*Writing Tutors-English Faculty
 Collaborative Meeting Notes*

 **Wednesday, March 8th from 2-3:30pm in the Learning Center 5-100**  **Attendees:** Rachel Bell, Joshua Paras, Justine Baker, Monique Ubungen, Nicu LoBue, Michael Gunnon, Kristy, Wisnia, Katrina Benedicto, Orionne Malool, Scott McMullin, Jessica Belluomini, Susan Zoughbie, Christina Trujillo, Chanel Daniels, Nina Floro, and Jarrod Feiner **Tutors giving feedback:**
*What challenges or difficulties have you faced in tutoring? What would make life as a tutor easier? What type of advice would you hope to get from faculty?*
-When you have a multi-part prompt with additional questions, which should you focus on? It is helpful when
 this is in bold in the paper assignment.

-It is challenging when the prompt is vague or all the background information was given in class and the student
 didn’t bring or take class notes. Sometimes you need more context.

-Prompts that are took sense, even with parts in bold, are still challenging.

-Do all professors want the PIE paragraph structure? Is there agreement on where the thesis should be located?
 Can students use 1st person “I”? Guidance on structure with the prompt would be useful.

-Elements that help make prompts clear: bullet points, clears separation of tasks, headings, a checklist of the
 standards and requirements.

-Instructors can give students clear expectations when heading into tutoring: best when not just one time but on-
 going, not a grammar fixing session, focus is on content. Best not to tell students to go to a tutor to have their
 paper proofread as students get the misunderstanding that the tutor will fix all the grammatical errors for them,
 tutors don’t write on student papers.

-Instructors can consistently remind students and encourage students to come to the Writing & Reading Lab—
 tell them where the TLC is, have tutors do class visits, tour students through the TLC.

-Tutors would love more connection with faculty. Remove the veil/wall between faculty and tutors

**Faculty giving feedback:**
*How would you like tutors to work with your students? What would you like tutors to prioritize? From experience, what are your “pearls of wisdom” for best working with our students’ particular needs?*

-Jarrod:
When you sit down with someone, the feedback depends on where they are in the essay. Talk about the prompt itself. Target the prompt first, deconstruct it. Help them turn the prompt into a question they can answer. Facilitate ideas, ask them questions. What do you think? Also be a little bit of a therapist. Tell them it’s ok. Calm them down so they are receptive to learning in the first place. Have students do the heavy-lifting of grammar. Don’t slow them down too early in the process with a focus on grammar. Ask them what do you think? Why do you think what you think?

-Susan:
We need as faculty to give students enough material so the tutors know where the faculty member is heading with the prompt. Create a repository tutors can access. Helpful to know what led up to the prompt. Get a broader picture. Ask to have the readings handy. Look at the readings and ask them about annotating. If the text is not marked up, have a discussion about the reading to make sure they have a good sense of that first. Don’t proofread. As far as grammar, can be helpful to breakdown one paragraph to help them see patterns of error.

-Rachel:
Caretake put the student at ease as much as possible. Be sure to compliment them on what they did well. Getting what feels like criticism on your writing can feel very personal and students are in a vulnerable position so be aware of this power dynamic. Help the students find their opinion (their thesis) through asking them questions. Have conversations to fine-tune and narrow down thesis statements. Ask the student to take notes and even create an outline or reverse outline to help them see the structure of an essay.

-Chanel:
Sometimes the writing is personal—thank them for sharing the story. Make sure this is not the last time we see them. Reverse outlines with colors can help them see the structure of their papers.

-Nina:
Tutors are in a position of power—help the students see their power too. Students have foundational knowledge. Give them some of the power as well in where the session goes. Help students breakdown the prompt. Circle key words. Help lay the prompt out for them so it can be a visual outline. Color coding ideas can also help.

**The Activity:**
*Using a range of English writing prompts from basic level to advanced, separate into small groups to examine a different prompt each and discuss approaches for how a tutor could breakdown the prompt with a student and make a writing plan. Share some “Best Practices” to working with prompts.*

**846 PROMPT:**

-Ask for a background on the reading-gauge reading comprehension.
-Use the prompt to form a thesis.
-Use prompt to also know what to avoid.
-Breakdown prompt to use as outline.
-Talk about the prompt generally-what they think about it. Let them collect their thoughts. Take notes.
-Reconstruct the prompt as a question they can then answer. Turn the prompt into a question to ask them.
- Have them write their answers down.

**105 PROMPT:**

-Have student read through the prompt. What is background? Where is the focus of the assignment? Is there
 anything in bold? What is the focus?
-Focus on bolded parts and deconstruct, narrow in on the prompt. Take time to really understand the prompt.
-Check for understanding. Denser prompt, take more time with it.
-Can turn over the prompt and ask them to summarize it.
-Ask for class materials (conceptual maps, class notes).
-Ask for other handouts/notes given on the prompt/assignment?
-Have a tutor file where tutors can jot down notes on prompts—guides to other tutors.
-Ask them if they are using their professor as a resource. Encourage students to utilize their instructor as well
 as the expert. Talk with them if they find this as a barrier and ease fears.
-Open a line of communication with the professors and ask them for clarification. Email with questions.

**100 PROMPT:**

-Help them to be able to paraphrase the prompt in their own words.
-Ask for quizzes, class notes to see what they understand about the text.
-Make sure they are understanding the reading—check reading comprehension.
-Give them resources for using MLA correctly.
-Ensure they understand the content.
-Help them jot down ideas/responses to their feelings on the prompt.
-Try different methods: Socratic style, psychological approach.
-Then move to structure and organizing ideas.
-Leave them with clear “next steps.”

**110 PROMPT:**

-Ask the students what is your understanding of the prompt? Can you explain it to me? What does your
 professor expect? Have you seen an example of what it should look like?
-If there are sub-headers, choose the most important parts.
-Ask what this mean in their own words.
-Helpful when there is a clear “objective” or purpose spelled out in the assignment. Help them to see the value
 of what they are writing about. Find a genuine connection for them to the subject matter.