

By Our WTS

The Indiana University Writing Tutorial Services Alumni Newsletter

Writing Tutorial Services
Indiana University
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The State of WTS

Mid-way through her second year as WTS Director, Jo Ann Vogt reflects on the changes she's made and those still to come.

Jo Ann Vogt

As I begin my second year as director of WTS, I am much more comfortable. I have the luxury of knowing all the WTS tutors, of being able to call them by name and chat about shared experiences. On top of that, I'm more conversant with the policies and procedures that keep a big organization like WTS running smoothly from day to day. I'm less likely now to have to ask tutors to explain to me how we do things and why.

Another change this fall is a concerted effort to increase demand at our satellite locations. To bring WTS to the attention of more students, I plan to expand—with tutors' help—efforts to advertise WTS to undergraduates in the residence halls and elsewhere. Even as tutors and I work to increase traffic, I have to acknowledge that the WTS staff is smaller, in part, because

a number of long-time peer tutors graduated last spring. (We miss you!) It is also smaller because I am intent upon balancing supply and demand at WTS.

I don't want WTS tutors to be overworked, and I value the informal tutor training that often happens as tutors talk when they have a free hour as a result of a no-show or open slot. At the same time, I don't like tutoring hours to go unused. I see myself as a steward of university resources, obligated to use those resources wisely. As a result, I will continue to monitor demand at the various WTS locations, and I'll ask for feedback from tutors concerning the workload. Eventually, I hope to reach a happy medium, a point of equilibrium between the number of students who seek help and the number of tutors prepared and eager to serve those students.

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The Creighton University mascot, the blue jay (photo donated).

Though she enjoys teaching, she said that it's more of a challenge than she expected.

"[Teaching] is chaos," she said. "It's not what I thought I was getting into."

She teaches sixth, seventh and eighth grade students every day and pre-school through fifth grade twice a week. She also teaches art to her middle school students.

McGuan said middle school students are the hardest to work with because "they don't want to be in school, and they hate everything." But, despite the challenge of keeping them

Though she spends the majority of her time at school with middle schoolers, she said that third grade is her favorite to teach and that she's starting to enjoy the earlier grades more than she thought she would.

"Young kids soak things up. . . . They're like sponges," she said. "Preschoolers never cease to amaze me. You've got one attached to one leg, and another's hanging off your arm."

McGuan added that her work at WTS has helped her tremendously with teaching.

For example, she said she was working after school with two third graders, one of whom is a special needs student, at the beginning of November when she felt her "WTS instincts kick back in."

The ease with which she worked one-on-one with those students led her to receive a compliment or two from her principal.

She said that working at WTS has helped her learn to adapt to students' diverse learning styles and allowed her to being a flexible teacher.

Although McGuan doesn't know where she's headed after she finishes the Magis program, she said can see herself staying in Omaha and earning money for a few years before starting work on a doctorate degree.

"Omaha's a nice town," she said. "It's a mid-sized city, and the people here are very hospitable. It reminds me of Indy."



WTS Crosses Continents

A peer tutor reflects on her semester abroad in England

Jane Barr

As I stumbled into London's murky daylight with my overweight suitcase in tow, my reassuring mantra, "four thousand miles isn't so far," sounded hollow on my lips.

After the benefit of over two months of hindsight, I can now barely remember why my first glimpse of this enormous city generated such genuine nervousness. I have since discovered that the reasons for my study-abroad apprehension and adoration are one in the same: London is all encompassing, enormous, bustling, beautiful, diverse

The title of the Londoner is not exclusive. Since few people live in London all of their lives, the definition of a Londoner means anyone who wishes to try their luck in the city of more than seven million people. People of all ethnicities, religions, sizes, incomes, personalities and educations inhabit and become perfectly attuned to the city.

If I take nothing else away from my time there, I will always remember London as a city of dichotomy. While walking to the tube station everyday, I pass St. Luke's Church, where Charles Dickens' somewhat ill-fated marriage began; a few blocks later, I

without causing a tear in the fabric of the space-time continuum? All the characteristics of the old and the new only add to the charm of one of the most historically important cities on the globe.

This combination of old and new worlds is only a small example of the scope of diversity that makes London wonderful. On any Sunday afternoon, you can take a trip to Camden Town to visit the markets. In this indie-rock Mecca, you will be met with more hair dye, tattoos, piercing, Mohawks, leather trousers and platform boots than you could ever imagine and see a number of unique shops and mar

Getting to Know You

Writing tutors spend several nights a week working with a host of other tutors, receptionists and advisors, but somehow, we know very little about our fellow ASC employees. Here, we've provided a handy crash course.

Callie Taylor and Brandon Haffner

All of the writing tutors work in the Academic Support Centers at some point during the week. We arrive, go to our little rooms and sit on reclining chairs at our tutors-only computers as we wait for eager students to arrive.

are these people we work with every night? This article gives the take of Leslie Robinson, ASC director, on student roles in the ASCs.

First, let's talk about the receptionists. They serve as "traffic

is her least favorite because it's rather difficult to tell people that there are no remaining time slots when they come to sign up for one.

"I really do not like dealing with people when all the tutoring slots are

