I need to describe ideas, not only for this one word—only one sentence. I need to give more information for this sentence to describe it right.” Yina suggests that embedded consultants are beneficial in ENG 108 because they allow the teacher give more individualized attention which helps ease the academic transition international students make as they come to America to study. Her advice to future embedded consultants in a NNES classroom are to be a good listener and spent time building rapport with Chinese students. “When I’m in the writing center,” Yina explains, “if I stop talking and [the consultant] stop talking, it’s awkward.” With Carson in the class though, Yina did not feel that awkwardness. A cultural exchange she reflected upon was researching the circus. Yina wrote about the Chinese circus for a homework assignment and after discussing her ideas with Carson, she learned about the American circus. Carson directed her to some online resources about the American circus and Yina was able to compare and contrast the two. On a deeper level, Yina says she and Carson have had discussions about the attitudes Americans and Chinese about studying abroad and American perceptions of the Chinese students at Miami.

**Winnie** is a first year engineering student from China who spent one year during high school studying in the United States. In addition to visiting the writing center three times for ENG 108, she also went once to get help on writing a lab report for her chemistry class. Winnie met with Carson once in the writing center to work on the ENG 108 research essay assignment. She purposely did not meet with Carson for the chemistry class because she “wanted to meet

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8 The names used were chosen by the participants. Some are pseudonyms and others chose to use their given names.
with a science major for help on [her] lab report.” Because Winnie spent a year studying abroad in the U.S. while still in high school, she brought a different level of understanding of the American academic culture to university. As her teacher, I observed a higher level of spoken and written English than her peers; she also appeared more confident in her language abilities than her ENG 108 classmates. She claims, “I didn’t really need a kind of teaching assistant, because I kind of know everything already.” However, Winnie did admit to referring to Carson for help with the required MLA formatting and citations. When thinking about the class as a whole though, Winnie did think Carson’s presence was beneficial. “Like other people if they have questions about their assignments, about their writing, I think they would turn to her,” she explains. Winnie brought a different perspective than the other interviewees when I asked her whether or not the Howe Writing Center should continue embedded consultants in NNES classes. She said, “It’s an opportunity for [the writing consultants]...because you can get in touch with new international students and then get to help them” which is important for consultants with majors that would benefit from building relationships with international students. Winnie’s advice for future embedded consultants is to be prepared to be uncomfortable. “If the consultant knows all the students are going to speak Chinese in the classroom, they need to get prepared and just tell themselves not to get offense or upset because I think this is a common problem for American students.” In the course of Winnie’s interview, she discussed the possibility of a Chinese writing consultant as the embedded consultant in a class like ENG 108. The comparison she made was “like a human translator” between the teacher and the students “so...the consultant can make a good relationship between the professor and the students.”

Flora, also a first year student from China, majors in Communication. She visited the writing center multiple times during the fall 2013 semester for ENG 108 and American Studies, meeting with not only Carson, but other writing center consultants. Flora also met with Carson during the spring 2014 semester for the next level of English class. For the embedded consultant program, Flora thought that Carson was helpful in the class, but wished there was more interaction between them. “I think she’s really good...and she teach herself about grammar to help us, but she did not interact with us initially by herself.” When asked to clarify this lack of interaction, Flora explained that she had a TA for a communication class and the TA frequently sent emails reminding students about due dates or expounding on class material; Flora would have preferred Carson to have additional communication to the students outside of the class. As far as her writing, Flora appreciated the model Carson was for the class. For example, students were required to give a presentation on one aspect of English grammar. Carson also did the presentation and went first “and gave us a sample” for the class. Overall, Flora thinks the “most helpful thing because she is American, so she can help us with all grammar...and talk to us one-on-one.”

Siyuan, a first year finance major from China, visited the writing center three times during the fall 2013 semester for ENG 108 and his computer science class. He met with Carson for ENG 108 once, and then met with different writing consultants the other two times he went to the writing center. Siyuan’s experience with Carson in the class was also positive; he said she primarily helped in the online research process especially when navigating Miami’s library website. However, Siyuan felt his most beneficial experience with Carson happened during his consultation with her in the writing center. “It’s a second draft of a project,” he explained and the consultation was toward the beginning of the semester. “She really helped me with organization because I didn’t do well on my first essay. After that she showed me how to
organize my writing and it helped me in other projects.” Siyuan’s advice for the future of the
embedded consultant program is that one consultant work with a few sections of ENG 108 and
that whoever the embedded consultant is that s/he has training to “be more familiar with how the
international students think about writing, the ways in which they introduce a theme.”

Cassie is a transfer student from China. Academically classified as a sophomore, she
majors in business. Cassie says she went to the writing center more than ten times during the fall
2013 semester for her ENG 108 and Geology classes. She reserved consultations with Carson as
much as her schedule allowed usually asking for help on “some structure problem and
organization problem.” Cassie compared Carson to TAs in her other classes explaining that TAs
hold study sessions after lectures and Carson is available to meet with students in the writing
center outside of class. In class, Cassie recalls, “we need to discuss in teams, but sometimes we
can figure out the problem quickly, so Lucy and Carson would come to us too, and join us…Carson can just give—especially for me—she give me how to understand what [the teacher]
want[s].” Cassie admits, “every time, if I misunderstand Lucy’s meaning, I can ask Carson.”
When asked about cultural exchanges between Carson and herself, Cassie was most excited
about the collaborative writing assignment on social media. “[Carson] introduced new words,
what was useful” and they shared perspectives on both Facebook and RenRen, or the Chinese
Facebook. Building a relationship with Carson was especially important to Cassie because her
friends in different ENG 108 sections relied on her to give feedback about the writing center.
“[My friends] didn’t know who is suited for their writing center. Because sometimes choosing a
person is really important. So we obviously discuss who is suitable for Chinese people, who can
understand us. Carson is one of them.” On the other hand, there were times Cassie felt that
Carson was disengaged in class depending on what students were working on. When it was
group work, “she’s really helpful, but other times, it’s just like she sit there.” For the future,
Cassie would like to see the professor encourage students to conference more with the embedded
consultant. This way everyone (students and embedded consultant) would be more engaged.

Upon reading and analyzing the interview transcripts, I used a two-part coding system.
First I looked for students’ perceptions of the embedded consultant. Then, I made note of their
experiences with the writing center. Yina, Flora, and Cassie felt the strongest about Carson’s
impact on the class; while Winnie and Siyuan appreciated Carson’s helpfulness, did not feel
strongly that having an embedded consultant really improved their individual writing skills. On
the other hand, Siyuan did admit the benefits of the one-on-one attention and help he received
from Carson during a writing center consultation. Because she often requested Carson’s help in
class and frequently visited the writing center, Cassie was able to provide a lot of information
about international students’ perspectives of the writing center, like when she explained how
they frequently share information about which consultants would be best (or not) for working
with NNES writers.

Student writing samples. Fourteen of the 15 students enrolled in my section of ENG
108 during the fall 2013 semester consented for my use of their reflective writing for this
research project. Students wrote reflections, or “writer’s letters” (Yancey, 1998) and submitted
them with the final draft of each major assignment. At the end of the semester, students
compiled a writing portfolio, which included a 600-800 word final reflection. In this reflection I
asked students to respond to the following questions:

 As a writer, what do you do well?

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9 The one student who did not give permission did not complete the portfolio assignment and was absent the day
my colleague asked for student consent.
What do you need to work on?
How have you used the Howe Writing Center this semester?
Discuss your time with Carson in our class.
What have you learned?
What do you wish you had learned?
What is something that surprised you about your first semester at Miami University?
Anything else you want to say about ENG 108 and/or about writing.

For the purposes of this thesis, I report only on the questions related to the writing center and students’ experiences with the embedded consultant. Upon analysis of students’ final reflections, three major topics emerged: (1) the embedded consultant (Carson); (2) the Howe Writing Center; and (3) “family”; I go into details about these topics in the following paragraphs.

**The embedded consultant.** Although there was a specific question addressing perspectives on experiences with the embedded consultant in the class, 12 students reflected on their time with Carson. In their reflections, eight students referred to Carson as a teaching assistant, an assistant, or someone who was assisting in the class. One called her a tutor and another said she “works as an advisor in writing center.” Overall, there was a positive reaction to Carson’s presence in the class. For example, one student wrote:

> Communicating with Carson has helped me a lot in this class. Carson is a teacher assistant and she has attended almost all the classes this semester. When Lucy gives us some work, like creating an account, searching websites, and writing brainstorming, Carson goes around the classroom to help us work out our problems. I always ask help from Carson to understand themes and topics. She explains to me and answers my questions patiently. I also have made several appointments with her in writing center because she knows the requirements and assignments.

Another student reflected:

> Carson, as our teaching assistant she is very nice and responsible, I turned to her for help in English paper writing for several times and she always gave me the best help. I have asked her about writing assignments when I was not able to understand and she explained to me in details. We have also met in the Howe Writing Center about a group project and Carson listened to our project and gave us many pieces of advice for that project. What’s more, Carson also provided us resources about how to write papers in English and she also talked about citation and quotation as well. She offered us much support for this class and has been always very helpful and nice for this ENG 108 class.

Two students simply wrote that Carson was “nice” and “helpful” without giving specific examples of how their writing improved because of her presence in the class. On the other hand, one student wrote, “I don’t think Carson is that helpful in our class…” There was no additional explanation, just an ellipsis.

Other ways students say Carson helped them were:

- “Checking my essay”
- “Carson is pretty helpful academically as well as mentally”
- “How to develop a topic and write a coherent paragraph”
- “Enhance our self-confidence on English writing”

Again, students’ end of the semester reflections affirmed a positive experience with Carson embedded in the class. Students reported help with not only their writing skills, such as organization and clarity, but also their mental state by boosting their confidence as L2 writers.
The Howe Writing Center. Similar to reflecting on their experiences with an embedded consultant in ENG 108, students answered the question “How have you used the Howe Writing Center?” Based on the design of the class, students were required to go to the Howe Writing Center twice throughout the semester. The first time was for an individual consultation with any writing consultant sometime during the writing process for their first essay, a personal narrative. The second time was during their third essay, a collaborative assignment in which all members of the group were required to attend a consultation with Carson. Although these visits were required, students did not always meet the assignment requirements, but the ones who did reacted positively to the services the Howe Writing Center offers to students. One student said:

One way to make my English paper better, I asked help from Howe Writing Center in this semester. The student who helped me was really a good guy and he edited my English paper carefully and in this process, he also asked me questions about how do you think you could make it better. Asking me questions is a good way for me to think about some ways I could use in the paper I will write in the future.

Another example of student’s use of the Howe Writing Center is his description of how he goes during different stages of the writing process:

So I used writing center a lot to help me revise the mistakes and tell me what should I focus on in the grammar. Another reason that I use writing center is for brainstorming. Sometimes, I do not have a clear train of thought when I got a topic, I will go to writing center for help. The tutors would like to outline the main ideas and help me come up some good ideas by myself. During the period of brainstorming, I will have clear mentality in my mind and it will be easier to write the paper compare to time before. I used writing center not only for ENG 108, but also worked for other classes.

One student had a mixed reaction to the Howe Writing Center explaining that Carson was helpful in understanding the assignment and which parts of the essay to spend more time developing than others, however, another visit to the writing center proved to be a negative experience because the student said he asked for help with organization, but did not receive it. Two students admitted to not taking full advantage of the Howe Writing Center’s consultation and workshop services.

In my experience as a writing center staff member, I find that generally students have positive experience with their consultations. On occasion, however, students react negatively for one reason or another. The student who reflected with mixed emotions proves that although one individual consultation may not end in the desired result, the overall experiences at the writing center benefit writers. The writing center consultation is not a one-way street from consultant to writer, but a conversation about writing between peers. By misunderstanding this concept or not taking full advantage of what the writing center has to offer, students miss an important opportunity to improve as writers.

“Family”. The final theme that emerged was that of “family.” Twelve of the 14 student reflections not only wrote about this theme, but also actually used the word “family” somewhere in their reflections. One student used the family analogy to organize her entire reflection calling her classmates, brothers and sisters and Carson and me, her parents. “They take care of us,” she says, “teach us not only English but also culture of American life.” Furthermore she says, “It was a big surprise that I met so many friends in this class.” Many other students reiterated her enthusiasm for the friendships built in ENG 108 including comments such as:
“At the beginning, we were too shy to answer questions and read paragraphs. However we became friends after a few classes. I really appreciated that I could make friends with Lucy, Carson and those classmates. :)”

“Lots of international students will feel lonely when they come to an unfamiliar country, the ENG 108 is a good place to help you make friends. I think the ENG 108 just like a family for me. We help classmates to study and students feel relaxed on the classes.”

“In the end, I like to mention about the surprise this class brought us. Although international students do need to have domestic friends here in America, it is important for them to make friends from their home countries to help them feel safe and calm. To my surprise, ENG 108 helps us to make more friends from our homeland here in Miami. After taking this class, our classmates became very familiar with each other. It is actually quite awkward when we do our ‘Peer review’ at the first time, especially when we need to read out loud to others. Nevertheless, this became normal and we would not feel embraced anymore while doing ‘Peer review’ during the semester passed. Indeed, we decided to take some same courses together in next semester. I believe this course provides international students great help on their first semester, which also leads them to have better experience in Miami.”

Multiple students added a class picture to their electronic reflections with captions such as “My Big ENG 108 Family” or “Like a Family.”

The five-credit course means we spend five hours a week together for 15 weeks. Because we spend a lot of time together, the ENG 108 class creates a smaller community within a larger international student population. In this case, most of the students view this community as family.

**Discussion**

**Relationship building.** Revisiting the ACE study I conducted in the spring 2011 semester, the primary motivation for students coming to the U.S. for higher education was not to “make friends,” but rather take advantage of educational opportunities unavailable in their home countries and improve their English language skills. This belief is consistent with Lee & Kim’s (2010) research on Korean Ph.D. students, as well as Chow & Bhandari’s (2013) report on international education (2013), and creates pressure on both the institution as well as the instructors to maintain this reputation of American academics. However, from these student reflections and interview data from the ACE study, students are building important relationships. Gaining a better understanding of the experiences of international students at Miami also benefits the larger academic community, specifically the faculty as they continue to improve their pedagogy and strategies for teaching ESL students. Similar to Gebhard’s book, *What do international students think and feel? Adapting to U.S. college life and culture* (2010), understanding the international student population at one’s university is key to being successful faculty member when international students are integrated throughout different classes. Gebhard states that his purpose in writing the book was to “illuminate the lives of international students who are studying at U.S. colleges” (p. 169) which allows faculty and staff to have a clearer picture of the difficulties when adjusting to another culture.

This relationship building, or family, emerges as another prominent feature of the Confucian-inspired Chinese culture (Watkins & Biggs, 1996). Based on the students’ reflections both the words they wrote and the images of the class they included are evidence of the
importance these relationships are to not only their academic success, but also to their well-being as they are over 7,000 miles from their biological families in China.

Students were not only aware of Carson’s presence in the classroom; they also sought her out for help both in the classroom and in the writing center. They felt as if she fully participated in the class; however, some suggested that she take on more of a model or prototypical role. For example, one assignment required students to create a Prezi and introduce themselves to the class. The introductory presentation helps to create community in the classroom as well as give NNES students a way to practice presenting to a group in English. I always go first and give my presentation a week before the students’ are due. Carson also participated in this but presented on the same day as the students. They preferred she present a class period earlier as to model what is expected of a student in an American academic setting. On the other hand, it was noted in the survey that one student say she was “like us” because of the way she participated in the class.

Additionally, many students felt comfortable asking Carson for help, especially if my instructions were unclear. Although many students used the title “assistant” or “teaching assistant” to refer to Carson, they perceived her as a peer more than equal to me, the instructor. Another example of this familiarity is when students approached Carson outside of both the classroom and the writing center. If they saw her studying in the library, for example, students felt comfortable enough to approach her to ask a question or just say “hi.” Cassie, in her interview, emphasized the importance of making appointments with Carson even after the semester with the embedded consultant is over. It should also be noted that Cassie applied and was accepted to train as a writing consultant in the fall 2014 semester so following that training, she will be a coworker with Carson. Their preexisting relationship will help Cassie to integrate into the writing center as a consultant, and give Carson further opportunity to mentor a new writing consultant.

Students not only built an important relationship with Carson, but also with each other. There were able to form a network based on their similarities as international students. In their reflections, half of the students discussed how they set up a Wei chat for the class so they could communicate with each other about assignments and what they were learning. Additionally, many of them described how they scheduled the next semester’s courses with each other. The writing skills and strategies students learn in freshman composition are more easily transferred when the students stay together. For example, a student reflected about being shy the first time they had to participate in peer review. By the end of the class, students voluntarily engaged in peer review, even for smaller assignments. Establishing relationships early in their academic careers can facilitate the peer review process to continue into other coursework.

Academic writing. Based on the Soliday’s (1995) suggestions about the role of the classroom-based tutor, ENG 108 students responded positively to the survey when asked how the embedded consultant was integrated into the classroom. Soliday’s tutors reported that classroom-based tutoring helped them to be involved in the writing process, as opposed to a “quick fix” (p. 64) or one time meeting in the writing center. Although I required students to physically go to the writing center twice throughout the semester, whether with Carson or not, many students reported they went more than the ENG 108 requirement, as well as for other classes.

A major concern reported anecdotally by Howe Writing Consultants and formally in writing center research reports (Enders, 2013) is that NNES students only come to the writing center for grammar help. Oftentimes, however, students may ask for help with grammar because
they don’t have the vocabulary to talk about their writing; or like many first-year students (NNES or not) adjusting to the new academic culture and expectations, students may not know the questions they need to ask about their writing. Carson successfully completed the consultant training course and had a few months experience consulting in the writing center. A large portion of her training is how to ask questions to writers to elicit information that will help improve their writing. By successfully implementing her consultant training of asking questions to student writers, Carson unintentionally modeled strategies for peer review by asking questions of students about their writing. Her goal was to help improve their writing, not teach them how to peer review. Carson’s unwitting example influenced students peer review and draft revisions. For example, during the revision stage of their collaborative writing assignment, one group decided to peer review each other’s sections of the essay. Once they read each other’s writing individually, the group decided to discuss different parts of the essay as if in a writing consultation by asking key questions based on their understanding of the assignment and the information from their textbook about the genre. In my opinion, this group’s essay was the most cohesive, which was not an easy task as each group had five people in it.

In their reflections, students were able to accurately explain their writing strengths and weaknesses. The strengths and weaknesses varied from student to student. Some students listed organization, logic, and writing more complex sentences as strengths. Some students listed grammar and organization as areas to improve. One student wrote an especially insightful reflection of her writing and writing processes:

> I learned many useful rules and writing skills…they help me get better grades on other courses’ papers. A good case in point is that the MLA format we learned on ENG 108 is useful in almost every other class. Besides, “clustering,” the way of brainstorming, becomes important to me on every paper I write this semester. It helps me to clarify my thoughts and let me ensure that I include all the information I need in my paper…Without clustering before writing, I will lose my direction of writing and my paper would become messy and illogical…One of my strengths as a writer: Instead of thinking one-side that only talks about the side I stand for, I change to be thoughtful that I find both benefits and disadvantages of the topic and try to provide constructive suggestions, even to the one opposite to my point. This leads my readers to have a thorough understanding of my paper and could comprehend the reason why I stand for my opinion.

This example reflects the university’s liberal arts requirement learning goal of reflecting and acting. The ENG 108 baseline syllabus explains, “successful academic writing requires careful reflection and critical thinking…and recognition of how your audiences respond to your writing” (see Appendix E for a sample ENG 108 syllabus). Students’ awareness of their writing abilities and how their choices in writing affect their audiences will help them succeed as they continue their academic careers. As both a writing consultant and peer, Carson modeled reflective practices related to writing as she met with students in the classroom and in the writing center.

**Cultural informant.** The unique feature of this case, as compared to other embedded consultant or writing fellow cases, is the American writing consultant in a class of only international students. A role that Carson took on was one of a cultural informant, evident in sharing both American culture, as well as, the academic culture.

Enders (2013) believes “tutors [act] as cultural informants who help second-language writers negotiate unfamiliar academic expectations for form, writer, and audience” (p. 8). For example, Terese Thonias (1993) urges writing center consultants to “spend what seems an inordinate amount of time establishing relationships with [the] international clients” (p. 20). In
their two-year study, Blau and Hall (2002) found that the tutor as a cultural informant was the most common exchange in NNES consultations. Likewise, in her article, Judith Powers (1993) explains that writing center tutors cannot approach consultations the same way they would with native speakers because ESL writers have different sets of prior knowledge about writing that an American-educated students brings. Additionally, she notes NNES first language rhetorics differ from American academic rhetorics. Writing center consultants act as cultural informants as they explain writing conventions and help NNES students understand the academic expectations not only in the U.S., but also specifically to the institution in which they study.

An example that students referenced in the survey, interviews, and reflections was a collaborative assignment about social media (see Appendix F for assignment sheets). Students who discussed this cultural exchange describe learning more about the social media sites Americans use from Carson. In turn, the students shared social media sites they use in China with her. In a casual conversation I had with Carson the following semester, I learned some of the ENG 108 students not only joined the American social media sites of Facebook and Instagram, but also became “friends” and interact with Carson using the social media platforms. Social media sites are a useful tool to remind students and the embedded consultant that they are peers and helps bridge the cultural gap between American and international students.

A second way Carson served as a cultural informant was helping the students gain a better understanding of the academic community at Miami University. In his interview, Siyuan recalled the difficulty he had conducting research online and how Carson helped him navigate the library’s website to narrow his search and find useful resources. There was also evidence of Carson acting as an academic, cultural informant in the student reflections. One student wrote, “She taught us how to make appointments to writing center... she taught me how to search resources from Miami library website.” Having a trustworthy, American, upperclassman as a reference helped the students learn about and utilize campus resources increasing their confidence as international students and L2 writers at an American university.
Chapter 4
Leveling the Playing Field: The Embedded Consultant’s Perspective

In an effort to create a comprehensive case of the ENG 108 class with an embedded consultant during the fall 2013 semester, I want to be sure to include Carson’s voice. As stated above, the students felt as if she was very helpful. This chapter presents her perspective of the class, the students, the instructor, and how her role as embedded consultant developed throughout the semester. The primary method to collect data for this chapter was an hour-long interview (See Appendix D for notional interview questions) conducted by a writing center colleague. The secondary data used to gain a more thorough understanding of Carson’s perspective are the Client Report Forms (CRF)\textsuperscript{10} she wrote when students from ENG 108 had appointments with her in the writing center. Upon my completion of a draft of this chapter, I sent it to Carson for a “member check” (Anderson, 1998). Carson gave valuable feedback including clarification of data and specific details I was initially missing from just reading the interview transcript.

During the summer of 2013 I emailed newly trained writing consultant\textsuperscript{11} Carson about the possibility of participating in the Howe Writing Center’s pilot embedded consultant. Having worked with her in the consultant training course, the manager of the writing center recommended her as someone who would be effective in a NNES classroom. The sophomore from a suburb of Detroit, Michigan majors in Political Science, minors in Entrepreneurship, and studies French. In addition to her responsibilities as an embedded consultant in my section of ENG 108, Carson also consulted 6 hours in the Howe Writing Center. She recalls her excitement upon learning about the program. “I was excited because this was the first thing outside of consulting that I did with the center. So that was another thing that really sparked my interest.” Many writing center consultants participate in outreach, writing center promotion and marketing, and research as part of a larger writing center community and developing as a professional, as opposed to a part-time job on campus at a place such as a dining hall (Watson, 2012). Carson’s enthusiasm was crucial to the success of the embedded consultant program.

Results

Interview. Carson attended the second meeting of the class and during this session, students were working on their Prezi presentations to introduce themselves. I asked Carson to create one as well. She remembers, “Most of [the students’ Prezi presentations] were better than mine…This was their first time, but it was also my first time using it. So that was a way to break the ice…level the playing field.” After presenting her Prezi, Carson thought the students saw her as more approachable, “a friend that they could ask questions” about not only their assignments, but also information she presented such as her family and her hobbies.

A surprising aspect for Carson about being an embedded consultant was her level of involvement in the class. She describes her daily responsibilities as:

There were multiple classes where I would teach things…grammar from their textbook, writing concisely, and brainstorming strategies…Then, also we would have a lot of time

\textsuperscript{10} A Client Report Form (CRF) is a report of what happened during a writing center consultation. On the form, the consultant discusses what happened during the consultation and future steps for writing, and then the CRF is sent electronically to the student writer.

\textsuperscript{11} At Miami University, writing center consultants complete a three-credit, upper level English class titled “Writing Center Consulting” prior to beginning work in the writing center. The course combines writing center theory with practice.
where Lucy would teach and then the [students] would have time to write. And for every class, I would just circle the classroom, go around, ask if they need any help, or if they understand the prompt, or if there’s a student who wasn’t really working, go up to him…Lucy and I worked as a team. I was just there during every class to help with what I could.

Carson worked hard to build rapport with the students in the class and as the semester progressed her relationship with the students developed even more. The most unexpected part Carson observed was when students would raise their hand for help and request assistance from her as opposed to the instructor. She reflected that this could be a result of wanting a “different student opinion, or maybe,” she speculated,” I don’t know if it was just we were more on the same level, more like a friend opinion type of thing.” Carson felt as if the students trusted her opinion even though they knew she had nothing to do with the grading of their assignments. “They would see me doing homework if we had downtime. I think that helped to put us on the same level,” she said.

In recalling her meetings and planning with me, Carson remembers I gave her advance notice for student projects and ways in which I would like her to help, teaching a mini-lesson or meeting with a small group of students for example. One additional role that neither of us planned for was a couple times I traveled to conferences and instead of canceling class, I called on Carson to “proctor” the class by taking attendance before an invited speaker came, for example, when a librarian facilitated an in-class research workshop. While Carson remembers these special times as a bit more stressful than when I was there she said, “I always knew what was coming, and I knew what the class was doing…I was never thrown on the spot.” The class met three days a week and Carson says she attended almost every class. On days when I was lecturing more than usual, I told her not to come because I felt she would not have opportunity to interact with students and their writing. When discussing the possibility of Carson’s participation in this pilot program, I was sure to communicate the time commitment required and in the interview, Carson confirmed she knew what to expect as far as the schedule was concerned.

An interesting observation Carson noted in her interview was her physical placement in the classroom:

The class was set up…in a U shape, and then at the front at the open end of the U was the projector, and the teacher’s station…But Lucy and I would sit at the end of the U, and I would just sit right next to her, but in between her and the students. That’s another interesting thing that I have a student right next to me, ‘cause it was all tables, and then on the other side of me, I would have Lucy…it was another example of me just being right in the middle.

While her physical placement happened organically, she recalls, “sometimes the students would just lean over in the middle of class, and be like, ‘Oh, is this right?’” Carson’s perspective of the students’ attitudes toward her was positive and that they really saw her as a resource. Carson’s interview took place during the spring 2014 semester so she has even consulted with former ENG 108 students.

They were friendly [to me] and I’ll still see the students around campus…Just last week I consulted with one of the students who was in the class, and she was so excited to see me. She was excited that I recognized her as well.
Carson described a time when she was studying at the library during her time as an embedded consultant and some of the ENG 108 students felt comfortable enough to approach her and ask a quick question. She remembers feeling surprised because “it’s intimidating there.”

A fun time in class was when Carson shared her experiences with social media, introducing students to Instagram, which many had not heard of. On the other hand, the Chinese students showed Carson Renren (China’s version of Facebook). She says she was excited to learn and the students enthusiastically shared their home culture with her. “The whole class was excited for that!”

When it came time to help with their writing, Carson circulated the room helping students by asking questions and clarifying instructions. Sometimes we ran out of time in class and Carson would take these opportunities to suggest students make appointments at the writing center so they could continue their conversation. “At least once a week, at the end of class, people would come up to me and ask to make an appointment. So I would make an appointment with them in class…they really wanted to consult with me, but it didn’t always fit our schedules so I assured them that all the consultants here are qualified.” Carson made sure to connect with students she saw using the writing center even if she was not the one consulting.

As a consultant, Carson felt the embedded consultant program helped to improve her consulting practices:

I think it helped a lot and I was thankful I did it earlier in my consulting career. But I think it taught me – it helped me more with my communication skills, especially working with international students and ESL students because I am more patient with them.

Carson also acknowledged the experience helped her to be a more “well-rounded consultant…being better at listening and tailoring my consulting to [students’] specific needs.” She also reflected on her own writing saying, “Sitting through another English class reinforced the importance of the writing process.”

The interview ended with the future of the embedded consulting program and Carson’s advice for moving forward. She saw how much the students benefited from it, and felt that the program would be have more impact by expanding to other types of classes because she saw students gain confidence in their writing which is helpful for all students, not just NNES. In training future embedded consultants, Carson emphasizes the importance of a willing instructor who constantly communicates the plan and direction of the class throughout the semester. Her biggest frustration was working with students who were resistant to doing work so she wishes there would be some training on classroom skills like teachers get, especially what to do in those situations. Instructors should emphasize that the embedded consultant is a resource for the students, not an assistant for the teacher. In other words, make sure the instructor should be very clear about the role of the embedded consultant and what they are here for. On the other hand, Carson warns instructors to not overlook the impact a writing consultant can have:

Don’t forget to use them because I feel like a professor might not realize how much help an embedded consultant can be, like how the consultant could help on even the smallest assignment or even just understanding a homework prompt…things like that we could help with more than just a large essay or project.

Her advice to future embedded consultants is to “be open to new experiences and not to worry if you are doing things correctly.” Carson said she “had to remind myself that even being there is helping, even if I just go to a class and all I do is answer one question, it’s still helpful.”

Client report forms. A secondary form of data from Carson were the client report forms she wrote and sent to students at the conclusion of their appointments with her in the writing
The ENG 108 students in my class during the fall 2013 semester attended 48 writing center consultations. Thirty-eight of these were for help on an assignment for ENG 108, while the other 10 consultations helped on assignments for other classes. Of the 38 ENG 108 consultations, only four were with Carson. Two of those four were group consultations, leaving only two individual consultations with Carson during the fall 2013 semester; this statistic supports the student complaint that Carson’s schedule in the writing center was not as accessible and accommodating, or she was scheduled to meet with students outside of the class in which she was embedded, as they preferred.

To analyze the four CRFs that Carson wrote to the ENG 108 students, I coded them with the topics of: higher-order concerns (HOCs), lower-order concerns (LOCs), and emotional support/encouragement or shared resources. Table 3 lists each writing assignment with the topics of discussion.

Table 3
CRF Analysis by Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>HOCs</th>
<th>LOCs</th>
<th>Support/Encouragement/Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Narrative</td>
<td>-Adding more description</td>
<td>-Sentence Editing</td>
<td>-Online thesaurus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Repetitive Clauses</td>
<td>-Compared reading essay aloud in writing center to reading aloud to peers in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Ask follow up questions in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Narrative</td>
<td>-Organization</td>
<td>(None reported)</td>
<td>-Referenced a handout from class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Revising to include dialogue and emotion</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Supportive of student’s ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Adding a conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Ask follow up questions in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Essay</td>
<td>-Cohesiveness of paragraphs</td>
<td>-Checked grammar and word choice paragraph-by-paragraph</td>
<td>“You guys are off to a great start and have many good ideas for your essay on social media and promotion.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Brainstormed for conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Ask follow up questions in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Essay</td>
<td>-How to add a paragraph using a movie as a resource</td>
<td>-General grammatical issues</td>
<td>“Overall your project looks good!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-How to improve/add to the conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A third group was scheduled to meet with Carson, but had to cancel. They rescheduled during class time so no CRF was submitted. Carson stuck to writing center pedagogy of addressing HOCs first. The literacy narrative was assigned at the beginning of the semester, while the collaborative essay was around midterm. Carson’s language in the CRFs for the literacy narrative changes to a more casual tone for the collaborative essay, which could be an indication that she was more comfortable giving suggestions to the students about their writing. She also
referenced handouts and activities from class, as well as things I said which helps clarify assignment requirements for students. Additionally, Carson not only reminded students to ask for more help in class, but also personally followed up with them in class.

Discussion
Carson brought a completed year of college, a summer of writing center consulting, and a positive attitude to her embedded consulting assignment. I analyzed her interview transcript using both a thematic coding system and a contextual discourse analysis. According to Barton (2004), discourse analysis is a method for “analyzing the ways that specific features of language contribute to the interpretation of texts in their various contexts” (p. 57). She continues to explain that discourse analysis can investigate larger contexts and “diffuse…sociocultural world views” (p. 57). This method works for an interview transcript because as Fontana and Frey (2005) admit, “We cannot lift the results of interviews out of the contexts in which they were gathered” (p. 716-717).

One important factor to note about Carson’s interview context is that it took place over two months after the end of the semester she was an embedded consultant. This time lapse caused her to begin some answers to the interview questions with “I think” or “If I can remember.” Second, the interviewer was the manager of the writing center, Carson’s boss. Thesis factors affect the interview outcome both negatively and positively. The time lapse caused Carson to be unsure about some of her answers. For example, in recalling the initial conversation about her possible involvement in the embedded consultant program she said, “I can’t remember if it was you or Lucy who approached me about it.” Recalling this minor detail is not crucial to the program assessment, but in researching her perspective on her experiences, a more definite answer would be more helpful. Like in response to what she did during in-class writing times, Carson said, “I think they wanted a different student opinion, or maybe—I don’t know.” On the other hand, Carson had more time to reflect on the semester’s accomplishments. In thinking about her own consulting practices, she explains, “[Being an embedded consultant] just helped me probably in every aspect of consulting, just working with different types of students, working with students that don’t understand prompts, or working with students who don’t want to write.” The extra time between being an embedded consultant and the interview not only gave Carson more time to reflect, but also compare her experiences as an embedded consultant with her current consulting practices over a year after completing the training course.

Writing center consultations, like teaching, improves when the consultant engages in meaningful reflective practice.

Contextualizing the role of the interviewer factored into this conversation as well. The closest Carson came to a negative thought was the feeling of pressure to always do what I told her. In response to the potential future of the embedded consultant program, Carson suggested more time with the instructor. “What I was in [the embedded consultant program],” she said, “it was a lot of just learning on the way, like this is what we’re gonna do next week. Do you want to do this? And I would just agree to it.” Because Carson’s boss, and my co-worker, conducted

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12 As noted above, consultants must enroll and successfully complete an upper-level English course on the theory and practice of writing center consulting. Carson took the class in the spring 2013 semester and because she was taking summer classes on campus, she began work in the writing center during the summer 2013. The course and a summer of working the writing center were complete prior to participation in the fall 2013 embedded consultant program.
the interview, she may have felt restricted in her openness about her experiences as an embedded consultant.

Another component of the analysis is thematic coding. In my reading of the interview transcript, Carson frequently uses the words “surprising” and “interesting.” Table 4 lists some of the parts of the experience that Carson found interesting and surprising.

*Table 4*

**Carson’s Reactions to her Experience as an Embedded Consultant**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interesting</th>
<th>Surprising</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The idea of the program as a whole</td>
<td>Students raised their hand and requested Carson’s help over the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalizing as writing center consultant (i.e., participating in a writing center related activity outside of the writing center space)</td>
<td>Students felt comfortable enough to approach her in the library outside of class and the writing center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The trust she earned from the students</td>
<td>Sharing of cultures, especially in regard to the social media project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Her physical positioning in the classroom</td>
<td>Sitting through another English class reinforced the importance of the writing process for her as a writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reluctant writers seemed to go to her more than the teacher for help</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above is helpful in organizing Carson’s thoughts about her experiences, but a major limitation to this study is the only data I have from Carson is the interview transcript. For example, when she discussed how students who did not really want to be in class tended to ask her for help over me, the data would have been better triangulated and understood if she kept field notes and I could compare the interview to her day-to-day interaction with the students. If I were to repeat this research project, I would request the embedded consultant maintain a field journal with reflective notes as s/he worked in the classroom throughout the semester. Another means of collecting valuable data would have been audio or video recordings of her interactions with students in the classroom and during writing center consultations.

As a teacher researcher, the surprising point Carson makes about her own writing and writing process is encouraging that although the ENG 108 course repeats a lot of information Carson already knew, she was able to extract course content that can help her as a writer and a student. This idea proves again that the embedded consultant, while a tutor, is a peer to help “level the playing field” between students and teacher.
This thesis is a case study; to present a comprehensive case, the instructor’s perspective is also important. The qualitative methodology carries over to this portion of the research. As not only the primary investigator, but also the instructor participant in this teacher-research project, I begin by self-positioning (Alcoff, 1992). I am a 30-something, white, middle-class, female instructor with two degrees in education. My first experience working in higher education came upon my employment at Miami University’s writing center where I was hired to work with international students. My training and experience as an elementary educator with TESOL certification in both the United States and abroad and my own second language study proved to be advantageous for this position. Given the chance to teach an ESL course, I eagerly jumped right in, although I had little experience teaching young adult learners. Continuing to improve as an ESL teacher, I looked for ways to combine my work in the writing center with my work in the classroom, which is why I approached the writing center administration for a pilot embedded consultant in my class. Prior to researching the effectiveness of the embedded consultant in my class and prior to conducting a more comprehensive literature review, I read a few articles about classroom-based tutoring and writing fellows, as well as attending as many conference sessions as possible regarding this topic. When the opportunity came for an embedded consultant in my ENG 108 class, I continued my research to find the best ways to not only incorporate Carson into the course, but also create as many opportunities for my students to utilize her skills as a writing consultant and knowledge as a native speaker of English.

Data Collection and Analysis
I collected data in three ways: syllabus and assignments, field notes, and reflective journal including a final reflection. The syllabus (Appendix E) and assignment sheets (Appendix F) are cultural documents. As the instructor, it is important that I effectively communicate the goals and purposes of each assignment to my students. Because I am from a different culture and age than my students, these goals, purposes, and even instructions, can get lost among the cross-cultural communication. Carpenter and Hunter (1981) suggest a more individualized approach to assignment design to improve NNES student writing. As I revised assignments to include an embedded consultant as a resource, I tried to maintain Carpenter and Hunter’s philosophy.

Sunstein & Chriseri-Strater (2002) define fieldwork in the realm of ethnographic research which is often used in the understanding of cultures. In a sense, they say, the researcher steps in and out of cultures. While this thesis is not an ethnography, I am in a sense stepping in, out, and between cultures as not only the researcher, but also a participant in the class and an integral part of the case. Therefore, I did borrow fieldwork’s method of field notes to collect data. Field notes offer descriptive details providing “a rhetorical construct...[to] help begin the movement from self to audience” (80). I wrote my field notes using a combination of field jottings and a field diary (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Field jottings, as the name implies, are quick jots or notes to remind a researcher what to expand on later. I wrote field jots while in class and in meetings with Carson. Then I used these jots for a more detailed field diary, which gives researchers a place for personal feelings, opinions, and perceptions. As Fraenkel & Wallen describe the field diary supplies “a place where researchers can let their hair down” (517). At the beginning of this research project I set out to make a short entry in my field diary following each class period and meeting with Carson. I maintained that timeline for the first half of the semester, then due to time constraints
and fewer meetings with Carson, I wrote in the diary once a week for the second half of the semester. Some entries were longer than others depending on my observations and the amount of interactions students had with the embedded consultant and/or writing center, but the average length of my entries was 500 words and took approximately 30 minutes to write. Often the field jotting directed the day’s entry into the field journal, but Merriam’s (1998) suggestion of beginning with the time, place, people, and purpose informed my field note-taking decisions. Along with my syllabus, I use the field journal as a timeline for the class as well as analyzing my thoughts and reflections to further assess and triangulate the effectiveness of the embedded consultant pilot program.

In 1916, John Dewey wrote that, “Only by wrestling with the conditions of the problem at first hand, seeing and finding [one’s] own way out, does [he or she] think” (p. 188). As stated above my major “problems” or as Linda Adler-Kassner (2008) would say, “issues” (p. 120), were to not only combine my work in the university’s writing center with my teaching, but also find a way for NNES and NES students to learn together. Adler-Kassner distinguishes between problems and issues because issues are “what we act on” (p. 120). From her WPA activist perspective, “change starts with individual principles—from an individual’s anger, passions, and…emotions” (p. 23). As a teacher-researcher, my individual emotions are directly related to the success of my students both in the classroom and at the university. To “wrestle” with these issues, I employed a self-study method (Samaras & Freese, 2006). Samaras & Freese define self-study “as a component of reflection in which teachers systematically and critically examine their actions and the context of those actions as a way of developing a more consciously driven mode of professional activity” (p. 11). By examining my syllabus, assignments, and field journal, I can analyze my own teaching practices.

**The Class, the Course and the Consultant**

Directly from the baseline syllabus that the English department requires instructors to use:

ENG 108 is a 5-credit composition course for international students. The course serves as an American academic orientation with writing and reading as a focus, and give students practical experience with summarizing, documentation, argumentation, and other forms of analytical academic composition.

Much of the course objectives revolve around the “American academic orientation” part of the above description. For example, two of the student learning outcomes are “(1) Articulate differences between textual practices in U.S. academic culture and textual practices in the student’s home academic culture; and (2) Interact with classmates in discussions in a manner consistent with expectations of oral participation in a U.S. classroom.” In accordance with these, and other listed objectives, I assigned four major writing projects: literacy narrative, informative summary and response, definition and description essay, and a researched argumentation essay. In addition to these four assignments, students completed short homework and in-class writing activities, gave four presentations, and compiled a writing portfolio which served as their final exam.

My section of English (ENG) 108 met three times a week: Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 to 11:50 and Friday from 10:00 to 10:50. During the Tuesday and Thursday sessions we met in a small classroom with no windows. The tables in the room were set up in a “U” shape with the teacher’s desk and workstation at the front of the room. Students sat two to a table and often there were not enough chairs for everyone in the class so we borrowed one from an adjacent classroom. The layout of the classroom assisted in our class discussions, but it proved to be difficult for students to move around when working in groups (which they did frequently). Additionally, the tight space made it hard for Carson and me to circulate around the room to meet
individually with students as they worked on their writing. On the contrary, our Friday sessions met in a classroom set up for a lecture that could accommodate up to 50 students. There were four rows of six tables with a teacher workstation in the front of the room. While this layout facilitated the movement of students for group work, it hindered discussion opportunities.

When reviewing my field notes prior to the semester’s start, I worried students would view Carson as a teaching assistant, not an embedded consultant. This concern was tricky, as most of the students were first-year and had experience with neither. At Miami University, and many other colleges, TAs assist teachers in many ways to include grading. I consistently emphasized that Carson would not be grading or have access to students’ grades.

Carson played an important role in the development of my students’ writing throughout the semester. She attended class at least once a week, sometimes twice. We met prior to the start of the semester to discuss what her role would be and review the syllabus. During this meeting we discussed Mary Soliday’s (1995) article and as the instructor, I placed special emphasis on the “insiders” group (p. 61) because they attended most classes, participated in group discussions, met with the instructor regularly to discuss the class, and be available to consultant with students in the writing center. I listed Carson’s contact information and hours she would be consulting. Throughout the semester, I encouraged students to make appointments with her and other available consultants at the Howe Writing Center.

Discussion

Talking about writing. A major (and unexpected) finding of this pilot program was the manner in which students talked about their writing with me, Carson, and each other, as well as the revision strategies they used. Soven (1999) defines revision as “reconsidering the larger elements of an essay, its content, development and organization” (p. 16). Too often L2 writers’ ideas of revision more closely match with the definition of editing, which refers to correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word choice (Ferris, 1997). Ferris found that ESL writers value teachers comments and will make significant revision to their writing based on these comments, but little weight is given to feedback from anyone else because the teacher is the one giving a grade. In her case study of a “reluctant” L2 writer, Celine Sze (2002) describes how the student’s drafts changed, noting the primary change was “phrasal, surface, and lexical” (p. 27). Upon explicit teaching of revision strategies, teacher comments, and revision modeling, the student’s writing later in the school year showed an increase of content and structure revision between drafts. One particular entry in my teaching journal about NNES revision strategies stands out:

October 11, 2013

Group 2 pushed and moved the tables in the room around to form a large table, like in a conference room, so all five students could sit together. All three groups were in the revising stage, so I gave little directions to the groups other than they would have half the class period to work. When Group 2 sat down, each member spent a few minutes updating the group on their individual progress on the document. As this group was the only group with a non-Chinese speaking member, their discussion was in English. After the initial update the group decided to do a peer review of each other’s individual contributions. The strategy they used was so interesting! First each person changed the color of the text they added to the document, so each person's writing was a different color. Then each member chose a colored text (not their own) to review. As they read, the
students edited errors in black text and added comments. Finally, they discussed each comment as a group and then revised according to the group's decision.

Today's class picked up where we left off Tuesday. I began the class with a mini-lesson on voice emphasizing the need for "one voice" although they were writing a collaborative document. We looked at some examples and did a few activities to practice strategies for revising an essay for a stronger, more unified voice.

During the second part of class, students had time to work on their essays. Group 2 creatively employed their color-coding strategy again. This time they used their previous colors to reread looking for ways to combine ideas. The group quickly discovered they were being repetitive and their writing sounded choppy. One of the members summoned Carson and told her what they found. She sat with the group during most of the work time and helped them combine ideas and reorganize their essay. By the end of the work time their five separate colors were so mixed within the essay that a reader couldn't tell who wrote which parts because all five group members contributed to all the different sections of their essay.

Students were assigned to groups of five and tasked with writing a definition-description essay. The topic assigned for the definition-description was "social media" but groups could focus on a small aspect of the larger concept. (See Appendix E for assignment sheet and more details.) There were three groups of five and subtopics the groups chose were: (1) marketing in social media, (2) social media and college students, and (3) online promotion of social media. The journal entry above describes one group as they worked in class. In comparing the peer review strategies to not only their classmates but also students I taught in previous semester, I found this group to be particularly innovative especially in regard to the voice and cohesion of their writing.

In the late 1970s, a process approach to teaching L2 writing evolved. Matsuda (2003) explains that instead of requiring L2 writers to regurgitate their linguistic knowledge by writing error-free sentences, educators began to value ESL students as individuals “who have their own voices, ideas, and opinions, who were capable of making their own decisions about writing, and who had something important to say” (Correa, 2009, p. 110). This inclusion of authentic “voice” in L2 writing meant that academic texts did not have to be perfect English, free from errors or written like a NES would write. As part of the assignment, I did require a cohesive voice of the essay, which weighed heavily as part of the evaluation and assessment of the essay. With the students’ previous peer review opportunities in class and their experiences with Carson’s modeling of asking questions about their writing, Group 2 not only developed a creative way to ensure one voice with multiple authors, but also scored the highest in the “cohesion” category of the rubric as compared to the other two groups.

During the week of September 10, I met individually with students for a conference about their literacy narrative draft. When students meet with me, I asked them to bring three questions about their writing. What I noticed about this group of students as compared to previous semesters is that the current students brought more questions regarding HOCs than grammar questions. By the time they met with me, most students had not only met with Carson as she rotated around the class, but also attended a writing center consultation; thus they had more exposure to peers asking them questions about their writing.

I also observed students gaining confidence in their writing throughout the semester. On September 13, just 3 weeks into the semester, I wrote about the increased confidence I saw in my students.
September 13, 2013

Students submitted their first major assignment today. I taught the sequence of lessons for the literacy narrative essay as I always did in previous semesters. The difference this semester is that I required students to schedule an appointment at the writing center. A few students met with Carson, but unfortunately her schedule was so limited, most students met with other consultants. This is okay but I prefer they meet with her to further emphasize the embedded consultant program.

However, at first glance of the students’ submitted work, it seems they have more confidence in their writing. I say this because while they did well on their Prezi presentations and previous homework assignments, all the students simply modified the examples I showed them in class, essentially “playing it safe.” With this assignment, students changed and modified the examples (while still meeting the assignment requirements.

I have been told by first-year composition instructors that they spend a good chunk of time getting their first year students to break free from the five paragraph essay format taught in American high school English classes. Teaching international students with different academic experiences, however, I teach a form of the five paragraph essay so that my students have the knowledge that American students already bring to the academic discourse. I strongly believe students need to know the rules before they can break them. With their final research essay assignment, I saw students attempting to break the rules.

In comparison to the four semesters I previously taught ENG 108, 86% the students with an embedded consultant finished the course with a B or better, while the sections I taught without an embedded consultant had 72% of students finish the course with a B or better. As students developed innovative revision strategies, learned to talk about their writing, and increased their confidence as writers, I noticed more risk-taking at the end of the semester.

December 6, 2013

Our final class meeting was today. After reviewing the writing portfolio project and my availability during finals week, we spent the class period taking pictures and saying goodbye. Carson was surprised about this; she said she’d never taken pictures of her classmates and teacher on the last day.

I have begun reading their research essays and am impressed with the amount of risk-taking I see in their writing. This is especially noticeable in the topics they chose and the way in which students organized their essays.

Similar to the narrative example, this entry describes how students experimented with different ways of composing instead of simply modifying examples I used in class (as many ENG 108 students do). This risk-taking proved to boost students’ grades above the students in the previous semester I taught.

**Working together.** One goal of this project to was to find a way in which NNES and NES students could “work together” (Williams, 1995). As reported by students in chapter three, their overall attitudes toward Carson were positive. I observed these two examples:
August 30, 2013

Students presented their “About Me” Prezi today. These presentations are still one of my favorite assignments because it’s a great opportunity for me to get to know them and it builds important rapport among students in the class. I asked Carson to prepare and present as well. She told me she was really nervous because she had never used Prezi before. I was happy with this because the students were nervous too...for many this was their first presentation in English. I think it helped them both be more comfortable with each other and break the ice between them and Carson and among themselves. By sharing their hobbies and about their families, both Carson and the students immediately had things to talk about outside the class itself.

October 1, 2013

I introduced the comparison and contrast assignment last class and today students had some work time on for this project. Carson and I circulated the room. I overheard Carson discussing educational differences with Flora. Carson studies French and Flora’s second language is French (English is her third language). The two engaged in a conversation comparing their foreign language educational experiences.

This conversation proved to be more than a cultural exchange between peers. Flora drew from this informal brainstorming session to completely revise her essay to match this topic she discussed with Carson. The embedded consultant is in the class to help with all stages of the writing process, not just revising and editing. As a teacher, I find myself rushing through the invention stage of the writing process because there are not enough instructional days in the semester to cover all I need to cover. Carson not only gave Flora an opportunity to invent, but the two girls also gained a better understanding of each other and the struggles of learning another language.

As noted in their self-reflections, many students continued to refer to Carson as a TA. She has one year of college already completed and a question I still question if they truly saw Carson as a peer because she is an American and they are not. Although there were times students collaborated with her, Carson was always a resource for them, never truly working together. However in my observations I saw Carson growing as a writing consultant both in the classroom and in the writing center.

November 12, 2013

This week I am facilitating training workshops for the writing center consultants. I am discussing strategies for consulting with NNES writers. Carson was in the group this evening. I saw her take a leadership role by adding what she has learned in my class by working with NNES students. One point she emphasized was the patience she has gained in the embedded consultant experience. When one consultant complained about how he doesn’t like working with the international students, Carson became a little defensive, acting as an advocate for them!

I view part of my job as an ESL teacher as being an advocate for the international student population on campus. I often hear faculty venting their frustrations about accommodating international students in their classes. It was exciting to see Carson empathize for the students.
she had been working with all semester and stand up for them in front of her coworkers and peers.

**Transferring skills.** Before I worked in the writing center, I was an elementary school teacher and while there are many transferrable skills between these two jobs, a big change for me was the indirect nature of writing center consulting. I naturally act as a teacher, being more direct when guiding students. Carson naturally acted as a writing consultant, being more indirect when helping students. The two of us together created a balance in assisting students become better writers. My experience both working in the writing center and observing Carson has helped me to ask better questions and be less direct when that kind of assistance is needed by students.

Because I saw students’ confidence increase as writers and because I observed them talking about their writing as a writing consultant would do, a major component of the embedded consultant experience that I take away is adding the explicit teaching of asking questions for peer review and self-revising practices. I want to add some of the writing center consultant training practices that Carson experienced to my first-year composition curriculum so students can replicate it in peer review. Hopefully this exercise will help students understand the importance of revision. Elizabeth Parfitt (2007) discussed how she was a peer tutor turned teacher and that it was necessary for her to learn to act as the “grader” with an agenda, yet still make time for one-on-one conferences with students. She provides suggestions for student responsibility amidst the authority of the teacher. These suggestions, along with my observations of Carson’s interactions with the students, can easily be transferred from the classroom to the writing center consultation and back.

**The process.** The data presented strongly indicates that the students benefited from an embedded writing consultant in the NNES English composition classroom. Also, my teaching practice improved by observing Carson’s consulting skills with peers. However, the primary form of data was my teaching journal and for this research, collecting all course documents to include students’ drafts, my comments on students’ drafts, and informal writing assignments would add to the conversation. Overall, I was pleased with my students’ progress both as writers and as international students learning in an American academic discourse. In his article, Darshan Thakkar (2011) explains that teachers tend to teach in accordance with their own learning style. “Ideally,” he says, “both the teachers and the students should accommodate each other’s teaching and learning styles by learning about each other’s culture” (p. 53). Embedded a writing consultant in my NNES class has given me the tools to learn not only about their ethnic cultures, but also students’ (the ENG 108 students and Carson) cultures at 18-23 years old in an American university. As a result, I will be a better teacher, balancing direct and indirect teaching styles and spending more time strategically helping students to increase their confidence.
Chapter 6
Forging Ahead: Implications and Advice

This thesis used a case study to assess the effectiveness of an embedded writing center consultant in a nonnative English-speaking classroom. In her discussion of the writing fellows program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Jennifer Corroy (2003) wrote “with every relationship forged, a new development occurs” (p. 42). Embedding a writing center consultant in a NNES classroom forged many relationships between students, writing consultants, and the course instructor. As a result of the multiple relationships, many developments such as increased confidence occurred. This sixth and final chapter looks ahead to the possibilities of these relationships and developments.

Maintaining the metaphor of bridging a gap, the embedded consultant bridged the students’ relationships with their teacher, with the writing center, with American students, and with each other. In his chapter about case studies, Robert Stake (2005) asks, “What can be learned about the single case?” (p. 443). In the case of an embedded writing consultant in a NNES classroom, what can be learned are the benefits for the students, the consultant, and the teacher outweigh any disadvantages to implementing an embedded consultant program in ESL composition classes. The embedded consultant worked together with the students in the class. The students became better writers and Carson became a better consultant. Carson served as a cultural informant to the students and they did the same for her. This cultural exchange increased student learning and enhanced Carson’s consulting practices.

In terms of moving forward, key stakeholders, such as writing center administrators, writing program administrators, and ESL faculty, should consider the impact an embedded consultant could have in a NNES class. Writing center administrators must choose the consultant to be embedded carefully. It must be someone who is open to diversity, patient, and flexible. Embedded consultants should not only research the potential roles a classroom-based tutor can play, but also work very closely with the teacher to be aware of the happenings in the class. The embedded consultant must be culturally sensitive and it would behoove the students if the embedded consultant has experience studying a second language. When Carson shared her experiences abroad and her struggles studying a second language, she build ethos with the international students. Additionally, she could more easily sympathize when students struggled with language or shifted their revision focus to lower order concerns. The success of classroom-based tutoring lies with the course instructor.

The instructor should remember to include the consultant in all activities, not just major assignments. As Carson explained, if she answered just one question during a class period, then it was worth the time she spent in class. She also added that writing consultants are extremely helpful in smaller homework assignments that help students be successful in the major assignments, so their impact on those should not be overlooked. As the syllabus and course activities are planned, the instructor should do so with the embedded consultant in mind. The embedded consultant is such a valuable resource in not only helping students as they draft writing assignments, but also as a model for activities such as presentations or peer review. Be sure to include the embedded consultant in all aspects of the writing process. None of the steps should be overlooked.

Future research calls for a NNES writing consultant as the embedded consultant in a NNES classroom. An international student who has a year or two of experience both in the country and at the institution could benefit students even more by having someone who empathizes with their
struggles of cultural shock and adjusting to a new academic discourse. Additionally, if the embedded consultant comes from the same linguistic background as the students (i.e., a native Chinese writing consultant in a NNES class with all Chinese students), translation, code-switching, and linguistic analysis could be examined. This situation would build a different kind of bridge between the students and the instructor.

Upon completion of her nationwide survey of writing fellows programs, Margot Soven (1993) declared, “institutions which have developed [classroom-based tutoring] programs have not been disappointed” (p. 69). In this case study of an embedded consultant in a NNES classroom, the data strongly suggests that the students, the embedded consultant, nor the teacher were disappointed by this pilot program. The newly forged relationships developed confidence, better writers, a better consultant, and a better teacher.
References


Appendix A
Writing Center Administration National Survey

1. Does your writing center have a classroom-based tutoring program such as writing fellows or embedded consultants? [radio buttons]
   a. Yes [link to #2]
   b. No [link to end]

2. What is the title of your program? [text box]

Demographics

3. Where is your university located? [radio buttons]
   a. writing center regions:
   b. Asia
   c. Africa
   d. Europe
   e. Oceania

4. Is your university a ____ 4-year college, 2-year college, university

5. Is your university ___ public? Private?

6. What is the approximate size of your student body? [text box]

7. What is the size of your writing center staff including full and part time staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students? [text box]

Classroom-Based Tutoring: Writing Fellows and Embedded Consultants

8. When did you first implement classroom-based tutoring?

9. How many courses per semester have a classroom-based tutor?

10. How does faculty apply to have a classroom-based tutor?

11. What are the faculty responsibilities?

12. How do students apply to be a classroom-based tutor?

13. What type of training do you provide for your classroom-based tutors?

14. What roles do the classroom-based tutors play?

15. How are classroom-based tutors compensated?

16. Do classroom-based tutors also work in the campus writing center?

17. Do you have classroom-based tutors assigned to ESL-only courses?

18. Are you willing to be contacted for a follow up interview? [radio buttons]
   a. Yes
   b. No

19. If yes, please provide your email address. [text box]

Thank you for your participation in this survey.
Appendix B
Student Survey

Demographics

1. In which course were you enrolled last semester with an embedded writing consultant? [radio buttons]
   a. ENG 108
   b. ENG/IMS 224
   c. BIO 176
   d. WGS 211
2. What class are you? [radio buttons]
   a. First year
   b. Sophomore
   c. Junior
   d. Senior
3. What is your major? [text box]

Embedded Consultant

4. My teacher introduced the embedded consultant and provided her hours at the writing center. [radio buttons]
   a. Strongly Agree
   b. Agree
   c. Disagree
   d. Strongly Disagree
5. The embedded consultant attended enough classes to understand the writing assignments for this class. [radio buttons]
   a. Strongly Agree
   b. Agree
   c. Disagree
   d. Strongly Disagree
6. The embedded consultant participated in our class discussions. [radio buttons]
   a. Strongly Agree
   b. Agree
   c. Disagree
   d. Strongly Disagree
7. Having an embedded consultant was useful to writing I did in this course. [radio buttons]
   a. Strongly Agree
   b. Agree
   c. Disagree
   d. Strongly Disagree
8. Specifically, how did the embedded consultant participate in class? [text box]
9. In what ways did the embedded consultant personally help you? [text box]
10. What advice do you have for instructors with embedded consultants? [text box]
11. What advice do you have for future embedded consultants? [text box]
Howe Writing Center

12. Did you meet with the embedded consultant at the Howe Writing Center?
   a. Yes
   b. No
13. If yes, what did you work on? [text box]
14. How many times did you go to the writing this semester? [radio buttons]
   a. 0
   b. 1-2
   c. 3-5
   d. 6 or more
15. Did you go to the writing center for other courses?
   a. Yes
   b. No
16. If yes, which other courses? [text box]
17. If you did not go to the writing center at all, please explain why? [text box]

18. Are you willing to be contacted for a follow up interview? [radio buttons]
   a. Yes
   b. No
19. If yes, please provide your email address. [text box]

Thank you for your participation in this survey.
Appendix C
Notional Interview Questions for Students

1. In which course were you enrolled with an embedded consultant? What is your major? What year are you?

2. Prior to having an embedded consultant in the course, how many times had you been to the writing center? How many times did you visit the writing center during the fall 2013 semester?

3. What role did the embedded consultant play in the class?

4. How often did she attend class?

5. In regards to your writing, how did the embedded consultant help you?

6. What advice do you have for the Howe Writing Center as we continue to investigate the effectiveness of the embedded consultant program? What advice do you have for us as we train writing consultants to be embedded in courses? What advice do you have for instructors interested in having an embedded writing consultant?
Appendix D
Notional Interview Questions for Writing Consultants

1. When we first approached you about the embedded consultant program, what were your thoughts?

2. How were you introduced to the class?

3. How did the professor work with you to include you in the class?

4. What was your role in the course?

5. How often did you attend class? When you attended class, where did you sit?

6. What were the attitudes of the students toward you as an embedded consultant?

7. How did you encourage students to make appointments with you or other consultants in the Writing Center (outside of class time)? How often did they come?

8. How has your experience as an embedded consultant helped you in your consulting practices? How has your experience helped your own writing?

9. What advice do you have for the Howe Writing Center as we continue to investigate the effectiveness of the embedded consultant program? What advice do you have for us as we train writing consultants to be embedded in courses? What advice do you have for instructors interested in having an embedded writing consultant? What advice do you have for future embedded consultants?
Appendix E
Syllabus

ENG 108 – OUR CULTURES & COMPOSITION FOR SECOND LANGUAGE WRITERS
Tuesday & Thursday 10:00-11:50, EGB 162
Friday 10:00-10:55, EGB 153

INSTRUCTOR: Lucy Manley
EMAIL: haubnelb@miamioh.edu
PHONE: 529-5777
OFFICE: 324 King
OFFICE HOURS: Monday & Wednesday 12:00-1:00, or Friday by appointment

Writing Center Consultant: Carson White
Email: whitecc2@miamioh.edu
Consultation hours at King Library: Monday 6:00-7:00 & 8:00-9:00 pm, Wednesday 3:00-4:00 pm
Consultation hours at B.E.S.T. Library: Sunday 4:00-7:00 pm

Required text
*Gateways to Academic Writing: Effective Sentences, Paragraphs and Essays*, Alan Meyers
Additional Articles and Readings provided by the instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
ENG 108 is a 5-credit composition course for international students. The course serves as an American academic orientation with writing and reading as a focus, and gives students practical experience with summarizing, documentation, argumentation, and other forms of analytical academic composition.

Beyond mastering these important skills, the class will also be a gateway for students to broaden and deepen their understanding of the cultures of the United States both in the university and beyond, while frequently observing similarities and differences with students’ home cultures. The course provides a supportive environment in which students will 1) explore their cultural self-awareness, 2) examine US cultures and the historical, political, religious, and other Western belief systems, 3) compare and contrast these frameworks and beliefs with other worldviews, 4) gain comfort and confidence with US communication styles, and 5) seek out and identify more than one cultural perspective in written, oral and visual discourses.

As much as the course is reading and writing-oriented, the course also provides a listening/speaking component that focuses on verbal skills that help students succeed in the US
university context such as academic discussion and presentation. Listening/speaking activities are incorporated into class discussions, interviews, peer responses, presentations, and audio/video projects.

**ENG 108 AND THE MIAMI PLAN**

Successful completion of the course will help you toward the four fundamental principles of the Miami Plan:

*Thinking critically:* As you work in ENG 108, you will not think of writing and reading as “just language”—you will learn to look more deeply, to identify information and ideas in written, spoken, audio, and visual texts, both surface messages and “under the surface” meanings. You will be encouraged to ask complex questions about ideas, and in the process uncover personal and cultural biases, assumptions, and values, and to share new insights in your writing.

*Understanding Contexts:* Writing does not happen in a vacuum. As you think critically about what you read and write, you will be asked to examine how texts are influenced by, and are relevant to, the particular national, regional, linguistic, socioeconomic, gender, race, and other contexts from which they emerged. You will have many chances to discuss how writing and other forms of composing differ in different contexts, and you will practice the open and respectful exchanges that are vital to US academic settings.

*Engaging with Other Learners:* Success in ENG 108 and in any other US university class requires you to connect with your fellow Miami University students. Time will be spent reviewing the norms of active and polite oral participation in US classrooms. In your writing, you will be encouraged to express empathy in writing and in speaking toward the views of culturally different individuals and groups.

*Reflecting and Acting:* Successful academic writing requires careful reflection and critical thinking, a more complex set of steps than you may be used to using, and recognition of how your audiences respond to your writing. Some of the most important things you will do as writers in ENG 108 will be to create clear, workable theses and sustain them throughout your paper, write clearly and effectively in a variety of formal and informal genres, and weave personal ideas with information and ideas found in researched texts. You will also use writing as a device to read US academic texts more effectively, and use reading as a device to write in more effective ways for US academic audiences.

**ENG 108 also satisfies part of the Miami Plan Global credit (G-credit) requirement, by helping you to reach the following G-credit learning goals:**
Develop and exercise the ability to communicate and act respectfully across linguistic and cultural differences: All of the major projects and other activities of the course will emphasize respect across individual and cultural boundaries. You will learn to write in ways that accurately and fairly represent a variety of people and ideas. When you write, you will learn to think about diverse audiences—your readers—and how best to connect with them. You will read about and discuss US academic culture, share academic experiences from your home countries, and compare and contrast the two. In full classroom interactions, small group and pair activities, and exchanges on Niihka and elsewhere, you will have the chance to work with students from different cultural backgrounds and to think about differences such as nationality, language, culture, race, socioeconomic class, gender, and sexual orientation.

Explore and understand your place and influence in the changing world: Context counts—and when you write, you are always writing within multiple contexts, to audiences who inhabit their own multiple contexts. Readings and projects in ENG 108 will ask you to examine your role in local contexts, national contexts, and international contexts. You will also be asked to examine not only how context influences you, but also how you can bring change to those contexts now and in the future. Miami University is the best local context to begin thinking and writing about, but you will move well beyond Miami, too, in many possible directions.

Describe the development and construction of differences and similarities among contemporary groups and regions: As you explore US culture and writing, you will have many opportunities to use knowledge of your home languages and cultures in comparison with US-based language and culture. Readings will illustrate important aspects of US cultures, and discussions of these readings will encourage you to think about how the circumstances represented in the readings might be handled in your own countries and cultures. By recognizing that these similarities and differences, you will see that they require different responses from you as a writer, in your ENG 108 projects, and beyond.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of ENG 108, students will be able to:

- Create a clear, workable thesis (i.e. main idea in the form of a response or opinion) and sustain it throughout a paper
- Write clearly and effectively in a variety of formal and informal genres used in the US academy
- Weave personal ideas with information and ideas found in researched texts
- Identify information and ideas in written, spoken, audio, and visual texts, both surface messages and "under the surface" meanings
- Ask complex questions about ideas, and in the process uncover personal and cultural biases, assumptions, and values
• Express empathy in writing and in speaking toward the views of culturally different individuals and groups
• Integrate relevant quotations and details from sources into your projects and cite those sources adhering to US academic practices, with awareness of differences in “ownership” of ideas from other traditions.
• Edit work carefully for content, mechanics, and grammar, with awareness of individual voices, accents, and styles
• Articulate differences between textual practices in US academic culture and textual practices in the student's home academic culture
• Use writing as a device to read US academic texts more effectively and reading as a device to write in more effective ways for US academic audiences
• Interact with classmates in discussions in a manner consistent with expectations of oral participation in a US classroom

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Four out-of-class essays are required in this class, and your peer reviewers and I will work with you on the entire composition process for each one. As you are working on your essays, make sure that you date and keep each piece of writing connected with it. This means you will submit all the writing you have done on a specific paper, including any full drafts, smaller sections, and even any brainstorming you may have done. It is very important that you submit all of this work each time you submit a paper. All assignments are intended to give students practice in composing relevant and important genres of academic essays, digital works, collaborating in a team, conducting research, and presenting their findings and creative work to audiences.

1. Narrative
The purpose of the narrative is to allow you to reflect on your personal and academic experiences with reading and writing, and write using example and illustrations of such experiences for an audience. This assignment serves as a springboard for what you know about reading and writing, and what you need to learn to succeed in an American academic setting by making connections between your own literacy and others’.

2. Informative Summary with Response
Using careful and critical reading strategies, you’ll read several journal articles and put the main ideas into your own words in summary form. Emphasis is given to accuracy, completeness, paraphrasing, and citation strategies. This summary assignment focuses more on the “What?” in the source text(s).

3. Definition-Description Assignment
Writing a definition-description essay will allow you to explore a complex topic of interest from the articles used in the summary project, by defining and describing all of its important characteristics. You may use other texts in addition to these and those from the textbook.
4. Researched Argumentation
Taking a stance and making your case with evidence is the most important writing skill you will need for your college career. You’ll create a thesis, integrate evidence, including personal experience and research findings, and present your position in traditional academic essay form.

Keep all intermediate drafts in your personal files! You will need to refer back to these at different times in the semester, so that you get a fuller idea of your progress and issues to focus on in the future.

PAPER FORMAT AND GUIDELINES
The draft and final versions of your papers and projects will be uploaded to your Niikha group page. You typically will also turn in hard copies of final assignments. You will sometimes be asked to bring printed copies to class on the due date to use in peer response and other class activities. Your assignments should follow MLA style:

- typed in Times New Roman 12 point
- double spaced (if you are using a version of Microsoft Word from East Asia, set it to “Exactly 28 pt.” rather than “double spaced,” since “double” is often bigger than in North American-based MS Word)
- make sure the paper size is set to letter (8½” x 11”)—not A4
- have 1 inch (1” = 2.54 cm) margins on all sides
- proper MLA heading and pagination

You will have the opportunity to revise all assignments at least one time. The final versions of your projects will count toward your semester grade. All iterations, first to final, need to adhere to minimal guidelines to be accepted. Those guidelines will be communicated on assignments.

CLASSES AND CONFERENCES
Attendance is required and is factored into your final grade calculation. You will also meet with the instructor and writing consultant for scheduled one-on-one writing conferences throughout the semester. These conferences will provide valuable opportunities for you to receive individual attention.

PARTICIPATION
In-class writing
You will regularly do in-class writing tasks of various forms, such as brainstorming and pre-discussion or pre-writing idea formation. You will turn in some in-class writing tasks, and these will be factored into your participation grade.

Contributing to class discussion
This includes (but is not limited to) active participation in class discussions, including active listening to classmates and instructor, and effectively and independently staying focused.
PLAGIARISM

This is the copying, deliberate or not, of another person’s work and/or ideas without the proper citations. Plagiarism is a serious breach of academic standards, but more importantly, it robs you of the chance to learn and to grow through your own writing. We will discuss plagiarism, the appearance of plagiarism, and proper ways to cite the work of others as the semester goes on. If you have copied someone else’s work without giving due credit, we will discuss the matter one-on-one and find ways for you to avoid it in the future, but continual evidence of plagiarism can result in failure for the project, the course, and other disciplinary action, including suspension.

When in doubt, check with me. For now, just keep these rules in mind:

1) Except for small in-class collaborative work, anything you write has to be written by you.
2) Except for small in-class collaborative work, anything you write has to be written only by you.
3) When you have to use other people’s writing in your own writing (for example, when you do research), make sure to mention those other people—don’t make it seem like you wrote it yourself.

Please also note that all papers submitted to your instructor must be single-author papers (with the exception of assigned collaborative tasks) written in the semester during which you are taking 109. In other words, submitting papers composed in previous semesters, at other institutions, or with co-authors will not be seen as fulfilling the requirements of the course, which is designed to give you ample opportunity to practice and strengthen your own academic writing in English. Further information about the assignments will be distributed as they are assigned.

All acts of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, are covered by Miami’s university-wide standard policy; read the Integrity for Undergraduate Students section of the University’s Academic Integrity website (http://www.muohio.edu/integrity/undergrads.cfm) and Chapter 5 of Part 1 of the Student Handbook (http://www.miami.muohio.edu/documents/secretary/Student_Handbook.pdf) for more specifics. Misconduct will be reported to the English Department chair for a hearing, and official written notice if the hearing determines that misconduct occurred. The English Department will impose penalties for academic dishonesty that range from a failing grade (an F or a 0) for the assignment to a failing grade for the course; any transcript course grade may also be appended with an “AD” (Academic Dishonesty) mark.
Appendix F
Assignments

Literacy Narrative

Approximate Length: 600-800 words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-writing</td>
<td>September 5, will be completed in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 1</td>
<td>September 6 – bring 4 printed copies to class for peer review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 2</td>
<td>September 10 – put in drop box on Niihka by 8:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft 3</td>
<td>September 6-September 13 – visit writing center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Draft</td>
<td>September 13, 11:00 pm to assignments on Niihka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author’s Reflection</td>
<td>September 18, will be completed in class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A literacy narrative involves reflecting on your own literacy (ability to read and write) experiences in your life. This assignment also involves sharing with an audience relevant and specific literacy experiences you’ve had at any point in your life (inside and/or outside the school setting), and how they shaped your current views on literacy. As this is a narrative assignment, you will use your own words, ideas, and experiences to write it. Make sure to give specific examples and descriptions when writing your narrative.

Literacy Narrative Purpose:
- To analyze your own views about reading, writing, and research, and what you need to learn to succeed in an American academic setting by making connections between yourself as a scholar and others

Audience: your ENG 108 classmates and your instructor (Help your peers and me to understand your literacy experiences and your background.)

Steps for completing the assignment:
1. Literacy Reflection/Pre-writing (this will be completed in class on 9/5) This step requires that you think about and recall your very first literacy (ability to read, write, speak and listen) experiences. Here are some questions to get you started (You do not need to answer all the questions):
   - What did you remember about learning to write as a child? How old were you?
   - Do you write in more than one language? If so, what do you remember about learning to write in a second language?
   - What kinds of writing have you done in school up to now? Which types of writing have been most interesting to you? Which have been least interesting? Why?
   - How have teachers helped or frustrated your reading and writing progress?
   - Did your family have any involvement in helping you learn? Did your friends?
   - Do you write letters, poems, stories, or do other kinds of writing for pleasure? What type of writing do you enjoy doing the most? Why?
   - What is the easiest part of writing for you? What is the hardest? How do you feel about writing? Are these answers the same in all languages you know? If not, how do you explain the differences?
2. Draft 1 (due September 6, 10:00 am): This step requires you to narrow down your topic using your answers to the questions above in addition to other points you’d like to add in your literacy
narrative. Choose 1-3 of the questions that you have a lot to say about and/or that for which you have a specific example.

3. Peer Review (in class September 5): This will be completed in class.

4. Draft 2 (due September 10, 8:00 am to drop box): Based on your peers’ feedback, revise draft 1 and complete draft 2.

5. Instructor Conference (September 10): For this step you will send me an electronic copy of Draft 2 and I will review it. In lieu of class, you will come to my office and we will meet to discuss your assignment.

6. Draft 3 (complete after conference): Based on my comments and our conference, revise draft 2 and complete draft 3.

7. Visit the Howe Writing Center (September 6-September 13) www.muohio.edu/writingcenter to revise and edit draft 3. Complete final draft.

8. Submit Final Draft (due September 13, 11:00 pm)

Criteria (what you will be graded on):

1. Introduction
2. Conclusion
3. Main Points
4. Components of a narrative (refer to rubric and resources for checklist)
5. Organization
6. Style
7. Mechanics (spelling, grammar, word choice, verb tenses)

References:
Summary

Assignment Sheet for Paper #2 – Summary & Response
Due Dates: Draft 1-Sept. 24 (3 copies to class and put in drop box, summary folder)
Draft 2-Sept. 27 (put in drop box, summary folder)
Final Draft-Oct. 1 (submit to Assignments 2)
Length: 450-600 words

A summary is a shorter version of a longer piece of information. A response expresses your interpretations, opinions, and arguments about the text you summarized. Refer to GAW Chapter 14 for summary and response writing.

Requirements:
• Choose 1 article from the summary folder on Niihka
• The summary should be around 200-300 words
  o The first sentence of your summary needs to include the following information (MLA documentation style):
    ▪ Author of the article
    ▪ Title of the article with quotation marks
    ▪ Source according to MLA format
    ▪ Main idea of the whole text
  o Paraphrase the author’s words and ideas
  o When you paraphrase, never copy more than three words in a row from the author’s article.
    o You may use a short quotation from the original text.
• The personal response should be around 200-300 words.
  o This is your own opinion.
  o A response is objective.
    o Discuss the material you read.
• The works cited should be a separate page and follow correct MLA citation.
Definition & Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draft 1</th>
<th>October 8</th>
<th>Google Drive &amp; Peer Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft 2</td>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>Google Drive &amp; Writing Center visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Draft &amp; Individual Reflection</td>
<td>October 22</td>
<td>Final Draft to Google Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Reflection to Assignments 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group document: 4-5 pages; Individual reflection: 2 pages

Group document = 65 points; Individual reflection = 35 points

For this assignment you will work on a Google Doc as a group to define and describe social networking. You may write about social networking in general, or pick a specific social networking site, such as Facebook or RenRen, and write about that. Your sources must include: one social networking site, two of the four articles, and the movie.

Part 1: Definition

Definition is a form of writing that explains what a word, expression, or concept means. There are two types of definitions: formal and extended. A formal definition is a concise, brief statement of a word’s meaning, usually in a sentence. An extended definition is one- to several-paragraph explanation of a word using a variety of writing patterns. You must include at least 5 different ways to define the term.

*See GAW Chapter 6

The effective extended definition paragraph has:

1. The topic sentence makes a point by giving the formal definition of a word.
2. The paragraph makes the meaning of the word understandable to the reader.
3. A variety of writing patterns or methods are used as supporting details such as descriptions, examples, causes and effects, comparison and contrast, and process.
4. The supporting details are organized to clearly explain the meaning of the word.
5. Transitional words and expressions connect the different methods used to define the term.

Part 2: Description

Description is a form of writing that creates a clear mental picture of a topic. Description is often factual. Descriptive paragraphs can be objective, subjective, or a combination of both. An objective description is based on real facts, while a subjective description is based on personal beliefs or feelings. A blended description is based on real facts and includes personal beliefs or feelings.
An effective descriptive paragraph has:

1. The description focuses on a dominant impression, which is the one distinctive feature that best describes the topic.
2. The supporting details work together to present a clear picture of the dominant impression.
3. The supporting details are both factual and sensory (relating to the physical senses: touch, smell, taste, sight, and hearing).
4. The method of organization is either special or order of importance.
5. Words SHOW instead of tell.

**Individual Reflection = 35 points**

Your individual reflection is due to Assignments 2 on **October 22 at 8:00 am**. It should be at least 2 pages and address the following questions:

1. How did your group work together?
2. What role did you play in your group?
3. How did you contribute to the group discussion and document?
4. Which five ways did your group use to define the term?
5. How did you organize the definition?
6. Which website did you describe?
7. How did you organize your description?
8. What did you learn about working in a group that will help you in your other classes? And/or in the future?
9. Reflect on your experience with Carson when your group went to meet with her at the writing center.
10. Anything else you want to say about the assignment, the group, the process, etc…
Researched Argument

Taking a stance and making your case with evidence is the most important writing skill you will need for your college career. In class we will discuss the basics of argument, read examples of argumentative essays, learn how to use the library to find sources, and practice looking at issues from multiple points of view. Based on the assignment below, you will create a thesis, integrate evidence, including personal experience and research findings, and present your position in traditional academic essay form. Remember that as you research the topic, your opinions may change, and that's ok. You should alter your essay to reflect your new views.

Assignment:

1) Research how American culture has influenced cultures around the world.
   • You may look at American culture as a whole, or you may look at a single aspect (music, movies, politics, food, family, technology, etc.).
   • You may look at the influence on world culture, the culture of a region, or a single country.
2) Form a conclusion about the effects of this influence. This will eventually become your thesis.
   • Is it a positive or negative effect?
   • Has the influence been embraced or rejected?
   • Has this influence led to some sort of movement?
3) Support your conclusion using examples from your own experience and sources that you find through the library.
   • You must include at least two outside sources. These may be books, journal articles, or news articles.
   • These outside sources should total at least 10 pages in length. This is mostly to ensure that you find useful, high quality sources.
   • You must cite these sources in correct MLA format both in text and in a works cited page.
4) Include at least one example of an opposing viewpoint.
   • Show why the opposing side believes what they do.
   • Show why your argument is stronger.