

Media Contact: Amber Chiang, 395-4256, 794-9684

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Bakersfield College to Open Writing Center for Students on September 6

When you text a friend to plan to see a movie, are you writing?

Do the 140 characters of that Tweet you just sent count as written communication skills?

Can you use the same "LOL" you posted on a friend's Facebook photo for your paper in organic chemistry?

Chances are no, says Kelli Michaud, project leader for Bakersfield College's new Writing Center. While not new to education, today's emoticon society and language of social media has necessitated refreshing of students' writing skills for the classroom.

The Writing Center was first recommended in a study of Bakersfield College by the National Center for Developmental Education in 2008. That study combined faculty and student interviews with focus groups and analysis of data and existing programs at Bakersfield College. Since then, Bakersfield College looked at models of writing centers at community colleges in California and across the United States, developing the Center now currently open for students.

Primarily, the Bakersfield College Writing Center provides writing tutoring by professional writing consultants who have earned baccalaureate degrees and have knowledge about and experience in the discipline of rhetoric and composition. Open to all students, the writing consultants at the Writing Center provide students with the resources to craft their writing process from invention and structure to style and mechanics. Though sessions with the writing consultants, students identify areas of strength and weakness in writing, and work toward developing advanced writing skills. This effort is designed to complement classroom instruction.

In addition, the Bakersfield College Writing Center provides students access to diagnostic and remediation software programs as an auxiliary to their classroom learning as part of student success efforts in English and English as a Second Language.

Among all the services offered in the Bakersfield College Writing Center, Michaud suggests following a basic process will help students write an effective essay. That process, she said, is:

1. Start with pre-writing.
2. Continue by planning and organizing.
3. Then, develop a draft.
4. Move on to revising and editing.
5. Finish with a final draft.

Funded by Basic Skills Initiative dollars, the Bakersfield College Writing Center will open on September 6, providing drop-in and by-appointment sessions with professional writing consultants. All services in the Bakersfield College Writing Center are free to students. The Center is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Friday from 8 a.m. to noon.

"This is not a place to drop off work and have it read or corrected," explained Michaud. "Rather, the Bakersfield College Writing Center will provide access to skilled, experienced writing tutors who can guide the student through the writing process, facilitating the development of writing skills which completing standard classroom assignments."

The Bakersfield College Writing Center is located in Student Services 133 and can be contacted at 661-395-4735 or by email to writingcenter@bakersfieldcollege.edu.

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TWITTERCUE: *Bakersfield College opens writing center with professional tutors to ease academic writing fears. @bcrenegades*