YGSE PRESENTS:

Online Writing Retreat

CATCH UP ON THAT MOUNTAIN OF BOOKS,
FINISH THAT PAPER, PROPOSAL OR CHAPTER,
GET PEER FEEDBACK

ATTEND ALL DAY OR DROP IN

DECEMBER 17 - 18
10 AM - 7 PM
ON ZOOM

Agenda
December 17 - 18

10 - 7 pm

December 17th

10 am - 11:30 am

- Land Acknowledgement
- Welcome and explanation of the retreat
- Get to know you (15-20 minutes)
  - Introduce your name, program, year, what you are going to be working on today, what you are hoping to get out of the retreat
- Ground Rules (5 minutes)
  - No talking unless it is during the designated social time, or go to the breakout room 1 to have social time
  - Keep your phone off as best you can and close down other unnecessary apps
  - Take breaks as you need them
  - Other ground rules you want people to follow?
- Writing Tips & Tricks (45 minutes)
  - Breakout rooms to brainstorm Writing Tips & Tricks
  - Sharing
- Creating a [SMART Goal](#) for your writing session
  - Our SMART goals

10:40 - 11:40

11:40 - 12:40: Lunch break

12:40 - 1:40: Writing

1:30 - 1:45: Break

1:55 - 2:55: Writing

2:55 - 3:10: Break

3:15 - 4:15: Writing

4:15 - 4:30: Break

<mark>4:45 - 5:45: Writing</mark>

5:45 - 6:00: Break

6:00 - 6:30: Writing wrap up for the day

6:30 - 7:00: Sharing time & wrap up

- People can share what they're writing about in small breakout rooms, their successes, their failures, their progress
- We will all come together at the end of the day for a thank you and a goodnight -- reminder that editing tips will come tomorrow
- Did anyone use a new tip that they learned today?

December 18th

10 - 10:30

- Welcome back!
- Reminder of links to be posted on the YGSE website
- Quick hellos and introductions (10 minutes)
- Checking in on your SMART goal, re-adjusting or creating a new one for today (15ish minutes)

- Reviewing our Writing Tips & Tricks
- Establishing how to peer edit (20 - 25 minutes)
- Review ground rules

10:30 - 11:30: Writing

11:30 - 12:30: Lunch

12:30 - 1:30: Writing / Editing

1:30 - 1:45: Break / Socializing

1:45 - 2:45: Writing / Editing

2:45 - 3:00: Break

3:00 - 4:00: Writing / Peer Editing

4:00 - 4:15: Break

4:15 - 5:15: Writing / Peer Editing

5:15 - 5:30: Break

5:30 - 6:30: Writing / Peer Editing

6:30 - 7:00: Socializing and Wrap up

Writing Tips and Tricks

Below is a shared document that was created during the Online Writing Retreat in December 2021. The tips are grouped by theme. Feel free to add your own tips and tricks.

Daily Writing Routines

- Dedicate 15-20 minutes every day to writing without judgment; write about anything
- Establish a routine that gets you in the headspace (putting in headphones, making coffee, etc.)
- At the end of the day, create your next day's to-do list
  - Have a massive list of everything you need to do and consolidate into smaller tasks for each day
  - Suggestion of do-list: 1 major task, 2 medium tasks, 3 small tasks / day

Study Space

- Dedicate a space to just writing/focusing on work
- Make sure your writing environment is productive
  - Remove anything that will distract you
- Use headphones; listen to instrumental music
- Have inspirational quotes / images in your study space
- Go to a café / library
- Listen to background sounds / white noise
- Have a strong cup of coffee or tea ready to go

Brainstorming Methods

- Record thoughts in voice notes
- Write down every idea that comes to mind- yes keep a journal/sketchbook of ideas
- Write out all your ideas on sticky notes
- Take walks to think, or don't think (a break away), about your ideas
- Paper writing: Start with your own research interest. A prompt (i.e. photograph, experience, conversation with colleague), or way to think about the material you're working with can be very helpful.
- Walk and talk - walk around and talk out ideas you have to yourself or to someone else

Outlines & Organizing Thoughts

- Use sticky notes to create your outline - these are good because you can move them around
- Use subheadings in a Word Doc and list every idea you have for each subheading; move things around as needed
- Keep referring back to the rubric to stay on track

Writing Methods

- 20-minute method (and it's variations)
  - Work for 20 minutes (or x minutes) without break → take a 5-10 minute break → return to work (repeat)
  - Breaks can be active - stretch, go for a walk, do some jumping jacks
  - Breaks can be rewarded - get a small treat each time you successfully complete a 20-minute segment
  - Off-time
- Be aware of what is going on with your work flow/attention, if you need longer breaks, take them, if you're not focussing today, take a longer more intentional break

- Large chunk of time - set aside a large chunk of time and a clear goal for that time

- Daily writing - write a small amount, but do it every day → more productive than large chunk writing (usually)

- As you finish your writing for the day, make a note of what you will work on next, then when you return you are more focused

- Have dedicated writing days/times so that you always have a chunk of time set aside to get some writing done

Editing Methods

- Create a NUFN (not using for now) doc (credit: Diane Lemieux)
  ◦ Any time you cut something from your work, paste it into your NUFN doc, that way you're not killing your sentence babies and can always go back to look at it again

- Create a new version of your doc each time you start editing it

- Edit for content separately from editing for grammar (proofreading)

- Make sure to set aside enough time to edit, it will take longer than you think - you have to read whatever you wrote + edit, so it can take as long as writing the actual document

- Get a friend to read it over

- Read out loud

- Double check your citations

Citations

- Add to your References page as you add each new citation

- When editing - go to your references page, for each reference entry, do a document search to make sure that it is still in your document and wasn't cut while editing

- Who are you thinking with? Is there someone's writing style that you can learn from?

- Use citation software in Google Docs / Microsoft Word

- zotero.org (great for summaries and citations)

Our SMART Goals

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm

Specific (simple, sensible, significant).

Measurable (meaningful, motivating).

Achievable (agreed, attainable).

Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based).

Time bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive)

Original goal: *I will work on my paper.*

SMART goal: *By the end of the writing retreat, I will finish the introduction and literature review of my final paper for my class.*

Goal	SMART Elements
By the end of the writing retreat, I will finish the introduction and literature review of my final paper for my class.	Specific - intro, lit review Measurable - yes Achievable - yes, not too much is required, already have a draft idea Relevant - important to finish the paper Time bound - yes
By the end of the writing retreat, I will finish one of my lit review sections	Specific - lit review (1-2 sections) Measurable - 5 pages each Achievable - Hopefully Relevant - important for DCP Time bound - yes (Jan 15 deadline)

By the end of the day, I will write a story related to an encounter at the watershed. I am also hoping that as I write, questions and conceptual directions might become clearer to me.	Specific - story with photo(s) Measurable -yes Achievable - yes, it's not too ambitious Relevant - yes it relates to a winter term assignment Time bound - yes
I will finish editing my paper	Specific -work through citations, and work through particular claims and arguments so that they flow well :) Measurable - yes Achievable - yes Relevant - yes Time bound - must submit paper at midnight ;)
I will write content for the first three sections of chapter one.	Specific - work through action, natality & plurality descriptions Measurable - yes Achievable - yes Relevant -yes Time bound -
By the end of the retreat, I will have written the entire story for my friend. By the end of today, I will have the outline and rough draft of the story done. By this afternoon, I will have an outline of the story complete.	Specific - Measurable - Achievable - Relevant - Time bound -

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	Specific - Measurable - Achievable - Relevant - Time bound -

Peer Editing

http://depts.washington.edu/pswrite/Handouts/PeerEditing.pdf

Peer Editing Sheet — Slotkin

Peer Editor: **Paper Writer:**

Please respond honestly and respectfully, and focus on helping the writer to improve this paper and future papers. Give the kind of feedback you would want. When you make an evaluation ("this is good; this needs work"), always explain your reasons, give specific examples, and make suggestions. Make marginal comments on the paper itself as appropriate, and staple the paper to the back of this sheet.

What is your overall impression of the paper? What are its main strengths?

Thesis:
Paraphrase the paper's main point here.

Label the thesis statement in the first paragraph. Is it easy to find? Does it capture the paper's main point?

Is the thesis sufficiently focused? If not, how would you alter its scope?

Is the thesis sufficiently objective? Does it adequately account for opposing arguments? If not, what counter-arguments should it address?

Do you find the thesis convincing? Does it pass the "says who" test?

Do you find the thesis interesting? Does it pass the "so what" and "who cares" tests?

Structure:
Does each body paragraph have a topic sentence which makes a claim that the ¶ then proves?

Read the thesis, followed by each topic sentence. Do the claims collectively pass the "so what" and "who cares" tests? Do they form a coherent argument? Should they be reorganized? How?

Can you easily determine how the topic sentences relate to each other (e.g. through clear transitions) and to the thesis? Does each paragraph build on the previous paragraph?

Is the textual evidence in each paragraph sufficient, necessary, and well-explained?

Is there a really good sentence buried somewhere which should be promoted to a topic sentence, or even to a thesis statement?

Does the conclusion add something to the paper? Does it answer a "so what" question?

Style:
What could be cut from this paper? Look for digressions, summary of the text, and wordiness.

What points in the essay are clearly written? Indicate any confusing points and suggest clarifications.

Did the writer proofread? Can you find grammar, spelling, punctuation, style, or citation format mistakes? If so, mark them on the paper itself.

Final Comments:
List the three most important things the writer can do to improve this paper:

1.

2.

3.

Try to formulate the "so what" question that seems most important to you as a response to the argument of this paper. In other words, if this paper were the beginning of a larger investigation, where do you think it could or should lead? What are the most interesting implications of the paper's argument?