

T hinktank

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A Writing Center and ACE Publication

The 2008-2009 year is accompanied by talented staff members, innovative approaches, and a positive attitude to help assist students in getting the most out of their time at ACE and the Writing Center!



*From left to right:
Donna Klepadlo,
Janice Dexter-Gunek,
Corey Larson, and
Peter Rutledge.*

Is it possible to remain healthy during finals? Yes!

Jennifer DiPrete offers students

It's that time of year again. As we approach the home stretch of the semester and prepare for finals, keep in mind the following lifestyle factors and the healthy choices that accompany them to ensure you are focused, well-nourished, and ready to tackle your finals head on.

Nutrition – Not only does your body need to be properly fueled, your brain also feeds off of key nutrients to stay focused and on task. Failure to eat regular, healthful meals will result in headaches, mood swings, and lack of ability to concentrate

Better food choices include old fashioned peanut butter and jelly on whole grain bread or a whole wheat bagel. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. To start a long day of studying, something such as oatmeal or whole grain cereal (Cheerios, Special K, or Chex) with fruit is a good option. An egg white omelet with vegetables and cheese is another good choice.

Watch consumption of energy drinks! They are not a good source (or A source for that matter) of nutrients. Many pack a 1-2 punch of caffeine and sugar along with other ingredients which have not been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Sleep – Something many college students are severely lacking in. Pulling an all-nighter will not help you retain or recall information and in fact, may decrease your performance on exams due to lack of restorative sleep. Most young adults need 7-9 hours of sleep. Some benefits of adequate rest include:

- Strengthened immune system (Being sick during finals stinks. This alone should be incentive to get enough shut-eye)
- Strengthens benefits of the flu shot
- Provides proper recovery from a full day
- Lowers consumption of high

Fitness – DO NOT eliminate regular physical activity from your daily routine during the exam period or during other times of stress. It is important to schedule regular, 30-minute bouts of cardiovascular activity to manage the stressful impact of a hectic schedule. Participating in a regular fitness routine during exams will serve as a healthy outlet to the hours spent sitting. You will return to your studies refreshed and refocused!

Physical activity helps to release dopamine and serotonin and reduce levels of cortisol (hormone that is released during stressful periods and is known to suppress

So don't just sit and study for hours on end. Take a study break and get moving!!

Prescription Medications (Ritalin/Adderall) – A strong note of caution against taking these medications if you were not prescribed them for a specific condition. They are stimulants which act on dopamine levels in the brain to produce greater focus and sharpen attention. In individuals who have no need for these medications, side effects include: increase in blood pressure, heart rate, and body temperature. In addition, decrease in sleep and appetite may occur which can lead to malnutrition and sleep disturbances.

Breathe! When all is said and done, remember to take a time out and focus on yourself and on your breathing. When we are stressed out we tend to hold our breath and tighten our muscles. This constricts blood flow to the muscles and vital organs, including the brain. This minor break in the frantic pace will relax your muscles, slow your heart rate and regulate your breathing.

Best of luck on finals! Be well.

The Writing Center welcomes new Writing Specialist Janice Dexter-Gunek!

Janice discusses her expertise in the field

I began tutoring when I was selected to enter the program for tutors at UMass Boston, and that experience led me to want to make teaching writing my field of interest. After receiving my Masters, I taught composition for a number of years in the Boston area and have also taught college-level writing abroad. As a result, I've learned a great deal from teaching diverse groups of students. My courses have focused on teaching writing across the curriculum and real-world writing. This interdisciplinary approach has allowed me to

design assignments to help students synthesize information effectively.

By teaching composition courses that span one or two semesters, I've been able to watch the development and improvement in many students' writing abilities. I'm also enthusiastic about working with students on their writing because no two papers are alike, and it's interesting to see how students approach an assignment and communicate their ideas. My experience has helped me to become a good listener and someone who knows how to ask questions about a topic to help writers think about it in different ways.

TutorTrac, an improved a
Peter Rutledge, Assistant Director of

A.C.E. discusses what TutorTrac

Additionally, the data is continually backed up as it is housed on a server instead of a single computer (which should also keep the system from going down).

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday thru Friday:

LOCATION:

ACE is located in the back of the rotunda adjacent to the far side of Janikies Auditorium.

PHONE:

ACE: x6746

WC: x6567

Please contact us to make an appointment or ask any questions you may have!

The biggest benefit, however, will be how we are able to assess the work we are doing here to continually improve our services.

Another exciting piece is that

TutorTrac is a web based tracking system that allows us to link to the student record system (BANNER) here at Bryant. In essence, every time a student logs into TutorTrac all of their other information is linked to the visit (classes in which the student is enrolled, class, major, etc.). This gives us numerous ways to report the data we get when students log in. The biggest advantage is that we save time in importing student records, and recording visit information.

Kelly Tiarks emphasizes the importance of A.C.E and the Writing Center for student-athletes



I have been employed at the Academic Center for Excellence since 2007 as the Academic Service Coordinator for Student-Athletes.

I assist the student-athletes with getting better connected with the academic support services within ACE and the Writing Center. As with any student population, student-athletes

With increased travel for competition and time away from the classroom, I am here to assist the student-athletes with general study skills, time management techniques and overall organization.

As a former collegiate student-athlete, I understand the demands of being part of a Division I athletics program. I find it very rewarding to help other student-athletes find a balance between athletics and academics, so that they can be successful in both endeavors.

Corey Larson introduces the Reading for Writing Program

The Reading for Writing program was developed to address the fact that many students have difficulty synthesizing their reading materials in order to write clear and relevant essays. The program was specifically designed for freshmen students for whom English is not their native language and who are also enrolled in the First Year Liberal Arts Seminar class (LCS 151) or the Introduction to Literary Studies class (LCS 121). However, it is open to all students who are interested in improving their skills in reading as a pre-writing tool. It offers another opportunity to

Additionally, it is essential for students to understand that it may take more than a single session to get through a troublesome assignment and they must plan accordingly when making their appointments. We seek not to simply do the work for the student, but to help him/her resolve the problem on their own, thereby, improving their skills in the long-run and increasing their confidence level

The Tutor/ Tutee Relationship

What we expect from our students and what you should expect from our staff

When visiting the Writing Center or A.C.E. for the first time, it is important to remember some key elements so that each student gets the most of their meeting. Time is often the biggest challenge when working with students, so in order for the tutor to best meet the students' needs efficiently, the student must come prepared. The

- Arrive on time
- Bring your books from class
- Copy of the assignment
- Class notes
- Papers from past assignments or tests with professor's comments

2008-2009 NEWCA Presentation

A brief look at what our staff is researching

Part of the Writing Center Consultant's job is to present research or conduct a workshop at a regional conference in order to gain proper CRLA (College Reading and Learning Association) certification. This coming spring, Bryant Writing Consultant's will be presenting a workshop-style presentation at the NEWCA (New England Writing Center Association) conference, with a theme of "Revisit, Reflect, Renew." Our focus will be on the "revisit" dimension, looking at statistics of our center's student return rate compared to the overall student visits.

We hope to conduct research of other schools as well to compare strategies and techniques for tutoring and encouraging students to return. If you are coming in to the center during finals or at the beginning of next semester, be sure to fill out our anonymous survey so that we can accurately portray our center at the conference!

Note of Thanks

The tutors and writing consultants here at ACE would like to send a very special Thank You to our professional staff! They have put in tireless hours helping all the students here at Bryant University; for us tutors in particular, they never hesitate to take time away from their day to help us make your tutoring experience the best it can be. Because of this effort, we would like to send a very special thank you to: Laurie, Stephanie, Peter, Donna, Sharon, Kelly, Corey, Sally, Janice, Sam, _____, _____, and _____!