



VERBAL EQUINOX

SPRING 2020



EDITOR'S

INTRODUCTION

This year's unprecedented circumstances have created new challenges for students and faculty here at Weber State. Like many organizations, our staff this year was required to adapt to the unique new situation in a very narrow time frame as we continued to serve our students and acclimate as a community. This year's edition of *Verbal Equinox* is a direct result of those efforts by our team to offer every resource we can to help our university's students succeed, especially as our engagement with digital rhetorics and teaching continues to increase.

Weber State has remained committed to its new digital literacy initiative since its adoption in Fall of 2018. This year's editorials reflect our tutors' commitment to providing students with thorough support, including the research tutors have done into current issues in education, which now ranges from fair use in academia to support systems on college campuses. Our staff training continues to provide tutors with the skills to incorporate aspects of digital design into their work that support and emphasize their writing in ways that were not possible through more traditional forms of document formatting. As always, we as a program believe that teaching by learning is the most effective way to pursue our goal of promoting learning and progress in the students we engage with. The work in this year's issue represents the editorial work that was done by our tutors in Adobe InDesign, but these documents only represent one of several steps that each went through to uphold that goal. In addition to these editorials, our tutors generated content in Adobe Spark (a web-based program that can be used to create a variety of presentation formats that go beyond the standard PowerPoint format), Premiere Pro (Adobe's professional grade video editing software), and Rush (a simplified version of Premiere with less tailored features).

These editorials were written using what is referred to as "three-part structure"; rather than the introduction most students are used to writing, the authors begin the articles by summarizing the topic on which they're writing before diving into the stance they have chosen to argue. Following that, the author presents support for this stance drawn primarily from credible, first hand sources. When working with students on these pieces, our tutors often take the opportunity to explain the purpose behind this style of writing as students work to develop their understanding of what an editorial should accomplish and adjust their writing approach accordingly. After completing the rhetorical components of these pieces, our tutors begin the process of digitally designing their documents, incorporating images that add to the overall message of their pieces and including the appropriate citations.

We hope you enjoy this new edition.

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VERBAL EQUINOX

SPRING 2020 EDITION

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Verbal Equinox is a Weber State University Writing Center publication. Articles produced for the spring semester 2020 tutor training course have been honed and refined for this edition, and that process has included licensing or replacing supposedly fair use images so that these pieces appear in as close approximation to the original documents as possible.

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Ethical Sourcing for Digital Projects: Fair Use in the Classroom

A pressing issue, copyright has become more critical in recent years as more students use online materials for their digital projects, which are easily shared and can quickly become viral. The problem is that, despite being publicly available, online images and videos are not always cleared for students to legally use (MIT Libraries). Unfortunately, as Kyra Folk-Farber discovered in a 2015 study, students generally have a vague understanding of copyright and fair use and have “an attitude of apathy toward copyright law” (461). This attitude is unfortunate because these legal concepts *do* impact students’ current and future work.

Far from being an academic hurdle that students can leave on college campuses after graduation, copyright and fair use extend beyond the classroom. According to Patrick Thomas, the Associate General Counsel for Weber State University, the likelihood that students could face charges of inappropriate use has increased because spiders (or web crawlers) can now scan the web for material that violates copyright law. For example, using copyrighted images inappropriately on a company’s website can have negative repercussions for the employee and the company (Thomas). Now more than ever, students need to learn how to use

digital material responsibly; otherwise, they might face negative ramifications in the future, whether it be in the workplace or the courtroom (Thomas).

Copyright and fair use are both legal terms that describe how potential users can or cannot use material created by someone else. Contrary to what some might believe, all works that are “expressive,” “original,” and “fixed in a tangible medium” are automatically granted copyright protection by law (Thomas). The copyright license merely establishes the terms of use by specifying how creators want their work used,



shared, or adapted by dictating a user’s right to make copies, right to distribute copies, and right to make derivative works by altering the original (Harvard University, Thomas). For some, fair use—a person’s ability to use a copyrighted work under certain conditions without acquiring the copyright owner’s formal consent—might seem to be a convenient way to sidestep copyright restrictions; however, fair use law is often up for the court’s interpretation (Bielstein 127, Thomas). The courts usually use four main factors when determining whether a work falls under fair use (see fig. 1), but the court’s final ruling largely depends on the case itself (Harvard University, Bielstein 128-129).

Students might be tempted to

use the four fair use factors to justify their use of copyrighted material, but this approach has its own dangers. According to Patrick Thomas, fair use is a much more “complicated legal concept” than most might think because, while fair use is a “defense against copyright,” it is not a *secure* defense. To put it in perspective, Thomas

emphasizes that students are always “infringing on copyrighted works” when they use copyrighted material; “the question is how much?” Because students and faculty do not have the legal experience needed to make an accurate assessment, Thomas “strongly discourages people from doing their own fair use analysis.” Instead of spending time and money debating fair use in court, it is easier to avoid the court fees by using others’ material correctly the

Fair Use Factors (Figure 1)

1. Nature of Copyrighted Work
2. User’s Purpose
3. Amount of Appropriation
4. Effect on Market Value

“Students and faculty should resist doing their own fair use analysis because they lack experience as legal counsel.”

—Patrick Thomas

first time (Thomas).

As students create digital projects, they need to know how to use copyrighted works appropriately and legally. The Writing Center can support faculty and students in finding sources and guideline for using online material responsibly. As Writing Center Coordinator Claire Hughes explained, “Students come to college knowing how to write and how to appropriate others’ ideas, and we teach them how to do it responsibly, thoroughly, and ethically. We now have the responsibility to do the same for digital projects used in class work. Students often already know how to make videos; it’s on us to teach them how to do it responsibly.” As students search for online material to use in their projects, they should keep three main guidelines in mind.

First, students should always cite the images or videos they use (Shanjengange). Hughes offers this insight: “Until recently, a written or digital project was just shared between student and teacher, or maybe a whole class, but now projects are submitted online and easily shared more broadly, so there is a stronger need to cite within the class context.” Even if an image from Creative Commons states that a student does not need to give credit, Weber State University strongly advises students to still cite it for academic



purposes (Shanjengange, Huxhold).

Second, students should always analyze the license associated with copyrighted work because the license defines the copyright and dictates how the work can legally be used. More specifically, an image's license determines what students can use the image for and how many times they can use it (Shanjengange). If it is available, students should always read the terms of use, copyright, or other legal statements (MIT Libraries). If an image or video does not have information about its license stipulations, students should avoid using it. As Patrick Thomas said, "presume nothing is free unless you can find proof to the contrary that it is safe to use."

Third, there are enough free resources that Weber State University students should not have to pay for a license (Thomas). Students can search for free material that is explicitly marked as "public domain" or marked for "scholarly reuse" (MIT Libraries). Students can also look for free images under the Creative Commons license through the Creative Commons search engine: search.creativecommons.org (Huxhold). Patrick Thomas also advised using the "usage rights" function to narrow Google searches to appropriate images and suggested asking the Stewart Library about the materials they offer for student use.

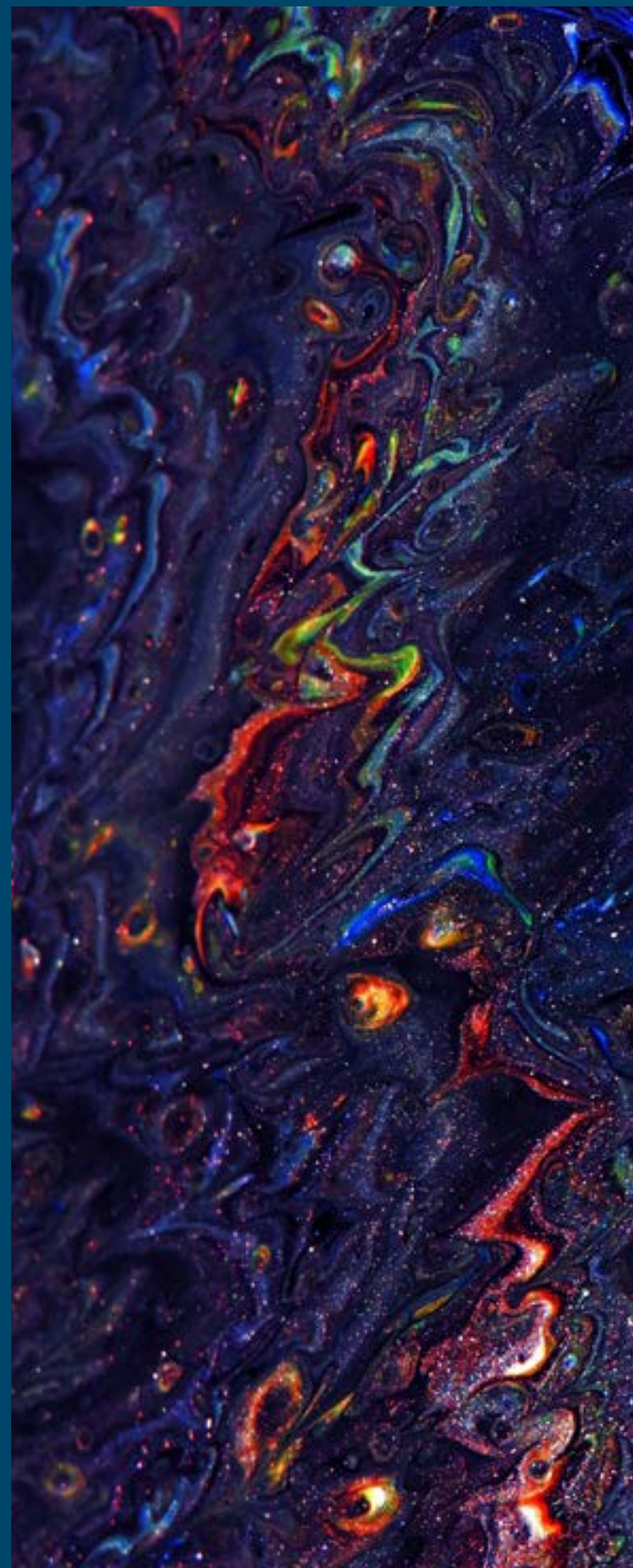
Due to the availability of options, students should

not have to resort to paying for a license, but if students are absolutely determined to use the copyrighted material, there are a few options they can pursue. If the material has a copyright owner, students could ask for the right to use the material or look into purchasing a license (Shanjengange). If students choose to do this, they should pay close attention to the license and, if possible, try to attain the owner's permission in writing (Shanjengange).

Overall, copyright and fair use are important issues that cannot be ignored. We live in a digital world, and the urge to use content that is publically available is strong; however, we must use that material ethically or risk facing legal consequences later. As Weber State University students graduate and go on to fruitful careers in their respective fields, they need to understand copyright restrictions and learn how to navigate them safely. Much like how a writing tutor or English professor would stress the importance of citing, the Writing Center must also stress the importance of using copyrighted works properly. As writing tutors, we can help by giving students the knowledge and strategies that will help them in the future.

■ Sarah Taylor is a tutor at Weber State University who studied fair use when she was Editor-in-Chief of the 2019 issue of Verbal Equinox. Special thanks to Llewellyn Shanjengange, Claire Hughes, and Patrick Thomas for helping with this project.

If you have any additional questions about fair use, please contact Patrick Thomas at patrickthomas@weber.edu



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Counseling Centers Need More Support

Are Universities Responsible for the Mental Health of Their Students?
Samantha Plum

Modern college students face more challenges associated with mental illness than any generation before. A study published by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators states the following: "During the last decade, university and college counseling students have reported a shift in the needs of students seeking counseling services, from more benign developmental and informational needs, to more severe psychological problems" (Kitzrow 168). Attending college requires the ability to concentrate, memorize, attend classes, participate in group discussions, and engage in cognitive learning tasks. Having a severe psychological problem, such as anxiety or depression, can make it difficult to perform well in an academic environment. As the rate of individuals experiencing mental illness increases, it is becoming increasingly more important for universities to support the mental health of students.

Weber State University's Counseling and Psychological Service Center (CPSC) provides a number of resources intended to help students cope. These services include individual sessions with a licensed therapist. During these sessions, students can talk through their problems and learn strategies on how to successfully balance their mental illness and college course

work. These sessions are instrumental to the academic success of many students. At Weber State University, however, the number

It is becoming increasingly more important for universities to support the mental health of students.

of sessions a student can attend is limited to twelve sessions per academic year and thirty sessions overall.

Aaron Jeffrey, a therapist employed by the university, said that in order for CPSC to continue functioning in the most pragmatic way, they must have a limit of twelve sessions. They do not have enough staff or center space to successfully support any more than that. He said that people are worried that twelve sessions a year will not be enough, but that some students see progress in five or six sessions. While encouraging, this does not account for students with chronic mental health needs. For example, individuals with chronic depression often require ongoing therapy, sometimes continuing for years. If these students are limited to thirty sessions for their entire academic career, how are they



supposed to get the support they need to succeed? CPSC often ends up referring students to local therapists outside of the university, but if they are unable to afford this kind of care the best they can do is attend group therapy. They lose valuable one-on-one time with a professional care provider. Left without necessary counseling, the effects of this can be detrimental to academic performance. How is a student struggling with chronic mental illness supposed to focus on note-taking when much more serious problems lurk in their minds?

The Counseling and Psychological Service Center needs more attention from the university. It needs more funding, more staff, and more space in order to support students with chronic mental illness. Having more staff would mean the amount of sessions students are allowed to attend would increase. Students who need extra support would be able to receive the treatment they need. Some might argue that the university should not be responsible for the mental well-being of the student, but I would adopt the argument of the authors of *College of the Overwhelmed* that states that those who argue against funding college counsel-

ing centers, "...do not fully understand the ramifications of not helping these students. The mental health crisis on campus affects far more than just the mental health counselors; it affects the individual students, the student body in general, and the entire institution" (Kadison and DiGeronimo 156). If universities wish to keep students enrolled and attending classes, they must be more attentive to the mental health of their student population.

Students that drop out of school because they are struggling with a mental illness lose the opportunity to build a career based on the skills institutions such as Weber State teach.

When asked why the work done by CPSC matters, Aaron Jeffrey responded, "We've found that when people have mental health issues, studying, memorizing, focusing in class, and even getting to class, all of that tanks. People don't do well with that, so if we support mental health, we support students getting the education that they need to be successful later on in life." Students deserve the opportunity to succeed in college. If the university truly cares about the success of their students, they will create an environment that fosters positive mental health in order to make that success possible.

"If we support mental health, we support students getting the education that they need to be successful later on in life."

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"LANGUAGE EXCITES ME. IRRATIONAL THOUGHT EXCITES ME. I SPEND MOST OF MY TIME LISTENING INSTEAD OF WRITING. A SHARD OF LANGUAGE MIGHT COME:

A PHRASE, A WORD, AN ANAGRAM, AND I'D JUST KEEP IT IN MY POCKET, LIKE A LITTLE SEED, WARMING IN MY FIRST." - OCEAN VUONG

The Food at Weber

Freshman year of college can be a difficult time for a lot of students. Figuring out what classes you need to take, how you are going to pay for school, and even just getting used to the flow of college can be stressful and time consuming. People often use this time to explore new ideas and try out new hobbies, but with so much going on, some things tend to get left behind. Unfortunately, one of the things that often gets left behind is nutrition. There is a phenomenon affectionately called the “Freshman 15” (“Freshman 5” in countries using the metric system): a common trend for students to gain around ten to fifteen pounds in their first year of college.

College, due to its transitional nature, has been cited as an important time to determine future health, and for many, it can be the beginning of a lifelong struggle with controlling their weight (Gow et al. 1). The primary problem with this is that being overweight or obese is associated with significant risk of developing heart disease, cancer, and diabetes (Eyre et al. 1812), and heart disease and cancer are the two most common causes of death in America by a large margin (Heron 8). However, these illnesses are largely preventable, and the findings seem to show that prevention is not as difficult as one would expect. One study showed that taking an “intervention” type class was effective at preventing weight gain and even promoting weight loss, among college freshman; it is important to note, however, that the group that met in a classroom had significantly better results than those who only took online instruction (Gow et al. 23). In addition, the “GEICO Study” found that providing classes on plant-based eating, as well as providing a few plant-based options at worksites, resulted in significant weight loss, improvement in various health markers, and an increase in workplace performance over multiple



studies (Successful 2). Here at Weber State University, we have eight restaurant options that individuals using a Wildcat Meal Plan can utilize, six of which could be considered fast food, the other two being Sodexo-run restaurants. Sodexo is a food services and facilities management company that currently holds the contract that determines the dining options available at WSU. These two restaurants currently provide no nutrition information, as well as no menu, despite having a fairly standard rotation of what they serve.

Currently at Weber, there is a nutrition class that can be taken for general requirements. However, this is

just one of nineteen courses available for the Life Sciences requirement. In my opinion, this is not good enough. When almost half of your students are projected to be killed by diseases that have been shown to be treatable and/or preventable by diet, nutrition should be a much higher priority than it currently is. All the students I have talked to have come to the same conclusion: the food offered at Weber State University is not healthy. I have talked to people who said that they wanted to start practicing healthier habits, but they say that it is not really possible because they do not have access to healthy food since they are on Weber's Meal Plan. Others complained that they could not eat the “colorful” diet that is recommended by dietitians, even having to beg a kitchen employee for a fruit cup at breakfast because no fruits or vegetables were offered. It is especially interesting because these complaints were offered to me before I started researching for this editorial, and since I have started researching this issue, the number of bad reviews continues to grow.

The importance of transitioning to a plant-based diet has been made apparent by multiple scientific fields, which is very fascinating because the need for this transition is something Sodexo claims to agree with. For example, as they cite in the afore-

mentioned “GEICO study,” in the ad campaign they have made for a new plant-based menu that they are currently testing in locations around the US. Another oddity is that on Weber's website there are options to look at the menus of the restaurants on campus. All of these restaurants have menus available except for the Sodexo-run restaurants; they have an app that is also supposed to have a menu and nutrition information, but it is similarly vacant. Many students at Weber live off campus, so this is not a big deal for them. However, some students, including those with scholarships, live on campus and are bound to the Meal Plan for their food. Additionally, anyone interested in coming to Weber has no way to determine how nutritionally adequate the meal plan would be.

Weber State University should make nutrition concerns more of a priority because chronic health problems are the number-one killer in the US, intervention actions have been shown to be effective, and the current practices are lackluster. I believe that some sort of nutrition training that has students meeting, working together, and confronting their current eating habits, and how that will affect their long-term health should be a part of the first year of college. In addition, although there have been some steps made in the right direction with “meatless Mondays” and the provision of some healthy options, a shift needs to be made so unhealthy options are the minority. This shift could be as simple as looking into bringing Sodexo's plant-based options here when they are available, or possibly introducing some sort of initiative with local grocery stores in order to make more fresh produce available for on-campus students. As for the nutrition information, the framework is there; it just needs to be utilized. Weber State University claims to be a cultural leader in our region, at least according to their mission statement; if that is the case, they should strive to be an example of promoting healthy living and help lead towards a future where preventable diseases are not our biggest killers.



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Austin Stenquist
Weber State University



Gamification in Higher Education

Jennifer Greenlee

What if you could go to class and, instead of listening to a long-winded lecture, you logged into a video game?

While this isn't likely to become reality any time soon, researchers are looking at video games in a new light, instead of the time-sucking devices they are usually framed as. Using video games in classes will enhance the learning for students and will make higher education classes more meaningful.

Over the past decade, more studies on the applications of video games have emerged in educational literature, specifically on their application in higher education.

Not all forms of video games would be appropriate for an educational atmosphere. Serious games are "games designed for a primary goal different from pure entertainment" and "are receiving a growing interest for education" (Gloria, Bellotti, & Berta). For

example, few students' parents would be okay with them playing Halo or Call of Duty instead of attending class. In fact, that's typically called truancy when this happens in high school.

In 2016, "A Proof-of-Concept Study of Game-Based Learning in Higher Education" focused on implementing a "game-based pedagogy." Each professor involved in the study taught one section of a course with the implementation of games and one without. The enjoyment a student felt during courses, specifically in courses with games, correlated with improvements in deep learning and higher-order thinking (Crocco, Offenholley, & Hernandez).

Higher-order thinking and deep learning is often dealt with in video games. According to James Paul Gee, "Challenge and learning are a large part of what makes good video games motivating and entertaining. Humans actually

enjoy learning, though sometimes in school you wouldn't know that."

Most video games have a primary goal, and the only way to achieve that goal is to learn the game. By learning the game, there are rules and applications the player must know. This can be applied to English, math, or science. By understanding the rules of the "game," the student is learning the rules of the subject.

Using video games as hands-on learning tools allow students to make mistakes and take chances without risk of the same failure many of them experience with traditional grades and exams.

As students explore the rules of a subject in a virtual world,

students are learning the boundaries of principles

and how to apply them in a multitude of ways. If higher education would embrace



video games, they could be utilized for the majority of

subjects to increase the understanding and the application of principles.

Gee continues on to say that "no deep learning takes place unless learners make an extended commitment of self for the long haul."

Students are already learning non-educational principles through video games that prime them for educational scene at an unprecedented rate. These principles include visual processing, attention allocation, spatial resolution, and mental rotation abilities (Granic, Lobel, & En-

gelst). More students are entering college with background experience and knowledge of video games.

According to the United States Census Bureau's data, taken from 2013 to 2017, 87.2% of households have a computer and 78.1% have a broadband internet subscription.

Many complex skills are being taught alongside higher-order thinking in video games and can be applied within a collegiate

education. According to the unapplied data from the Electronic Entertainment Design and Research Group (EEDAR), 67% of Americans aged two and older play video games on at least one device. By the time most students enter college, they have typically played some form of video game. As even more digitally engaged generations follow, the amount of video game hours and overall internet hours will continue to increase.

In a vastly internet-centric world, there is still a prevalent and out-of-date form of teaching. Instead of utilizing an already ingrained heuristic, the current education model is taking steps away from it.

By using the "modern" student's innate digital fluency, teachers can forward learning outcomes in a more powerful and natural way for the student. In turn, this will be more beneficial for students as advances are not moving away from the technology they have grown up with.

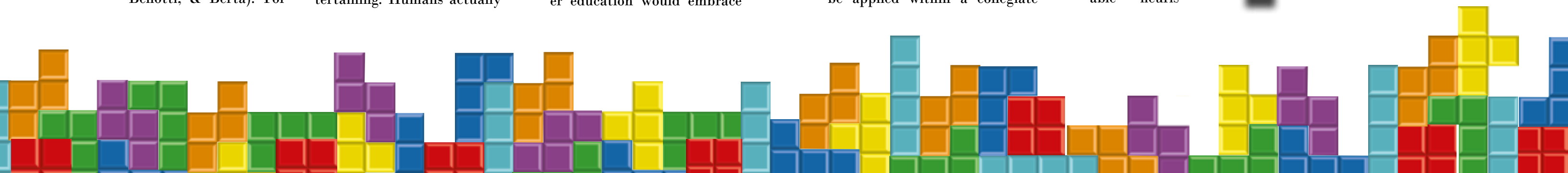
These available heuris-

tics can aid professors in encouraging a deeper learning and a deeper understanding of valuable subjects.

This will encourage a mastery of subjects instead of the regurgitation that the current educational model typically endorses.

Data has shown that students learn through a more entertaining curriculum. A large part of the entertainment that students and young adults of consume is technologically based, and, even more than ever, it is commonly consumed in the form of video games.

Challenging students through a platform they are more comfortable will cause essential deep learning to take place more frequently in the classroom. These same games can promote higher-order thinking and help students understand the variety of applications that a single principle can have and help them to link it across disciplines.



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"BEING A WRITER IS A VERY PECULIAR SORT OF A JOB: IT'S ALWAYS YOU VERSUS A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER (OR A BLANK SCREEN) AND QUITE OFTEN THE BLANK

PIECE OF PAPER WINS." - NEIL GAIMAN

To Learn or To Be Graded

Why Grades Are Hurting Students and Campus Writing Centers



University is a place where students can pick an educational path that suits them and their aspired careers. However, with the pressure to earn grades and meet the expectations of seemingly almighty professors, students are looking to writing centers to raise their letter grades within thirty-minute sessions. For students, earning a grade is vital for success in higher education. Unfortunately, in the rush of busy college student life, students are only able to quickly push papers out of their tired minds and into a teacher's lap instead of, in the process, learning how to be independent writers and thinkers.

For years, it has been argued that the symbol of education should not be a letter grade but perhaps the human mind and its potential to develop and learn. This is not because student success should be subjective but because grades are not conducive to learning. Beckie Supiano's article "Grades Can Hinder Learning. What Should Professors Use Instead?" presents the argument that grades are not effective tools of measurement of student learning. She says, "[Grades] make it harder for students to think for themselves" (Supiano). Similarly, Stuart

Tannock states in his article, discussing grades in higher education, that democratic educators focus on the fact that grading makes students weaken "the principles of dialogical engagement and critical questioning of authority figures vital to democratic practice" and makes students passive and submissive to their professors (1350). Students fearing failure will most likely try to fit into the cookie-cutter outline of a professor's expectations, thus ignoring his or her own individuality.

Anyone who steps into a writing center for an hour will notice that students coming into it are from diverse backgrounds. Because a writing center is a place where campus cul-

"...the symbol of education should not be a letter grade but perhaps the human mind that has potential to develop and learn."

tures collide, an awareness of how grades, or the hidden curriculum, often assume that the dominant culture's standard is necessary. To avoid a situation where a student tries to "earn" satisfactory grades that Nancy Grimm, author of *Good Intentions: Writing Center Work for Post Modern Times*, claims "come more readily to students from the dominant culture" (29), universities and their writing centers need to acknowledge

how grades often allow for the potential suppression of student individuality in order to assume the dominant culture's standard that almost always gets them the grade they want. Objective grading is not only hurting student individuality, but it is hurting the work of writing centers. Writing centers intend to be



places that promote student growth and offer resources to help students across all levels and cultures think and write more effectively.

Furthermore, the expectations of the professor, the giver of grades, do not just guide the students as they think about and write their papers but also create a framework for how a writing center tutor gives feedback during a tutoring session. One of the things the Weber State University (WSU) Writing Center web page asks is for students to "be familiar with [their] professor's expectations" (Writing Center) before coming in for a session. I believe that the Writing Center asks

this because grades are one of the fundamental reasons why students seek help from writing centers.

Ben Rafoth, a professor of English and writing center director, defines the writing center as a place where students learn "to become better and more thoughtful writers" (77). This definition should be any university writing center's mission because students' success in crafting better and more thoughtful writing will give them the skills necessary for their next writing project to do the same. While students often go to a writing center because they are concerned about the grade they will receive, not solely because they want to improve, it is a bigger issue that most universities consider grading systems that often align with the dominant culture's views as accurate measurements of all student writing and thinking abilities despite the fact that not all students are able to fit in the dominant cultural standard.

If institutions of higher education want their students to become better thinkers and writers, they must realize that grades do not only affect the way students think and write, but they also undermine the writing center's purpose. As "institution run, on-campus centers where students of all disciplines can go to get assistance with any and all of their college writing assignments" (The Final Draft), writing centers should be prepared to help students grow in their thinking and writing, not just fit cookie-cutter expectations.

- Brenda Carrillo

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"READING A BOOK IS LIKE RE-WRITING IT FOR YOURSELF. YOU BRING TO A NOVEL, ANYTHING YOU READ, ALL YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE WORLD. YOU BRING

YOUR HISTORY AND YOU READ IT IN YOUR OWN TERMS." - ANGELA CARTER

Your Climate Change Education is Lacking

Schools are not educating students enough about climate change, but where does Weber State University fit in?

Courtnee Goodwin



There is no denying, or at least there shouldn't be, that climate change is real. The reason that so many people know about climate change is due in part to the way information is communicated. Some people have learned what climate change is by watching news reports or reading about it in journal articles or magazines. Other people have been educated about climate change in their academic institutions. Schools are so critical in educating all students about world issues and because of this, we can look into the topic of climate change and see a rather disturbing trend. Schools are not doing enough to educate students about climate change and the topics surrounding it.

"Universities and colleges have failed to update the general education curriculum and ensure that all students are exposed to education about climate science and climate change."
-David Hess and Brandi Collins

In general, there seems to be a lack of communication about climate change topics, and a separation has been made between climate change and other areas like sustainability (Moser 31,33). It is not just a lack of communication that is disheartening, it is also that people know that they can help reduce climate change, but it is unclear if they are willing to help reduce the change (Moser 35). If this

is the public opinion, then do people think that climate change education even needs to happen?

Studies say yes. National Public Radio (NPR) conducted a survey to see what adults and teachers think of climate change education. Out of the 1007 adults surveyed, 505 of whom are teachers, 806 said climate change should be taught in schools. Out of the group of teachers, 434 said that climate change should be taught in schools, but about half said that they do not cover it in their schools or even mention it to students (Kamenetz). The reason? The majority say that it is because climate change does not relate to their subject material (Kamenetz). Sad to say, but this is not the only study done about climate change education.

In a research project conducted by Petra Molthan-Hill et al., the level of climate change education is not meeting the standards needed to help mitigate the harmful effects of climate change (1093). This also means that not enough diverse academic disciplines are incorporating climate change education into core curriculum (1100). The authors

of the study urged for other universities and institutions to integrate climate change education into core academic activities and encouraged students to think outside the box on how they can participate on changing the current way concepts are being taught (Molthan-Hill et al. 1100).

Another study by David Hess and Brandi Collins shows that out of the 100 schools they surveyed, the percentage of courses that highlighted climate change or global warming is less than 10%, and that the average probability that a student will take at least one climate change course in their college career is 0.17

(1454). This is not an ideal number, and while several academic institutions are not doing enough to incorporate climate change curriculum, there are some that are helping to educate students about our climate crisis.

One academic institution is at the forefront of change. Weber State University is incorporating new policies and procedures to help combat the negative effects of climate change. Located on the Weber State web-

site, there is an entire section dedicated to explaining ways WSU is reducing its carbon footprint and educating students and local communities about climate change ("Sustainability"). There is a current list of faculty and staff that are doing their part to incorporate climate change education within their classroom, and better yet, the courses they are teaching are from several disciplines, not just science based ("Faculty and Staff").

"In both academics and operations, we research and implement sustainable practices on campus, and engage the community through outreach initiatives."
-Weber State University Sustainability



Weber State is also promoting ways to let students get involved by hosting sustainability summits, providing research grants, and creating greener buildings on campus ("Students Get Involved"). By being ahead of the game, and understanding the importance of the climate change issue, Weber State is helping revolutionize how other universities educate about climate change.

Education about climate change is not happening to the level that it needs to. Academic institutions need to implement more programs and curriculum that allow climate change communication to hap-

pen both in the classroom and across campus. Students are the future leaders of the world, and they will have to clean up the mess that has been made before them. Students will be the ones to teach the future generations.

If climate change education was a bigger priority, then more people will be informed about what climate change really is, know what they can do to help the climate situation, and know how they can help educate others. We need to be more proactive in our education so we can know how to fix our climate crisis.

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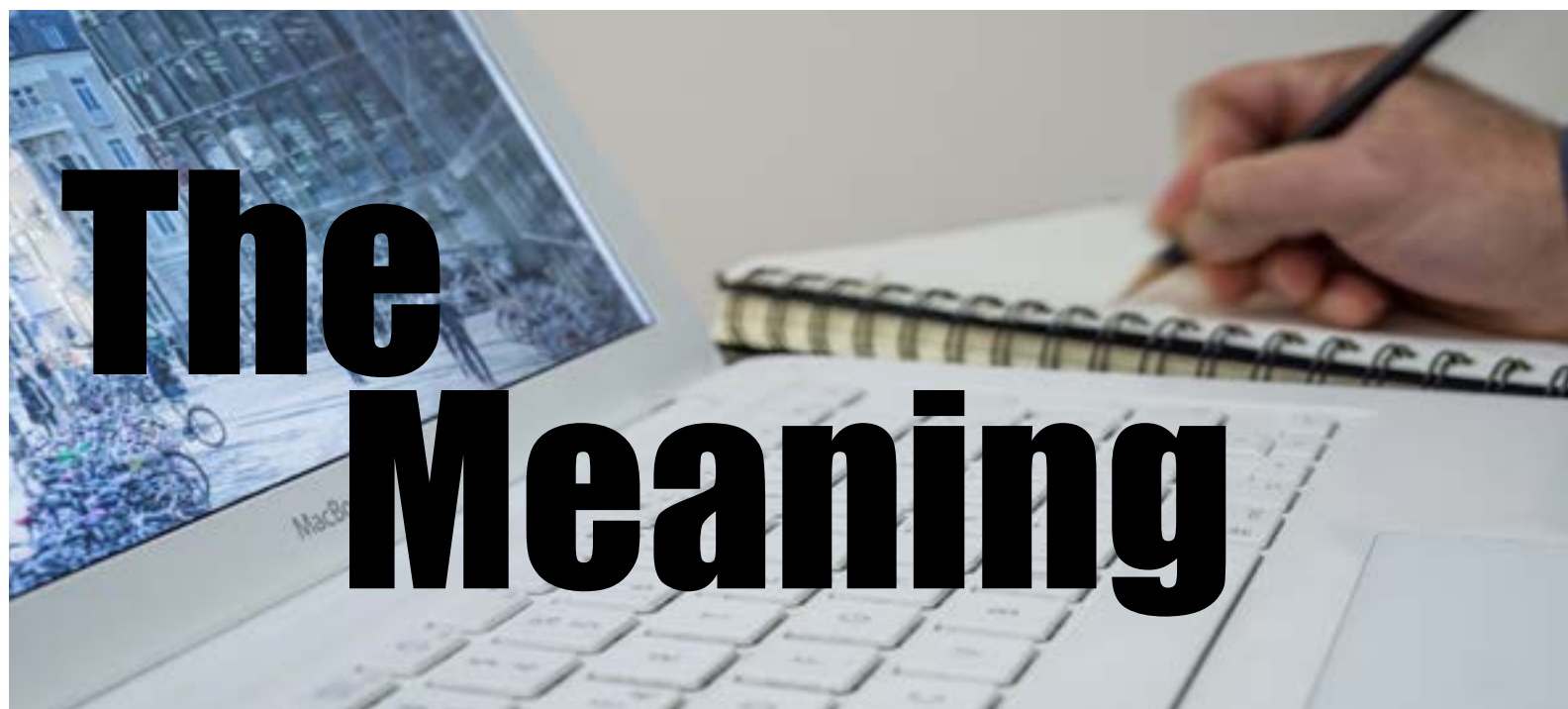
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BY WILLIAM MAXFIELD

As a writing tutor, one of the most common questions I have encountered about any piece of writing is “Is this right?” While, grammatically speaking, there is a correct way to write a sentence, I am not sure any piece of writing can be right or wrong. I believe the more productive question is to ask whether or not a piece of writing is successful. I will argue that newer mediums and forms of communication are just as valid as the traditional academic forms, even if they work best in different contexts.

We should not reject newer forms of communication. One of the most common issues I hear brought up in regards to academic writing is that it is far too formal. I have encountered a lot of students who are not so successful in their classes because they have difficulty reading academic writing.

Most of the time, their problems have one thing in common: the writing is too stuffy, too formal. “No one ever talks like that,” many peers tell me, explaining that “It takes too long to get to the point.” When it comes to actually writing in academics, I would say many students feel as if their vocabulary and language is being restricted. These perceived restrictions become more apparent when compared to the relatively loose structure of online communication. Of course, when discussing forms of communication created by the internet, we must consider the implications. “The Internet” is an all-encompassing term that has a wide variety of meanings and histories (Haigh et al. 143-159). In the discussion about internet-mediated language, it is therefore important to remember that any conclusive statement is generalizing the nature of the internet.

A journal article written

by Lauren Squires made an intriguing point about how online methods of communication are hybridized. Her assessment boils down to this: online communication methods, like texting, are in-between writing and speaking. Each text is responded to in real time, like speech, but drafted as writing. She also explains that this is the origin to common abbreviations (such as lol, brb, ttyl, etc.). They were created to save time to more closely resemble speech (457-492). In texting, it is not so important to have a well-written draft because intent can be clarified within seconds.

A study done by Phil Reed and Emma Reay, psychologists focused on human development, wanted to focus on the ways in which students interact within their online and real lives. Overall, they found students who were literate with the internet had more success in academics than the students who

of Meme-ing

did not (712). So this means that having an internet literacy has noticeable effects on academic performance. On the other hand, Reed and Reay found that frequent use of online platforms can lead to problems like increased anxiety and depression, which decrease academic performance (713).

Students seem to believe their internet literacy is just as important to them as their academic literacy. Back in 2003, Royal Van Horn wrote an article about the benefits of being literate in the online community. His point was that the internet serves as an online library, a virtual tutor, a study group, a guidance counselor, and a virtual backpack (343, 407). He argued that students have access to information like never before, and that being literate with the language of the online community could only be beneficial.

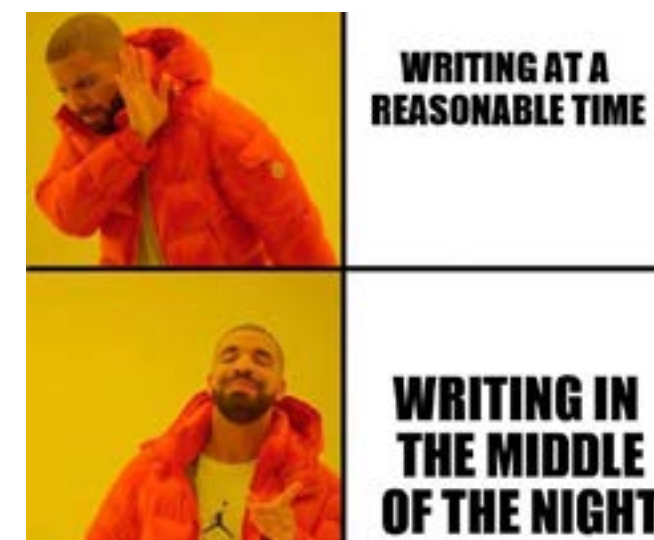
The question I wish to pose is this: why do we have the writing conventions we do? Writing is, at its most basic, a form of communication. When we write, we transcribe ideas and stories into a form that can be truly understood by someone else. While seemingly arbitrary,

writing conventions are simply a structured way to form an idea in order to accomplish a goal: to share information, to persuade, to agree, and to disagree. The internet has brought about the rise of a new form: one that uses different conventions to accomplish the same goals. This is the language of memes. While it may sound a little silly, an in-depth study was conducted about the ways in which memes communicate.

The study found that memes often used similar techniques as nonverbal communication. An image could be substituted for the body, often showing a response to a particular question (Sumeisey et al. 83-87). This supports the idea that the language of the internet exists in a hybrid space between writing and speaking.

If we judge an act of communication by its success in relaying a message, memes

are incredibly successful. While I am not arguing for students to be able to submit a series of memes for their final paper, I believe their



meaning and utility should be acknowledged. It is not a threat to convention to have a new form. After all, academic convention was once brand new itself. Any form of communication that gets its intended meaning across is valid. They might not apply to every situation, but memes have a practical application

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To Order A Border?



A hard border would negatively affect the economics, politics, and education of Great Britain and Ireland

When the United Kingdom withdrew from the treaty that they had with the European Union, lawmakers passed a temporary plan to allow the border between Ireland and Northern Ireland to stay open while they worked out a more permanent deal, but politicians still have not come up with a solution to the problem. Not only would having a hard border be devastating to all involved parties in many ways, but it would have far-reaching effects on other countries as well. A soft border should be implemented between the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom because of the negative economic, political, and educational changes that would occur as a result of the border.

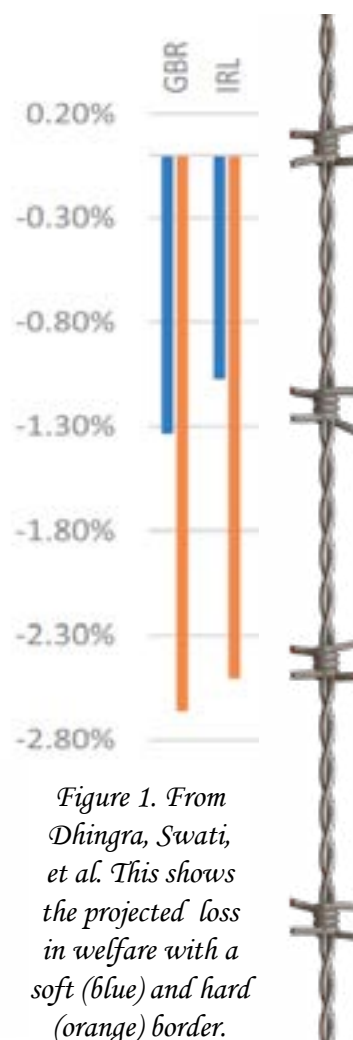
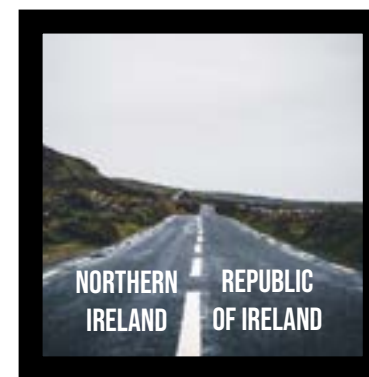


Figure 1. From Dhingra, Swati, et al. This shows the projected loss in welfare with a soft (blue) and hard (orange) border.

A hard border will hurt the UK and the Republic of Ireland economically. The population density of the UK is nearly four times the population density of the Republic of Ireland, which means that much of the UK's food production comes from the Republic of Ireland. 11% of the food and animals imported to the UK come from the Republic of Ireland, which is second only to imports from the Netherlands (Ward). The UK currently imports more than half of its food, so a hard border will raise food prices in the UK significantly. Beef prices alone are anticipated to increase up to 29% with a hard border (Barrie). This could be devastating to cities such as London that already have sky-high food prices. A hard border would also make it more difficult for the farmers in the Republic of Ireland to sell their products

to the UK and make a decent profit.

According to an article from Science Direct, the projected change for each of five predetermined



trade factors will have a negative impact if politicians decide on a hard border with Brexit. Those five factors are monetary cost, time in transit, probability of encountering a delay, hours of delay of deliveries, and wait time of departing products (Vega). Although many of these factors are related, each factor has a different impact on trade. All of these factors will change negatively if a hard border is implemented between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland or the UK.

Also, a hard border would upset the fragile political peace that exists throughout Ireland. Ireland has had major political turmoil and wars going on almost constantly for hundreds of years. They were under British rule for

nearly 800 years. After several attempted and failed revolutions, the Republic of Ireland was formed in 1921. However, the peace was still rocky. With a border now separating Northern Ireland from the Republic of Ireland, many of the Irish felt that the border was still infringing on their lives. The changes in the border led to more problems throughout the next few decades for the people who were both north and south of the border. After nearly forty years of fragile peace and political unease, a period of time called The Troubles began. The Troubles was a series of uprisings and political disturbances from 1969 through the 1990s, which ended in a precarious peace arranged for the people in an agreement called the Good Friday Agreement (Holder). Since then, there has been a delicate peace. Having a hard border could open old wounds and send Ireland into chaos and contention once again.

According to Debi Sheridan, a member of Weber State's faculty who has lived in England and Scotland, not only has the issue of a hard border affected Ireland



and Northern Ireland, but it will also impact other areas, like Scotland. One way that Brexit and the border will impact Scotland is through education. Scotland has one of the best higher education systems in the world. Up until now, it has been easy for students from the EU to go to school in Scotland. With a hard border, the students from the EU and the Republic of Ireland could not complete their education in Scottish universities with the same ease that they have been able to under the soft border. Instead of allowing a hard border, the UK should keep the border open between the Republic of Ireland and the UK.

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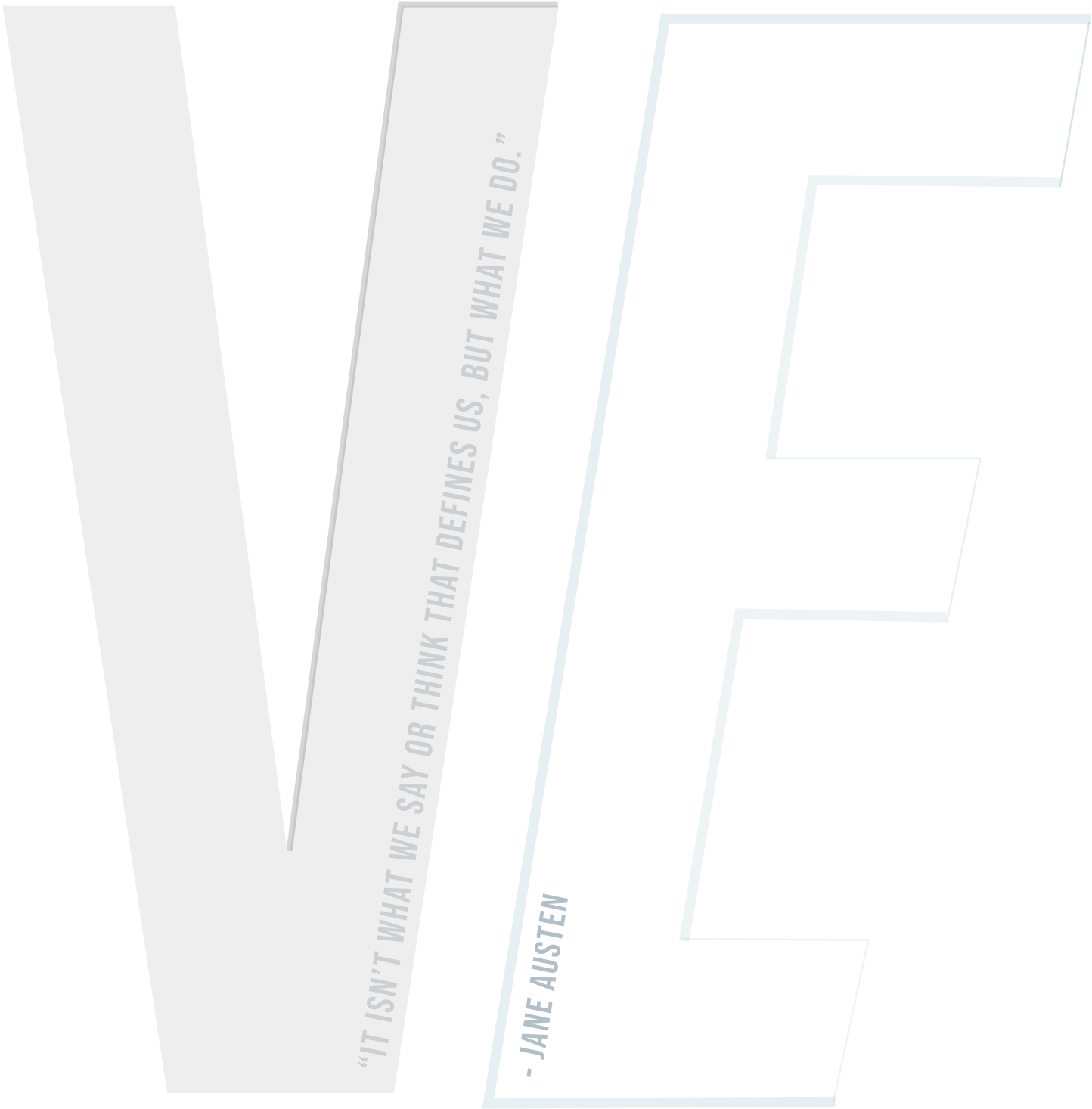
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Helping Students Who Have Learning ~~Disabilities~~ Differences



Sarah Taylor
WSU Writing Center Tutor

Recent studies indicate that more students with learning disabilities (LD) such as dyslexia, ADHD, and ADD are enrolling in postsecondary education (Newman et al. 6). Unfortunately, studies also indicate that they are usually ill prepared for university curriculum (Hadley 20). In Hazel Denhart's study, students with learning disabilities complained that they often invest more effort with very little result (483-485). Nine of eleven interviewed students reported working longer on projects than their classmates; four remarked that their efforts went unnoticed, and eight feared that the final "mediocre quality" did not reflect their time and effort (Denhart 490). As a result, students with learning disabilities have, on average, a lower graduation rate and a higher dropout rate than students without disabilities (Hadley 20, Denhart 483).

These statistics reflect the challenges that students face when accessing disability

resources. While 98% of high school students with learning disabilities were enrolled in support programs, "only 26% did so in college" (Newman et al. 14). During a 2011 to 2012 study, only eleven percent of female and male undergraduates voluntarily reported a disability (United States Department of Education). Many students are unwilling to use campus resources for their disability because they fear or have endured discrimination (Denhart 491). For example, multiple students with learning



disabilities feared faculty members would interpret learning aides as cheating (Denhart 491-492). When asked how she felt about using campus resources for her dyslexia, Hannah Taylor (a sophomore at Weber State University) replied, "I have not been having a good experience. I feel it's because it's not really tailored to my disability." She also believes that asking for accommodations wastes others' time, so she rarely uses them. Instead, she puts more effort into studying.

Due to the negative experiences and anxiety associated with using resources specifically for learning disabilities, many students avoid disclosing their diagnosed disability by relying on other support systems instead. A 2019 study discovered that "students with LD were more than twice as likely to access universally available supports (53%) than disability supports (26%)" (Newman et al. 13). Despite her anxiety over disability resources, Hannah Taylor commented, "Every time I get

an essay, I go to the Writing Center." She even visits the center "three times per paper" because she believes, "If I turn in my essay without going to the Writing Center, it's going to fail." Luckily, studies indicate that general support systems *do* help students with learning disabilities and increase their chances of graduating (Newman et al. 7).

Because these students are more likely to rely on general support systems, I argue that support systems like writing centers should help increase tutors' awareness of students with learning disabilities. First, tutors should be mindful of the unintended consequences that the label "disability" can have on students. Denhart states, "The label of disability spreads from single-task incompetence across one's totality obliterating other quite sound abilities" (484). The result can cripple academic success, so tutors should begin thinking about dyslexia, ADD, and ADHD as "learning differences" instead. Such a



term reframes the situation into something more manageable and less debilitating for the student (Denhart 486).

Changing tutors' mindsets is important because students with learning differences often feel self-conscious: an emotion that inevitably impacts tutoring sessions. In Wanda Hadley's in-depth study, a student diagnosed with dyslexia, ADHD, and dysgraphia complained he did not receive adequate help "constructing" his papers from his university's writing center (as qtd. in Hadley 22). Hadley indicates that some of his difficulties might have resulted from his self-consciousness and a strained tutor-student relationship (24-26).

Other students have similar concerns. Hannah Taylor said that the label "learning disability" was not embarrassing, but the mistakes still were. She doubts tutors' assurances that mistakes in papers are normal because she believes her writing is "not normal." As a result, she remains self-conscious with tutors she does not know but feels more comfortable with a familiar tutor. Like Hannah, ten out of eleven surveyed students believed facing obstacles was easier if they could identify with others more willing to unconventionally think around the problem: a mentality tutors can keep in mind during tutoring sessions (Denhart 492).

Overall, these students' experiences indicate that the tutor-student relationship is crucial to their success. Due to the social stigma and self-consciousness associated with the "disability" label, more students are turning to other support systems for help. As a result, tutors will need to know how to approach the hurdles caused by learning differences. Students with learning differences probably will not tell their tutor outright, which poses a unique challenge for tutors; however, tutors can still help by avoiding the pitfalls of social stigma, creating an understanding environment, and approaching students as if they have their own unique learning differences, not disabilities.



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“FOR ME WRITING IS LIGHT, A RADIANCE THAT CAPTURES EVERYTHING IN A FINE PROFILE. THIS LIGHT SEARCHES AND ILLUMINATES, IT IS A SAFE PLACE

FROM WHICH TO UNCOVER THE EMOTIONAL HAVOC OF OUR EXPERIENCE. LIGHT IS A BRIGHT WARMTH WHICH HEALS. WRITING CAN BE THIS KIND OF LIGHT.”
- YVONNE VERA

EDITOR'S

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First and foremost, our publication staff would like to thank the Weber State tutors whose articles are included in this issue. Without their hard work researching and designing or their willingness to make continuing edits, especially with the challenges of our current circumstances, we would not have been able to put out such an impressive edition this year. Visually, it's clear that each piece was carefully designed and their content reflects valuable insight into topics that are increasingly relevant in an ever-developing world where education and the issues surrounding it have such a profound impact on our day-to-day lives.

A special thank you to Sarah Taylor for her diligent work copy editing submissions, citing sources, and providing not one but two thoughtful editorial pieces. This year, we remained committed to our staff's decision last year to begin publishing digital content that continues to be significantly from previous editions of Verbal Equinox. Our new emphasis on digital literacy has come with a variety of challenges, both anticipated and not, and her work tracking down photo sources and reviewing copyright information was critical in ensuring that our publication continues to be successful even as the world of online media becomes progressively more complex.

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Mckenzie Williams
Editor in Chief