



Instructionally Related Activities Report Form

SPONSOR: Kathleen Klompfen

DEPARTMENT: University Writing Center

ACTIVITY TITLE: 2014 Southern California Writing Centers Association Tutor Conference
Irvine, CA

DATE OF ACTIVITY: March 1, 2014

A. PLEASE ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. **Brief Program Description.** The ninth annual Southern California Writing Centers Association Tutors Conference was held at UC Irvine, in North San Diego County, and will be attended by over two hundred tutors from colleges and universities across Southern California. The event is unique in that it is designed especially for writing tutors—the tutors choose the sessions, lead the discussions, and then return to their respective institutions to disseminate what they have learned. Nine CI tutors presented at this year's conference which provided them not only with a good chance for tutors to meet one another around Southern California and share tutoring strategies, but it also afforded them an opportunity to include conference participation on their curriculum vitas.
2. **Relation of the IRA Program to Course Offerings.** Writing tutors assist as in-class tutors in several courses: ENGL 102, 103, 105, and 107 are a few examples. It is important to note that in order for tutors to work in the University Writing Center they need to take a tutoring course, ENGL 329; attending this conference relates directly to the work of the course. This year, the tutors presented on this topic of in-class tutoring and on the impact working with first year writers has on their own writing. Both sessions were well attended with over 15 participants at each session. The experience of attending an academic conference and the knowledge the writing tutors gain for this conference in particular will expose them to a larger academic community. Their experiences at the conference helped them to realize that writing tutoring is not merely an isolated activity that takes place on our campus, but it is an enterprise that is grounded in theory and is taking place across Southern California and worldwide. Finally, learning how to be a more effective reader of others and ones own writing is vital and this conference helped the tutors who attended to do so with more confidence—regardless of the course.
3. **Strengths of the Activity.** This is an excellent conference for the tutors. As a member of the planning committee—I chaired the proposal review subcommittee this year—I am able not only to influence the design of the conference but also mentor CI and other tutors as they prepare for it. Particular strengths include:
 - Audience for Conference—the tutors are the specific intended audience for this event.
 - Range of Attendees—tutors met peers from over 20 Southern California (and two out of state)
 - Experience of preparing for the conference. Tutors were all very engaged in preparing their presentations, they spend at least 10 hours each working to create effective presentations. This increased their knowledge of tutoring and their professionalism.
 - Tutors learned a great deal from other sessions and are improving their own tutoring from those sessions.
4. **Activity Weaknesses.** There were few weaknesses regarding the event.
 - Weak opening session.
 - It was a very long day for us. We left campus at 7:15 a.m. and returned at approximately 8:15 p.m.
 - UC Irvine is a large campus, so there were long distances to trek between sessions.
 - Poor signage.



5. **Suggested Improvements.** I would suggest that IRA consider funding students to attend conferences at which they are not presenting. The only way for the CI tutors to attend the conference was through IRA funds and those require a role as a presenter. While the process of preparing for sessions was an excellent one for tutors, it is a heavy burden for newer tutors to have to present at an event they have never attended and on topics about which they are not entirely confident.
6. **Sponsor Learning.** I learned that while there is a great deal of preparation and foresight necessary to take tutors to the conference, it was definitely worthwhile. Tutors learned a great deal, they deepened their rapport with one another and gained valuable presentation skills. I hope this can be an annual event for the center. I also hope to host the conference here at CI in the near future.
7. **Students Responses.** Please see attached.
8. **Budget.** Please see attached.

B. **ATTENDEE LIST:** Please see attached.

C. **IMAGES FROM THE ACTIVITY:**



The whole CI Group at the Conference (current tutors & me)



Audience for the plenary



Presentation Preparation