



the Collage

Kutztown University's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Apr. 2019

THE WRITING CENTER

Have you heard of the Writing Center? Do you know what services it offers to students?

The KUWC is an on-campus resource that helps students expand their writing abilities. The tutors can help with any part of the writing process, from brainstorming and outlining to research and citations. Not only do they help with academic writing, but personal writing such as novels and poetry as well. It sounds like an excellent resource, but what is it like meeting with a tutor?

I went to the Writing Center and sat in on a session with UWC manager Eddie Probasco (who's completing his master's degree in English) and a student. By the time I left, I was proud of the Writing Center and what they do. Let me tell you what happened.

The student came in with their laptop, and said the assignment was to write a narrative about an event that changed their lives. The student had written part of the body of the essay and wanted to see if they had a good start.

To begin, Eddie asked to see the assignment sheet and requirements, and then read the student's piece out loud. As Eddie read through the material, he would ask the student questions for clarification and suggest stronger words to better convey the student's point. The two worked together as a team to settle on phrasing that was still in the student's voice.

Eddie encouraged the student as they made changes, saying things like, "I like it a lot so far," and "You tell me if I'm wrong." Eddie guided the student in the right direction while the student took the reins.

Eddie also suggested adding punctuation marks, such as the em-dash and the colon to condense run-on sentences. The student questioned why and when to use those marks, and Eddie explained how they would fit in the student's writing and came up with other examples to further demonstrate their usability.



Formerly located in Old Main, the Writing Center now occupies a sunny corner in the Rohrbach Library.

After they made it through the paper, they noticed that the thesis no longer correlated with the rest of the content. They worked together, Eddie giving a structure and the student filling in the words, to create a sound thesis. The student was very excited to see their writing change, often smiling and exclaiming when they were satisfied with what they could write with a little help.

The session came to an end and Eddie went over what they had done and suggested what could be improved on to sharpen the piece.

After the session, I asked Eddie what it felt like to see a student get excited about their writing. He said that it's a "nice

feeling to see the world expand around the student." There's always room for improvement with writing.

The student left with a cleaner paper and a direction to go in, and Eddie was happy to have helped. After all, isn't that the purpose of the Writing Center? To help amplify a student's voice?

There are many good reasons to go to the Writing Center. Everyone struggles with writing, but sometimes a little push and some guidance is all one needs. The KUWC has trained and passionate tutors who are able to work with students as long as they ask for help. They can come in at any time with an assignment finished or barely started. So how does a student set up an appointment?

Students can email, call, or walk in to schedule a 30-minute session with a tutor. Appointments can be made weeks to hours in advance, as long as spots are available. The sessions will always be one-on-one and multiple visits are encouraged.

When it's time for a meeting, students should bring the assignment sheet and their work done so far. The tutors want to make sure that the writers are hitting all of the requirements.

Writing is a continuous process of revision, so the earlier students come in, the better the piece will be.

THE WRITING CENTER

Rohrbach Library 100C
wrcenter@kutztown.edu
610-683-4733

Monday – Thursday 11 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Saturday Closed
Sunday 2 p.m. – 9 p.m.

PA GERMAN MINOR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER

Red barns with white trim and decorative barn stars are scattered in the countryside around Kutztown. This barn style originated from the Pennsylvania Germans who settled here around the 18th century. 250 years later, they're still here.

Historically, Kutztown is a Pennsylvania German town. It's become more cosmopolitan, but many locals and students of the university are of Pennsylvania German descent. KU decided to embrace the community and create a Pennsylvania German minor so students can learn more about the culture.

In the minor, students learn about who the Pennsylvania Germans are, their origin, diversity, and practices. KU is the only school in the area to offer a Pennsylvania German minor and it's designed to be fitting for many different majors. Anthropology, history, art, and German majors are a few examples but any student can take the minor if they would like to learn more about the subject.

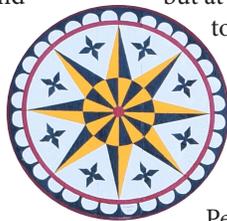
The minor requires an Intro to PA German Studies course, an internship, and four electives covering a wide variety of credits that can cross over for various requirements. Some of the courses include GEG 112: Geography of Pennsylvania, PAG 101: Intro to PA German Lang I and ANT 242: Museums, Festivals, and Cultural Events. Students can also take a "course by contract" that includes a PAG research component to count towards the minor.

What's interesting about the Pennsylvania Germans is that their language has persisted for 250 years.



This barn style is seen mainly throughout southeastern PA in Lehigh and Berks county.

Dr. Donner from the Anthropology and Sociology Department helped create the Pennsylvania German minor and claims that the Pennsylvania Germans are "a group that was able to be distinctive and maintain their difference but at the same time, they tended to be very American." They incorporated the American customs but kept their own traditions and language.



Hex signs were originally called barn stars, and they are used to decorate barns. However, there are many myths about the usage of hex signs.

KU is also home to the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center. Located behind the baseball fields on north campus, the Heritage Center is an open-air folk life museum that preserves and embraces the Pennsylvania German Culture. It received most of its artifacts from the Pennsylvania Dutch Folk Culture Society and their current exhibits are developed by students and the Heritage Center staff.

The museum consists of a farmhouse, several barns, gardens, a schoolhouse, and a genealogical library. The Heritage Center is a great resource for students to do internships and research, regardless of major. The schoolhouse is lined with antique, one-piece desks with ink



Introduction to PA German Language is taught in the schoolhouse among several other classes.

containers built in them, and exhibits of Pennsylvania German art and artifacts on the walls. Some classes for the minor, including the Pennsylvania German language courses, are held in the schoolhouse as well.

The farmhouse has handwritten birth and baptismal documents, handmade quilts, and kitchen materials that Pennsylvania Germans would use in the 18th and 19th centuries. According to museum director Patrick Donmoyer, "the collection's artifacts serve as reminders of the daily life and folk-cultural traditions of the Pennsylvania Germans throughout three centuries in the region." However, the museum not only focuses on the history of the Pennsylvania Germans, but also the present. There are many modern artifacts collected and displayed around the museum such as dyed and painted Easter eggs and hex signs designed by contemporary artists.



The Heritage Center offers tours by appointment and they host free events several times throughout the year.

In addition to artifacts, the Heritage Center distributes the only newspaper written in the Pennsylvania German language, *Hiwwe wie Driwwe* (over here as over there). They've also published books on hex sign meanings and powwowing, which is traditional PA German medicine.

KU undergraduate Erica Hamilton is finishing her minor in PA German studies and she couldn't be happier with her decision to pursue it. She says, "My experience interning at the Heritage Center has led to paid work and collaboration on several projects... students of many majors should take advantage of the unique opportunities on campus."