



THE WRITING CENTER

Academic Services • Phone: 962-7710

www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/

Writing Groups:

What to Expect from Your Faculty Mentor

Your group may choose to ask a faculty member to be a mentor for your group. The Writing Center maintains a list of faculty interested in helping students in this way, and you can consult with the Writing Center staff to find a mentor. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a professor on your own and invite him or her to become a mentor for your group. A mentor can help your group get going, resolve problems that might emerge during the course of the year, suggest activities for group meetings, and model good writing and response strategies for group participants. Here are some of the ways your mentor might be involved:

- ✓ The group should help the mentor determine his or her roles. Some groups may want their mentor to sit in with them, offer feedback on their writing, and share his or her own writing from time to time. Others may want their mentor to help them get started but then stand back and allow the group to evolve as it will with minimal intervention. Be honest about your expectations for your mentor, and try to find ways that your mentor can assist your group, even if he or she has a busy schedule.
- ✓ Mentors may use their own writing history as a guide for your group, sharing the obstacles that challenged them and the solutions that they found. Your mentor may share his or her writing process with you and the specific tips that help him or her write and revise successfully.
- ✓ Mentors may share their writing with you and invite you to comment on it. They might bring you drafts of their research-oriented writing, grant applications, syllabi, or personal writing
- ✓ Mentors may offer feedback on your writing, encouraging you to push your ideas further, nurture your own critical insight, and develop as writers and editors of your own prose.
- ✓ Mentors may keep in touch with group members, even if they don't attend your regular meetings. Mentors might send out a group e-mail periodically to ask how your writing is going, send out pieces of their own writing to share with the group, or meet students for coffee informally.

- ✓ Mentors may provide helpful suggestions for activities that your writing group might undertake, drawing on their own experiences. They may also be willing to help you develop group policies that will be effective and agreeable to all.