WAC- CTL Faculty Writing Boot Camp FAQ

What is Writing Bootcamp?

Writing Bootcamp was a grassroots project that began in 2008 at the urging of two faculty members who learned about this sort of initiative at the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Conference. The idea is to provide a space for faculty to work on their scholarship in a supportive environment. The first week-long Writing Bootcamp occurred in August of 2008 and had six participants. The WAC program provided limited support for securing a room on campus and providing coffee.

Since that time, 12 week-long Writing Bootcamps have been offered. Typically, about 10 writers participate; however, we have had many more at times. Baby Bootcamps (two-day informal writing times) have been added to create writing support during the academic term. Faculty have also self-organized into small groups who meet monthly to provide support.

Today, the Writing Bootcamp is coordinated by CTL; however, the Writing Bootcamp has no budget and no dedicated staff. Faculty participants are largely responsible for making the Writing Bootcamps happen. There is an advisory committee with representatives from CoLA, COSM, and CEHS who provide advice to the CTL organizers.

When do we meet?

Here is the schedule for upcoming Writing Bootcamps:

Baby Bootcamps (Friday and Saturday work session) -- in the spring-- Feb 2-3 and Mar 16-17

Who Can Attend?

WSU Faculty, Staff, and Adjuncts are welcome. Grad students enrolled in WSU programs are encouraged to contact their academic program for bootcamp opportunities. For example, the English Department runs graduate student bootcamps. Colleagues from other universities are welcome as long as space is available.

Details about the Week-long Bootcamps

Daily Schedule:

Work begins promptly at 9 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m. It’s important to note that 9 a.m. is when you begin working, not when you should arrive. Give yourself enough time to set up your work station and get whatever beverage or snack you need in order to be in your chair ready to work at 9 a.m. If you arrive after the 9 a.m. work session has already begun, please work elsewhere and then join the rest of us during the first break.

8:30 - 9:00: Arrive, get coffee, etc., set up laptop, etc., chat
9:00 - 10:15: In chairs working. Seriously. We lock the door at 9.
10:15 - 10:45: Break
10:45 - noon: In chairs working
Noon - 1:30: Lunch
1:30 - 2:45: In chairs working
2:45 - 3:00: Break
3:00 - 4:00: In chairs working***
4:00 - 4:30: Room clean-up. Pack up and leave.

***The schedule shifts slightly on the last day of boot camp when the last session will end at 3:45 in order to give us time for our graduation ceremony.

Attendance policy

While boot campers may quietly come and go during sessions (for bathroom breaks, to grab a library book, etc.), the hustle and bustle of someone coming in, unpacking supplies and generally setting up is much more disruptive. Same goes for packing up to leave. For this reason, if you arrive during a session or need to leave early for the day, please do so during break times to avoid disturbing and distracting your colleagues. Boot campers may be granted leave for a maximum of four sessions (the equivalent of one full day). Our goal is that we will always have at least 80% of camp in attendance. If you know you will need to miss a session, please let your fellow campers know – an email to the entire group or an announcement on the whiteboard is fine. You don’t need to give a reason why you can’t attend. But knowing you won’t be in will keep others from worrying that you’re dead on the road on the way to bootcamp.
Because any absence diminishes the group (returning boot campers can testify to how useful it is to hit a wall, look up and see all those other campers hard at work as a major motivating force to keep at it), boot campers who miss sessions are requested to offset their absence (or as one boot camper puts it, purchase an indulgence) by offering the rest of camp something to mitigate the sin of missing camp. Possibilities include sharing some talent at lunch, explaining something about your discipline in five minutes or less, or providing a special treat for the snack table. The idea is that whatever you do, it is not onerous, but fun. Because any absence diminishes your ability to meet your goals for the week, if you miss a session, you are expected to make up the missed time on your own by the end of the week. We’ll ask how it’s going. This policy is strictly for planned absences. If emergency or illness arises, obviously it’s okay to miss, although again, give the group a heads up so they don’t worry about you. Boot campers who do not adhere to the attendance policy may not be permitted to register for future boot camps for one year.

Other Policies
- Write your goals on the whiteboard. Update them through the week.
- Share triumphs!
- No phone calls in the writing room during sessions. Please turn phones to vibrate if you must have them on. Please leave the room before answering a call.
- Please don’t talk with anyone else in the room during a session
- Boot camp is not for class prep / syllabus writing / grading. It is time and space to work on your scholarship.
- No email/Internet during the sessions -- unless directly related to scholarship
- No children, no pets, no non-participants.
- Please don’t do anything that annoys us when students do it! Spit, shout, chew tobacco, Facebook during class, snore…

What to bring to boot camp
- Boot camp is a cooperative D-I-Y week that operates with no WSU resources apart from the classroom space and contributions from WAC and CTL. We all pitch in.
- Whatever you need to write – books, papers, computer. You may wish to bring an extension cord / power bar.
- Your own coffee / tea mug. Paper / plastic cups will not be supplied.
- Back support cushions -- some of us find the classroom chairs are not ergonomic!
- Headphones if you need them to block out noise. Boot camp tends to be pretty quiet but it’s not a place of absolute silence. Think quiet coffee shop environment as opposed to strictly silent library environment. Please make sure others can’t hear your music!
- A snack to share. Huge amounts aren’t necessary, but it makes for good variety if we each bring a little to add to the communal snack table.
- A coffee maker and tea kettle are provided. Coffee, creamer, sweeteners, and filters are supplied from previous donations.
- If you have a particular type of coffee or tea you like, bring it.
- If you don’t like WSU’s water, please bring your own bottled water.

Lunch money.
You may bring your own lunch or participate in the group lunch. Bring $7 cash for each day you want lunch. You can pay for the week all at once, a few days at a time or a day at a time. Any change goes offsets the tab at El Rancho Grande on Friday afternoon.

Prize/Lunch Duty.
Prize/Lunch Duty responsibilities require members to coordinate ordering and delivery of lunch from a local eatery, securing the cart and supplies on the day before and picking up the cart in the morning, and providing a small prize at the end of the day to celebrate everyone’s accomplishments. Cost of prizes is negotiated within the group and typically ranges from $15-$25 per team member.

Details about the Baby Bootcamps
Baby Bootcamps take place during Weeks 4 and 10 of the semester on Friday and Saturday. Baby Bootcamps are significantly less formal that the week-long experiences. There are no mandatory attendance requirements; however, we do ask that you let us know if you are coming. We also ask folks to minimize distractions by coming and going during break times.