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 Eastern Washington University
Thinking Well, Writing Well Workshop
 October 15th, 2013

Attendance

- Fifty-five individuals attended the training, and 52 completed evaluations.
 - One (1.9%) participant identified as a student, one (1.9%) identified as staff, two (3.8%) identified as visiting professors or researchers, three (5.8%) identified as lecturers, 29 (55.8%) participants identified as assistant professors, 11 (21.2%) identified as associate professors, two (3.8%) identified as full professors, and three (5.8%) participants identified as administrators.

Quantitative Results from the Evaluation Form

I feel that my understanding about academic writing has improved after today's workshop.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	1	1.9	1.9
Agree	27	51.9	53.8
Strongly Agree	24	46.2	100.0
Total	52	100.0	

I feel I have acquired new skills and/or information that will enhance my writing skills.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	1	1.9	1.9
Agree	25	48.1	50.0
Strongly Agree	26	50.0	100.0
Total	52	100.0	

As a result of my participation in this session, I will be able to implement new writing strategies that will increase my ability to publish my research.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	2	3.8	3.8
Agree	28	53.8	57.7
3.50	1	1.9	59.6
Strongly Agree	20	38.5	98.1
N/A	1	1.9	100.0
Total	52	100.0	

I would recommend this workshop to others.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Disagree	1	1.9	1.9
Agree	18	34.6	36.5
Strongly Agree	33	63.5	100.0
Total	52	100.0	

How would you rate the overall quality of this workshop?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Average	6	11.5	12.5
Above Average	25	48.1	64.6
4.50	1	1.9	66.7
Excellent	16	30.8	100.0
Missing Data	4	7.7	
Total	52	100.0	

Qualitative Results from the Evaluation Form

1. What questions do you still have about academic writing after attending this workshop?
 - As a grant writer, creating an interesting, powerful argument (story line?) is important – flow of material.
 - What research has been done on using her style vs. standard academic styles?
 - I feel that my biggest writing problem right now is communicating why my work is important and tying it in to bigger debates. And I can't identify for myself whether this is the way I write or my area of focus.
 - Most of the questions are about execution which is sort of the next step.
 - Would like to know why for some of the information.
 - Team writing and how to combine styles.
 - Questions I have motivate me to read some of the resources Rachel gave us.
 - Scheduling time, basics of how to start.
 - A few more specific revisions would help.
 - How to help graduate students become better writers (how to be constructive rather than destructive in editing).
 - How do you help for foreign scientists about academic writing?
 - How to deal with rejection.
 - How to (steps) to publish a book?
 - Tricks or ways to work on some of these skills.
 - How can writing skills of grad students be improved? You tell them to revise but they have no idea how to improve.
 - More novel publishing secrets.
 - Time management.
 - How to organize my thoughts/go from a bunch of ideas to a manuscript.
 - Hot to start a revolution for quality over quantity.
 - How do I know where to try to publish my work?

2. What do you think were the most helpful or valuable aspects of the workshop you attended today?
 - Encouraging writers to say what they think.
 - Good tips – specific, practical.
 - Rachel did a nice job.
 - Focusing on writing, aside from content.
 - The connection the speaker connected. She did a great job bringing up ideas, helping create the desire to improve, and set up the first steps.
 - Knowing that everybody struggles when writing; that it is difficult to write clearly.
 - Gave research and general tips.
 - General tips on writing; words that need to be avoided.
 - Resources and tips.
 - Confirming the importance of the academic as a writer.
 - Tips and tricks and an editor's perspective!
 - Helped me feel validated that my simpler writing style doesn't indicate lack of depth!
 - Resources; quick tips.
 - The concrete tips and examples.
 - There was a sentence in presentation: "What is easy to read has been difficult to write."
 - Tricks, nominalization very useful.
 - Second half of presentation – concrete tips for writing.
 - General tips and tricks were the most helpful. Actually, the workshop was helpful for me.
 - Know useful sources that may help writing.
 - Resources about writing.
 - Involving audience in revision nominalizations or whatever strategy was under discussion.
 - She reinforced much of what I teach.
 - Tips and tricks.
 - The resources/recommended books.
 - The tips.
 - The resource list.

- Tricks and tips on how to write clearly.
- Many specific tips.
- Sentence structure.
- Tips for writing well.
- Broad examples with many ideas.
- The list of references.
- Examples on wording.
- Getting her point of view as both an author and an editor.

3. What is one tip that you learned today that will be useful to your writing process?

- Revising “nominalization.”
- Read and examine each sentence.
- Ways to make my writing “leaner.”
- The ideas about reading like a writer and how to do that.
- Read as a writer.
- Trying to avoid adverbs and use more strong active verbs.
- First draft is a thinking draft.
- Use “find” to look for normalizations and other pitfalls. Use PowerPoint as an outline.
- Your editors are your friends!
- Breaking the “academic rules” – Hurray! This is liberating!
- PowerPoint – start to organize writing, resolving passive voice writing.
- Reinforced “use strong verbs and nouns;” edit, edit, edit, and read every sentence aloud.
- Writing more clear.
- Looking for “tion” etc. as cues to poor writers.
- Changing the font/format when editing your own work.
- How to arrange the manuscript before publishing.
- How to get started.
- Change font when reviewing my writing.
- I will be more intentional about studying the form of academic writers I appreciate.
- Most journals do not ban the use of “I.”
- Style of writing.
- Cut the first draft by 25%; re-read in different format.
- Writing resources list.
- Use strong nouns and verbs.
- Become comfortable making statements that are direct.
- Reduce size of draft by 25%.
- Using clear, declarative sentences and reading like a writer.
- Words to stay away from.
- Be bold.
- When writing, think about reader as much as content.
- Write by page, not by the hour.
- Think like a reader.
- Don’t be defensive when someone edits your work.

4. How could the workshop be improved to be more beneficial to you?

- Giving good feedback to students – How do you do this?
- Needs to focus on academic writing – most journals expect a more formal style.
- This was great. As a next step, I would love to workshop some papers with these tips in mind.
- If time, I think more hands on examples would be a great next step.
- Wish we worked together on some examples.
- Maybe a two-part workshop.
- Some practice activities.
- Add some hands-on activities.

- Very beneficial, but maybe time to actually do some writing then exchange with people at the table to edit, then discuss.
- Would love to have slides – handouts.
- Good and bad example paragraphs could be shown.
- PowerPoint with huge blocks of text difficult to follow.
- There could be more examples, especially in the sciences/engineering. The message is valuable, but it sounds like a humanities-oriented presentation.
- I'd love to see some samples of some of the characteristics of excellent academic writing, like a good use of I, a strong opening, etc.
- Tips for writing for publication, not only writing “well.”
- Very good workshop.
- ? Maybe little more organization, less scatter?...
- Bring a paragraph and edit it.
- Was pretty good as it was.

5. Please provide any additional comments you have about today's workshop and/or the FORWARD program in general below or on the back of this page.

- Thank you!
- This was the best workshop on writing that I have attended at NDSU.
- This was probably the best FORWARD program I've been to. It's not about the subject but the quality of speaker and presentation.
- This was very good (and I'm usually very critical.)
- So fun to use writing as a metaphor for the design process (architecture). So many parallels – getting out the first idea, then tossing it, simplifying and getting rid of “ornamentation,” etc.
- Continue to offer more on this subject, consider networking groups.
- Presentation was beneficial and professional; however I was not ready for the questions, this lack issue was mine. Besides I couldn't/don't know some words reader talked about, I should know all the words... thanks for presentation.
- Great speaker! Thanks for bringing her to NDSU.
- Thanks. ☺ Liked the sense of humor.
- It was quite helpful. Thanks.
- Excellent session/speaker.
- Thank you for addressing the need for building writing skills.