

Helping Your Students Make Effective Use of the Writing Studio

Students need some guidance in how to make effective use of the variety of services offered on LCC's campus, including the Writing Studio. As an instructor, you can play a vital role in this process by helping students better understand our services as they prepare for an appointment.

Preparation counts. Encourage students to bring their written assignments and notes about any additional instructions you have given during class. Also encourage them to bring any relevant course materials, including textbooks and writing handbooks that you have required them to purchase. Our staff routinely help students with documentation and other mechanics issues by demonstrating how to look up appropriate examples in their course textbooks.

Visit early. Many students think they must bring a written draft of a paper to the Writing Studio, but this is not true. On the contrary, we encourage them to visit during the pre-writing stage to discuss the assignment requirements, brainstorm topic ideas and develop a plan or outline.

Visit often. Writing assistance is especially helpful for students who visit the Writing Studio multiple times at various stages during the creative process. A single visit often does not allow sufficient time to address everything.

It's *your* writing. Encourage your students to take ownership of their Writing Studio appointments and subsequent revisions. Students are not obligated to use every suggestion we make. The Writing Studio relinquishes control over post-visit revisions the writer chooses to make. Our goal is to help students make good decisions about their own work and to become confident, independent writers.

Shop around. Students can request a specific staff member or request *not to work with a specific person*. We take no offense at this request because we know that just as instructors have different personalities and teaching styles, so do our staff. Sometimes students need to work with a variety of people before they find an optimal fit.

“I think my teacher said . . .” When students visit the Writing Studio for assistance with revision, encourage them to bring any written feedback they have received from you. It is very helpful for us to see exactly what you have commented on so they can assist the student with interpretation and application of the feedback.

“What was that?” Feedback from both instructors and the Writing Studio is open to interpretation. What we suggest and what the student hears and internalizes might not always be congruent. Please be aware of this and encourage students to take notes during their appointment to minimize confusion and produce a tangible point of reference.

Back to you. We are familiar with the general requirements for some courses but not with instructor-specific requirements or preferences. We therefore rely on students' understanding of these requirements and might need to refer the student back to you with specific questions.

Misguided expectations. If students tell you they visited the Writing Studio for an appointment and did not find their session helpful, it might be useful to ask about their expectations. Sometimes, well-intentioned students ask us to edit a paper or predict a grade, which our staff are not permitted to do. If the student does not fully understand why these requests cannot be fulfilled, a follow-up conversation with you can provide further clarification.

Talk to us. We encourage feedback—both positive and critical—from students and faculty. If a student approaches you with a complaint, please encourage them to come talk to us. If you would rather bring the concern to our attention on behalf of the student, please try to get as many details as you can about the student's visit, who they worked with and what happened.

Requiring visits. If you have required that your students visit the Writing Studio, please specify for them whether you have a preference for a specific type of assistance. Assistance formats include: guided independent work in the Studio, 25- or 50-minute face-to-face appointments with English Tutors and Writing Assistants, and 50-minute online appointments with English Tutors. If you are requiring students to schedule appointments, please give them as much advanced notice as possible. The availability of these appointments is limited.

Prove it. If you are requiring students to provide evidence that they visited the Writing Studio, please remind them to record essential details about their visit while they are here. We recommend that, at minimum, you ask them for the date and time of their appointment, the first name of the staff member who assisted them, and a brief description of the feedback they received. Instructors can contact the Writing Studio for verification of a student visit if confirmation is needed. Staff members are not permitted to sign their names to student papers.