



# Dissertation & Thesis Support: Writing Groups and Resources

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# Outline of Workshop

- Writing Group Types (00:56)
- Writing Group Best Practices (04:45)
- Feedback Best Practices (11:30)
- Graduate Writing Center Resources (14:15)
- Wellness Resources (17:00)
- Other Tips and Suggestions (18:55)



# Writing Group Types

## 3 Basic Types:

- 1) Support/accountability groups
- 2) Groups that write together
- 3) Peer review groups
  
- 4) Hybrid Groups



# Support/Accountability Groups

## Basic Components

- Regular (weekly) meeting
- Check in about progress
- Discuss current work
- Discuss goals for the next week

## UCLA Counseling Center Groups

- Contact the Center (CAPS)
- Clinician led
- Short interview to participate



# Groups that Write Together

## Basic Components

- Regular meeting (weekly, biweekly, monthly)
- Specific time and location
- Most of the time spent writing/working
- Protocols for communication among members

## UCLA Options

- Reserve rooms at one of the libraries
- UCLA or GWC led options



# Peer Review Group Pros + Cons

## Benefits of Peer Review Groups

- Accountability
- Regular feedback
- Social support
- Socialization

## Challenges

- Establishing protocols
- Maintaining commitment



# Setting Up and Running Groups

## Membership

- 3 – 8 people and size considerations
- Similar fields, but maybe not too close
- Similarity of stage
- Similarity of document
- Minimum period of commitment
- Adding members



# Setting Up and Running Groups

## Meetings Time, Place, and Schedule

- Set meeting place
- Set meeting time and length
- Schedule one quarter at a time
- Procedures for notifying of absence
- Procedures for changing schedule





# Setting Up and Running Groups

## Meeting Roles

- Scheduling
- Reserving space
- Email reminders
- Time-keeping at meetings
- Printing copies
- Other tasks or duties



# Peer Review Group Set Up

## Meeting Structure

- Establish protocols for sharing writing
  - How many present each time
  - How much writing each time
  - When to send writing
- Structure for giving feedback
  - Turn-taking or free-form
  - Time limits
- Time to socialize (before or after)



# Peer Review Group Set Up

## Meeting Rules & Responsibilities

- Deadline for sharing writing
- Minimum and maximum pages
- Guidelines for feedback (oral, written)
- Legitimate excuse for missing meeting
- Attend when not presenting
- Confidentiality



# Peer Review Group Set Up

## Meeting Rules & Responsibilities

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# Feedback Best Practices

## Preparing for feedback

- Tell others what kind of feedback you want
- Take notes but be efficient
- Pay attention to what you like
- Write a summary statement of impressions
- Organize feedback from big to small issues



# Feedback Best Practices

## Giving Constructive Feedback

- Start with the positives
- Speak as a reader “when I read this passage, I wondered about the connection...”
- Ask questions for clarification “What do you mean by this statement...How does this passage relate to the argument?”
- Be specific



# Feedback Best Practices

## Receiving Feedback Constructively

- Accept compliments
- Try not to be defensive
- Keep track of feedback (possibly record)
- Listen to feedback before responding
- If you don't agree with feedback, try to understand how the reader got confused
- Ask clarifying questions



# Graduate Writing Center Resources

- Writing Appointments  
<https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/Appointments>
- In-Person Workshops  
<https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/Workshops>
- Workshop Videos  
[https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/workshop\\_videos](https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/workshop_videos)
- Writing Group Support





# Graduate Writing Center Resources

- Thesis/Dissertation Support
  - <https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/Programs>
- Master's Thesis Support
  - Mentoring Program (Humanities & Social Sciences)
  - STEM Thesis Writing Retreat
- Dissertation Programs
  - Humanities Prospectus, Dissertation
  - Social Science Proposal, Dissertation
  - STEM Proposal Workshop, Dissertation Retreat



# Wellness Resources

- UCLA Counseling Center  
<https://www.counseling.ucla.edu/>  
<https://www.counseling.ucla.edu/services/group-treatment>
- UCLA Resilience Programs  
<https://www.resilience.ucla.edu/>
- UCLA Healthy Campus Initiative  
<https://mindwell.healthy.ucla.edu/resources/sleep-well/>  
<https://healthy.ucla.edu/events/>



# Wellness Resources

- UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center
  - <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/>
  - <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/classes>
  - <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/day-long>
  - <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/free-drop-in-meditation>
- UCLA Free Meditations Online
  - <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/audio>
- UCLA Mindful App
  - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/ucla-mindful/id1459128935?ls=1>



# Final Suggestions

- Be proactive about your well-being
- Organization is everything
- Regularly monitor progress
- Look at dissertations in ProQuest
- Learn about the writing process
- Learn about writing in your field



# Contact us or stop by

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