When you, the writer, come to the Writing Center, my goal is to facilitate a conference that is **writer-centered** (as opposed to tutor-centered). What this means is that the relationship between the writer and the tutor should be non-evaluative – or, to put it another way, collaborative. Effective tutoring results through dialogic relationships, where writers and tutors – who are also writers themselves – converge for meaningful conversation and dialogue. Working collaboratively, writers can discover effective strategies and approaches to writing that enhance the overall quality of written communication.

My tutoring philosophy challenges the misconception that tutors exist to “fix” writers’ writing. Instead, I view myself as a facilitator of the writing process. My immediate goal in a writing conference is to help writers realize – and then enhance – ideas and insights that are already present. Because writing is an ongoing process, my hope is that writers will come back to the Writing Center to meet with me or any of the other highly competent writing tutors. The overall goal, whether a writer comes to the Writing Center one time or ten times, is to build a depository of **skills, strategies, and processes of discernment and self-understanding**. An effective Writing Center is one that aims to develop **writerly confidence** in writers of all levels, from beginners to the advanced. Working alongside writers has helped my own writing, as I too strive to improve the effectiveness of my writing on a daily basis. While I help writers learn about writing processes and understand their own writing strengths and weaknesses, I also relate what goes on in conferences to my own writing, and for that very reason, I find my job to be very rewarding.

A typical conference with me entails a very relaxed and welcome atmosphere. I remember when I was struggling with my own writing and how I was very reluctant to have others read my texts. I can empathize with that sentiment of vulnerability so I strive to make the writer feel comfortable, first by greeting her/him warmly and laying the foundation of a cooperative relationship. I believe this is vital. I then proceed to what I refer to as my Conference In-Take process – questions about the assignment, about the writer’s concerns, about what kind of feedback the writer has received recently and in the past regarding writing practices, and other pertinent information that is situational to the writer, the meeting, and the genre of the assignment. This helps me set a starting point for the conference. I want each writer to feel that his/her concerns are addressed, but if a writer is unsure of where to begin, which can be a very common side effect of the pressures of written communication, I offer direction and guidance. I rely on the **asking of questions** to stimulate the dialogic process; however, questions do not always have to have answers. Sometimes, questions can serve as a railroad switch, diverting our attention to matters **associated** with the task at hand, ensuring that we do not get too bogged down in meeting pre-formulated objectives. Basically, when a writer schedules a conference with me, she/he can expect an **individualistically tailored** appointment in which we work together to come up with a conference agenda. And of course, the writer can call an audible at any time, and can be assured that my agenda is her/his agenda.