

Writing Center Design:

Fostering Creativity in a Rhetorically-Sound Space

“...we have a lot of groups here in our location often.... there is a lot that happens here that is not just one-to-one consultations. Our goal here is for learning to happen. Sometimes this means giving individuals a space to work and not be bothered, sometimes it means consultations (which is what we probably think of most often), sometimes it means group work, sometimes it means whole classes coming together in a space that is different just for the sake of having a fresh place to work and think. Or maybe it just means getting people to a place where they feel like you are open and inviting...Without being preachy, the hospitality of the location has really set the tone for how we are received on campus. Student groups, neighboring offices and departments, and student writers are all looking for a place to be comfortable to do the work that they are passionate about.... [L]ogistically it may become a challenge to work in an open space where multiple things are taking place[.]... [T]here may be a lot of positive that could come from the diversity of the location.”

Chambers, Evan. “Re: directors with an office in the Center.” *Writing Center Mailing List*. wCenter, 26 Jan. 2012. Web. 2 Feb. 2012.

From tutoring space to a multi-function space, there's a myriad of ways to design a writing center. Most centers fall somewhere in between these two designs, and they both have benefits and drawbacks. It's important to note, however, that one isn't necessarily more useful or better than another because the “success” of any space is determined by how that space needs to function. The intended function of a space should be determined by the school and department mission statements. The space's audiences should also be carefully considered.

Our mission is geared toward one-to-one tutoring .

- Yes: Tutoring Space
- No: Multi-Function Space

We want students to use our space only for writing-related tasks.

- Yes: Tutoring Space
- No: Multi-Function Space

We want our center to inspire collaboration among its users.

- Yes: Multi-Function Space
- No: Tutoring Space