We Dig Our New Digs!

The Center for Writing Excellence offers the same services and support you have come to depend on, now in Memorial Hall Room 103.

We celebrated with an open house the second week of fall classes, Sept. 1-5. Many of you stopped by to eat, drink, and check out our new setup.

Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

It’s hard to believe we’ve made it to the end of another academic year, and what an exciting, inspiring year it’s been! We’ve moved, developed new writing resources, and connected with so many of you in the Writing Lab and via our new social media pages.

In this issue of Writers Bloc you can read a little about the projects we’ve been working on, glimpse into our lives outside the Writing Lab, and learn a few of our favorite writing tips.

You’ll write, right?

Cynthia

Cynthia Willmert, Writing Associate
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Look for red boxes throughout this issue for quick tips!

Quick Tip: Active Voice

In general, active voice keeps writing interesting and ensures the emphasis is where it should be—on the subject.

Read all about using active voice on our blog, Writing Wednesdays, blogs.semo.edu/writinglab.
News and Notes

Originality and Grademark

Need help preventing plagiarism or with grammar? We’ve added new TurnItIn features for our online submissions: Originality and GradeMark.

Originality
Any time you use information or ideas that you got from a source (including the Internet), you need to cite that source, even if you paraphrased. If you’re not familiar with incorporating and crediting sources in your writing, it can be difficult to do it correctly. That’s why we now offer Originality checking.

Grademark
Upload a paper, and within minutes the grammar is checked for you. It takes you word by word, phrase by phrase through mistakes on your paper, pointing out where it thinks you need to make a correction, as well as how to fix it. Click on a link within each suggestion for more information about the grammar rule used.

Helix Winners Announced
Congratulations to our Helix: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Research 2014-2015 winners, who each receive $75!
- Rakeda Biggers, undergraduate writing
- Sarah Vohsen, graduate writing
- Alyssa Johnes, design

Taken for Granite
How do I format dialogue?

Jeremy: Dialogue itself is pretty simple—you put the words in quotation marks and change paragraphs whenever you change speakers.

Standard paragraph rules apply too—so if the speaker changes topic, you change paragraphs; however, in this case you do not close the quotation marks on the first paragraph, but you do open them on the second.

Internal dialogue is a different matter altogether, though, and it’s largely a matter of style. The key here is to simply be consistent—most authors italicize internal thoughts (but not narration!) while others place them in quotations with a “he thought” afterward. As long as you’re consistent, you’ll be fine.

Mickey: Something else to think about is dialogue tags. Do your characters say something, or do they proclaim or vociferate it? I’m from the school that says ... well ... says is the way to go. It’s unobtrusive—the reader will hardly notice it. Vociferate they’re going to notice.

Exceptions? Of course. Maybe your character interrupted someone or sighed their words—but unless the tag is descriptive enough to add an emotional element not present in the actual words, I would avoid getting too fancy.

Our Blog Is Live!

Have you ever wondered about a particular grammar rule? Are you unsure when to use certain types of punctuation? We address your grammar concerns on our new blog, Writing Wednesdays, blogs.semo.edu/writinglab.

Quick Tip: Your/You’re
Your is possessive. You’re is a contraction of you and are.

If you are unsure which to use in a sentence, try to change the word to you are.

If it makes sense, you’re is what you want. If it doesn’t, choose your instead.
Tutor-Traveler: Addie Scoggin

“When I write, my heart’s desires become more aware to me,” Addie Scoggin says. “Many times I don’t realize that something bothers me until the pen in my right hand says so.”

The Park Hills, Missouri, native writes consistently in her diary, which she has kept since fifth grade. “If someone were to pick it up, I would be completely vulnerable. My diary contains everything from fifth grade crushes to my experience as a graduate student.”

At Southeast Addie is pursuing professional writing. She says, “The best aspect of writing is seeing my thoughts flesh themselves out when transferred to paper. My mind contains so many ideas—I imagine it looks something like alphabet soup.”

After graduation Addie plans to teach English internationally. “I wouldn’t be surprised to find myself living permanently outside the United States. I want to jump on an airplane and see where it takes me. I want to travel to a foreign land with different traditions and do what I’m best at.”

She says her love of travel first became real when she began mingling with international students on campus. “I have made dozens of friends from all over the world here. I get invited to their homes to eat their exotic food and listen to stories of their cultures. They have a zest for life that is unparalleled.”

It seems Addie has that same zest for life. We look forward to hearing about her adventures overseas.

Brittany’s Got Talent

Soprano Brittany Graham’s singing can often be heard drifting down the halls of Memorial Hall. The vocal performance major, who regularly performs with the University and Chamber choirs, Studio Jazz Ensemble, and Southeast Guitar Ensemble on campus, always has a song in her head and something to practice.

“Singing is something very near and dear to me,” she says. “I love being on stage and becoming someone else through song. It’s so awesome to be the bridge that connects the audience to words or text.”

Brittany connected her audience to 14 pieces in English, French, German, Italian, and Portuguese during her senior recital Nov. 20 in the Robert F. and Gertrude L. Shuck Music Recital Hall and to the part of Amahl’s mother in the one-act opera, “Amahl and the Night Visitors,” Jan. 23 in the Donald C. Bedell Performance Hall.

Brittany’s musical talents didn’t begin with her voice but with the piano, which she started playing at age 5 in her hometown of Cape Girardeau. She still plays from time to time to learn a part or for vocal warm-ups.

When not performing or practicing, Brittany dabbles in makeup and fashion and spends time with her family and friends. Often she can be found with her nephews, who are 4 and 5. “I love kids,” she says. “We like going to the park and watching movies. And they absolutely love when I take them to Chuck E. Cheese’s.”

After graduation Brittany plans to attend graduate school to further hone her talent. “I’ve always known I’ve wanted to be a professional singer,” she says. “I cannot imagine doing anything else with my life.”

Special Thanks to Lynne Dozier

This summer Southeast alumna Lynne Dozier visited the University for the first time in many years to make a donation to the Center for Writing Excellence in the name of her former English professor, Dr. Bierck, who she says was a great inspiration to her.

The CWE has since been able to hire interns to assist in the Writing Lab.

Dozier recently published her first full-length writing manual, The Writer’s Voice: 18 Lessons to Improve Writing. It can be borrowed at Kent Library, and free tutorials from the book are available on our CWE Spin with Lynne carousel.

Quick Tip: I.e./E.g.

I.e. means “that is (to say),” and e.g. means “for example.”

A great way to remember the difference is to think about the first letter in each abbreviation.

i.e. = in other words  
E.g. = example given
Professional Development

Leadership
Jennifer Weiss and Marge Phillips attended the International Writing Centers Association/National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing Joint Conference 2014 at Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort Oct. 30 to Nov. 1 in Orlando, Florida.

Tutors
Rakeda Biggers completed an internship with the Southeast Missouri State University Press in fall 2014, and her poem, “Baby,” is being published by Journey student literary magazine.

Jason Branham, Samantha Carano, and Paula McCormack served on a panel on the New Socratic Seminar in Freshman Composition for the Radical Writes Conference March 12-14 at Arkansas State University.

Carano this fall will begin her new role as adjunct instructor in the Department of English at Southeast.

Casey Hinkebein presented her research proposal, “Application of Realia and Technology in the ELL Classroom,” at the TESOL 2015 International Convention and English Language Expo March 25-28 in Toronto, Canada. She won “Best Poster” at Southeast’s 23rd Annual Student Research Conference. She will graduate in May with a Master of Arts in TESOL, after which she will teach for four weeks in July and August through We Teach in China.

Alex Hughes will graduate in May with a Master of Arts in English: Professional Writing.

Daugette and Hughes presented “Spiraling Through Narrative Spandrels: An Exploration of Building on the Unplanned in Practice and Function” at the Radical Writes Conference March 12-14 at Arkansas State University.

Jessica Koon attended the Radical Writes Conference March 12-14 at Arkansas State University and the National PCA/ACA National Conference April 1-4 in New Orleans. She is graduating in May with a Master of Arts in English: English Studies.

Erin Miller will graduate in May with a Master of Arts in English: Professional Writing.

Clare Paniccia presented at the Radical Writes Conference at Arkansas State University. Her poem, “Sunday Series,” is being published in Pine Hills Review. This summer Paniccia will graduate with her Master of Arts in English: Professional Writing, and she was accepted into a doctoral program with a focus in creative writing at Oklahoma State University.

Addie Scoggin moderated Southeast’s Faulkner and Hurston Conference Oct. 23-25.

Student Workers
Ashley Bankston is now a Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program scholar. She was also recently accepted into the Goldfarb School of Nursing at Barnes-Jewish College BSN Accelerated Option program.

Brittany Graham is graduating in May with her Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance.

Michael Valadez will intern this summer with Motion PR in Chicago.

Quick Tip: Number/Amount
A number is countable, but an amount is not.
Example: cups of water
You can count cups but not water. Therefore, you can have a number of cups, each with an amount of water in it.

Alexandra Holland is graduating in May with a Master of Arts in English: English Studies.

Kelly Jackson is graduating in May with a Master of Arts in TESOL.