



California Writing Project

ISAW

Improving Students' Academic Writing

FALL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Memorial Union II
University of California, Davis
9:00 A.M. – 3:15 P.M.

Welcome to the ISAW Fall Conference! This year's conference has been designed especially for teachers who are participating in ISAW teams and learning communities across California. Together we will put a laser focus on empowering all students to write academically, analytically, and engagingly!

Workshop sessions and discussion will address the following issues and questions:

- How can we design writing and reading assignments that help students write analytical essays that are clear, compelling, contestable, and complex?
- How can we choose texts and develop writing prompts that engage students and scaffold their critical thinking and reading?
- How can we help students access and interact with multiple texts, genres, and perspectives?
- How can we teach students essential building blocks of analytic writing—analysis, synthesis, thoughtful claims and assertions, and reasoned lines of argument?
- How can we help students develop authoritative, academic language and phrasing to elevate their analytic writing?
- How can we teach students to revise and edit for rhetorical effect?
- How can we teach students to examine personal issues in an analytical context?
- How can we collaborate with teachers across disciplines to improve students' academic writing?
- How can we accelerate the academic writing improvement of all students—the college-bound, English learners, and struggling writers—and prepare more of these students for college?

Writing today is not a frill for the few,
but an essential skill for the many.

*The National Commission on
Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges*

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Conference Registration	8:30–9:00 A.M.	Memorial Union II Foyer
Coffee/Exhibits & Book Sales Open	8:30–9:00 A.M.	Memorial Union II Foyer
Morning Keynote Session	9:00–10:30 A.M.	Memorial Union II
Round A Workshop Sessions	10:45 A.M.–12:15 P.M.	Garrison/Fielder/De Carli
Lunch/Exhibits & Book Sales	12:15–1:00 P.M.	Memorial Union II
Round B Workshop Sessions	1:00–2:30 P.M.	Garrison/Fielder/De Carli
Closing General Session	2:35–3:15 P.M.	Memorial Union II

MORNING KEYNOTE SESSION

MEMORIAL UNION II

Weaving the Fabric: Synthesis in Academic Writing

Betsy Gilliland, School of Education, UC Davis

This workshop scaffolds the process of writing a synthesis section in an academic research paper, integrating concepts from multiple sources into one essay. Students can apply these skills in their writing from middle school to college and beyond. Participants will write a collaborative synthesis paper following the steps described in the workshop.

ROUND A WORKSHOP SESSIONS

GARRISON/FIELDER/DE CARLI

Utilizing Popular Magazines to Promote Academic Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum

Carla J. Truttman, Yreka High School, Yreka Union High School District; Northern California Writing Project

Participants in this session will explore the value of popular magazines as a source for teaching analytical reading skills. A variety of different reading strategies will be explored using a multitude of genres that can be adapted to any grade level or discipline.

Understanding Text Structure is Essential When Writing Analytical Prompts That Encourage Close Reading

Louann Baker, Supervisor of Secondary Teacher Education in English, UC Santa Cruz; Associate Director, Central California Writing Project

Confusing prompts elicit confused writing. Participants in this workshop will analyze text structures and write analytical prompts that ask students to read closely. Participants will receive models of text structures and writing topics (prompts and texts). They will explore ways to teach students how to read texts and prompts, knowing how to define text structures and meaning to write effective essays.

Using Text Sets as Lenses: Determining the Significance of Historical Events

Heidi Bowton, Dorsey High School, Los Angeles Unified School District; UCLA Writing Project

Using a group of purposefully chosen texts can not only help students develop perspective as readers and writers, the process can also reveal the choices available to students wishing to become part of a larger thematic discussion. Participants in this workshop will collectively make sense and create personal significance around an historical event. We will analyze four texts from different genres, time periods, and personal perspectives around an incident involving a young man from another era. The session will include reading strategies for multiple texts, suggestions for student writing, as well as strategies for rigorous classroom discussion about whom we remember historically and how we remember.

Beyond the Box: Crafting Meaningful Curriculum Using Adopted Materials

Belinda Foster, Coordinator Secondary Instruction and Information Technology, Twin Rivers Unified School District; Area 3 Writing Project

In light of district and state assessments, pacing guidelines, pre-packaged binders and boxes of adopted materials, today's teacher often feels trapped in static, disconnected curriculum. The purpose of this workshop is to review one teaching team's journey towards addressing the many requirements and expectations while still teaching units that for students were relevant, fluid, and engaging. Important to this journey were revisiting the unit structure used by the Area 3 Writing Project's Transition to College program and teaching the 'head' by honoring its interconnectedness with the human heart. Participants will hear an account of this journey and be provided tools and time to consider its application to their own teaching context.

Improving Students' Reading of Texts

Marlene Carter, Dorsey High School, Los Angeles Unified School District; Associate Director, UCLA Writing Project, Co-Director, California Writing Project

Rochelle Ramay, Corning High School, Corning Union High School District; Associate Director, Northern California Writing Project

Analytical writing and critical reading have to go hand in hand if students are to improve their academic writing. Participants in this session will explore strategies for making critical reading processes visible to students, processes students should apply to the reading of texts written by published and student authors and to the reading of their own texts as well.

Indeed: How to Write “Nerd”

Marty Brandt, Independence High School, East Side Union High School; Teacher Consultant, San Jose Area Writing Project

One way to help your students consider using authoritative, academic phrasing is to help them identify the patterns involved in such academic writing skills as making efficient comparisons and contrasts, writing effective thesis statements, and quoting text economically. This workshop will provide flexible templates and models you can adapt for use in your classroom to help show your students how such phrasing is in fact perfectly within their grasp, even if they might never have considered using it on their own.

ISAW Students Write The Future: An Invitation to Them and to You

Jayne Marlink, Executive Director, California Writing Project

What could happen if we focus on what ISAW student writers can do instead of what they can't do? What could happen if ISAW students get opportunities to write about issues and questions they know or care about? What could happen if we give them a chance to go public with their writing and create with them a forum for their ideas?

“Critical, issue-based teaching aims to inspire levels of academic performance far greater than those motivated or measured by grades and test scores. When students write for real audiences, read books and articles about issues that really matter, and discuss big ideas with compassion and intensity, ‘academics’ starts to breathe. Yes, we must help students ‘pass the tests,’ (even as we help them analyze and critique the harmful impact of test-driven education). But only by systematically reconstructing classroom life do we have any hope of cracking the cynicism that lies so close to the heart of massive school failure, and of raising academic expectations and performance for all our students.” (Rethinking Schools)