A Sociocultural Exploration of English Faculty Perceptions of the Writing Center in the Qatari Context

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Abstract

This study examines English faculty perceptions of the Writing Center at American Design University in Qatar (ADU-Q) through a sociocultural framework and social capitalist analysis[i]. The current proliferation of American higher education branch campuses in the Arabian Gulf region make this a timely study, as the local context warrants an in-depth analysis of how writing centers are situated in this unique environment of language learners and dynamic social and cultural changes. Data triangulation in this qualitative study was informed by three sources: interviews with English faculty, interviews with the ADU-Q Writing Center Coordinator, and archival documents. Preliminary findings suggest that collaboration between the Writing Center and various stakeholders tends to improve positive perceptions of the Center. Furthermore, the changing nature of the local context contributes to changes in these perceptions and ways in which the participants' viewed their own role as faculty. This research unites the fields of Composition, TESOL, and writing center research; furthermore, it aims to inform an understanding of teaching and writing center practices in Qatar.

Keywords: Qatar, writing centers, sociocultural theory, ESL, faculty perceptions

Introduction

In one of my first experiences as a writing center instructor in Qatar, a student came to me and confessed, "My professor told me not to come to the writing center. She won't know I'm here, will she?" I found it ironic that this student's professor was an English Language Learner (ELL) herself, with limited English language proficiency. Furthermore, in Qatar, where most of the students studying at the branch campuses of American universities are second language speakers, I had anticipated the writing center to be flooded with students seeking assistance. I have not experienced this influx, however, and when this particular student revealed to me her concerns about a faculty member advising her against using writing center services, I began to ponder faculty perceptions of the center. I found the warning to her students rather bewildering, and it has remained a source of puzzlement that served as the impetus for this study.

Background

The findings in this article stem from a doctoral study that explored English faculty perceptions of the writing center at the American Design University in Qatar (ADU-Q). A wide range of open-ended questions were asked of English faculty about their personal backgrounds, education, experiences with writing centers, and their work in Qatar[ii]. The primary data analysis of this study involved transcript analysis and coding; this coding then led to the discovery of emergent themes, one of which was the unique perceptions of the writing center in the Qatari context.

Although writing centers have been in existence since the early 1900s (or perhaps even earlier; see Boquet, 1999), writing center research has only substantially proliferated since the wake of open admissions in the 1960s, and it remains an emerging field of inquiry (Gillespie, Gillam, Brown, & Stay, 2002; Grimm, 1992, 2003; Pemberton, 2009; Rose & Weiser, 1999). One of the under-researched areas is the faculty perceptions of the center (Boquet, 2002; Lerner, 2010; Masiello & Hayward, 1991; Pemberton, 2009; Thonus, 2001). Research suggests that the more positive the perceptions of faculty about writing center work, the more effective writing centers can be in outreach to students (Boquet, 2002; Clark, 1985; Eodice, 2003; Hall, 2007). This relationship between perception and effectiveness suggests a collaborative model that lends itself to a social capitalist data analysis, which this study adopted. For example, how does a closer relationship between faculty and the writing center influence the growth of social capital between the two? This research investigated one particular institution, American Design University in Qatar (ADU-Q)[iii], through a qualitative, sociocultural research approach in order to investigate English faculty perceptions of the writing center; the study's framework links writing center theory to TESOL practices within this particular Middle Eastern context. The primary method of data collection included interviews with English faculty at ADU-Q. Archival data, such as tutorial and statistical reports, were also collected and analyzed. Interview questions with English faculty explored the individual faculty members' cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds; for example, did they have experience with a writing center during their education? If so, what were those experiences? What types of experiences had they had with ADU-Q Writing Center? With an overwhelming majority of ELL undergraduates and colleagues, how does language play a role in their expectations of students, the Writing Center, and within their own classrooms?

This particular site, an American higher education institution in the Middle East, also offers an important arena for exploring TESOL-related pedagogical challenges. Statistics reveal

that English is the global language of many disciplines (Crystal, 2006; Hanauer & Englander, 2011; Jenkins, 2009; Maher, 1986).[iv] Therefore, the importance of English at ADU-Q is critical to the overall institutional mission of educating students for a global community in a place where the students and faculty often speak Arabic, Urdu, and a wide variety of other languages. Furthermore, the importance of writing across the curriculum in a variety of educational and international environments has become a recent focal point of scholarly attention and research inquiry (Bazerman et al., 2012; Thaiss, Brauer, Carlino, Ganobcsik-Williams, & Sinha, 2012). Finally, these ELLs often utilize the services of peer consultants, which presents a unique consideration of faculty perceptions of the writing center because the concept of ELL peer tutors teaching other ELL learners is relatively new (Eleftheriou, 2011; Ronesi, 2009, 2011).

A plethora of influences shape the status of a writing center within an institution. One of these influences is the degree to which faculty are involved with the center (Hall, 2007; Harris, 2000; Masiello & Hayward, 1991; Mauriello, Macauley, & Koch, 2011). More importantly, however, as the anecdote in the above introduction highlights, faculty can play an influential role in encouraging or discouraging student visits to the writing center. Research has also underscored the positive value of writing centers' collaborative work with faculty, and how these relationships can yield beneficial results for all stakeholders (Hall, 2007; Kinkead & Harris, 1993; Mauriello et al., 2011). When faculty support the writing center and encourage students to utilize its services, this support benefits students' writing success. In particular, student use of the writing center can positively affect academic success for ESL students.

> The frequency of writing center tutoring seemed to be especially valuable for ESL students, who outperform their domestic cohorts, receiving significantly higher grades in composition….it indicates that even students with minimal English proficiency are able, when appropriate help is available, to make significant progress toward mastering academic writing. (Williams & Takaku, 2011, p. 13)

In the current context at ADU-Q, where most students are ELLs, the writing center seemed to be a valuable component in fostering student success.

While student success is critical in education and should arguably be the focal point of educators' concerns, a writing center's overall position within the institution is also a vital point to consider because it contributes to student success. Writing centers have always held rather untenable positions; in the face of a budget crisis, writing centers are often one of the first lines to be cut (Harris, 2000; McHarg, 2011; Pemberton, 2009). If faculty play a pivotal role in supporting a writing center, then their perceptions are crucially instrumental in upholding support for the center. By extension, faculty support for the center is key to maintaining writing support for students and increasing their academic potential, especially in the face of budgetary or political challenges. Social capital theory offers a framework for investigating this faculty-writing center relationship because it focuses on the social and relational connections between these groups, rather than financial or economic relationships.   The social capitalist framework utilized in this study will seek to analyze this relationship through the lens of collaboration.

Research Question

Data has been triangulated through three primary sources: interview transcripts with all six full-time teaching English faculty, interview transcripts with the ADU-Q Coordinator, and

archival artifacts, such as tutorial reports and institutional reports and statistics.   Primary Research Question: What are English faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q Writing Center?

Local Context

As previously noted, recent years have experienced an explosion of American higher education institutions in the Arabian Gulf.   Each of Qatar's seven American universities represents a branch campus that was established to identically replicate the home campus. Each university in Knowledge City[v] also houses a writing or academic resource center, and these centers vary widely in their goals and purposes[vi]. Nonetheless, writing centers in Qatar all deal primarily with ELLs, who comprise the overwhelming majority of the student, faculty, and staff populations.   Within this group of ELLs is a subpopulation of Qatari students who receive government benefits that provide them with a greatly privileged lifestyle. Social, cultural, and political pressures to service and benefit Qatari students remain a constant undercurrent at all institutions in Knowledge City and likely play a role in the construction and delivery of services such as the Writing Center. It is hoped that this research will give insight into what is surely a complex relationship among students, the writing center, the faculty, and the institution, and allow a framework for enhancing the social capital of the writing center.

The sociocultural theory adopted in this study provides a lens through which the researcher may identify the multiple and often conflicting viewpoints that a faculty member may have in developing perceptions of the writing center. What factors have influenced a faculty member's understanding of the role of the writing center? Have faculty generally understood writing centers to be facilitators and coaches in writing instruction in the United States higher education context, but then developed a greater sense of need for editing and proofreading services for the largely multilingual student population at ADU-Q? Have their experiences and interactions with students, other faculty, or the writing center influenced what they perceive to be the writing center's role? What other societal factors in the Qatari context have shaped faculty ideas about the writing center's role?   This social capitalist view provides a structure for data analysis that connects faculty perceptions with the writing center from a collaborative viewpoint. The historical background and rationale for these two theoretical perspectives will now be discussed.

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory has its origins with Vygotsky (1986), who introduced the notion that children are not individuals brought up in isolation, but rather formed as a result of the plethora of external influences in society. Although his research focused on child development and socially mediated learning, it laid the foundation for further inquiry into and development of sociocultural theory. Wertsch (1985), who coined the term "sociocultural", is credited with "capturing the notion that human mental functioning results from participation in, and appropriation of, the forms of cultural mediation integrated into social activities" (J. P. Lantolf & Beckett, 2009, p. 459). Given the complex nature of the historical background and cultural context of this research project, a Vygotskian sociocultural theoretical framework is appropriate. Framing this study through a sociocultural lens takes into consideration the many variables that come into play – this study considers gender, age, nationality, cultural and educational background, history, language, social interactions, and more (Johnson, 2009; J. R. Lantolf, 2000):

a sociocultural perspective also emphasizes the role of human agency…It recognizes that learning is not the straightforward appropriation of skills or knowledge from the outside in, but the *progressive movement from external, socially mediated activity to internal meditational control by individual learners*, which results in the transformation of both the self and the activity. Thus, cognitive development is not simply a matter of enculturation or even appropriation of existing sociocultural resources and practices, but *the reconstruction and transformation of those resources and practices in ways that are responsive to both individual and local needs.*[emphasis added] (Johnson, 2009, p. 2)

Johnson's description of a sociocultural perspective offers a useful framework for this current writing center study because it allows for the possibility of fluid and dynamic perspectives. For example, has a faculty member always had a particular perspective about the writing center? Or has this perspective been reconstructed and transformed in response to changes at the ADU-Q Writing Center? Do the sociocultural dynamics of the Qatari context play a role in a faculty's expectations and understanding of the writing center's role?

Kim's (2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2011) recent work on sociocultural theory provides a particularly useful model of research inquiry. Kim's work has primarily focused on Sociocultural Theory (SCT) as it relates to motivation in second language learners. Specifically, he has investigated how Korean immigrants in Canada have undergone changes in their motivations and attitudes regarding language learning. His work reveals the numerous influences that contribute to language learning successes and failures. Kim's work is particularly relevant for this study because it incorporates the multitude of social influences he identifies, such as motivations for living in a foreign environment, length of time in the country, etc., that may similarly play a role in how faculty perceptions are formed and developed in the unique context of ADU-Q. Additionally, Syed (2003) notes the importance of sociocultural context in English language teaching in the Arabian Gulf to teachers: "The sociocultural context is important not only for the learner but also for the teacher" (p. 337). Syed's call to understand the faculty's personal situation underscores the value of eliciting perspectives from English faculty, as this study will do. The status of education reform in Qatar raises critical questions about the linguistic imperialism of English in a country where Arabic is the official language. It brings to the surface pedagogical and professional issues such as the role of faculty vis-à-vis the writing center. It is imperative to explore and reveal the underlying origins and perceptions of these issues in order to strengthen the relationships between the faculty, writing center, and other stakeholders.

Social Capitalism

While sociocultural considerations were an important component of data collection, this study primarily takes a social capitalist perspective in analyzing data. Social capital theory has its origins with Bourdieu (1986), who based his theories on economics and global social conditions in France at the time. He identified social capital as one type of capital whereby "social capital is the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119). In the present study, I explore the possibilities of social capitalism between English faculty and the writing center at ADU-Q.

Bourdieu's theories focused on socioeconomics and class privilege, which is one relevant component of the Qatari context. For example, Qatari students are granted significant privileges – e.g., free education, stipends for attending school, and often guaranteed employment upon graduation. In this scenario, Qatari students do not need to invest in the development of social capital to supplement their economic wealth. On the other hand, non-Qatari students typically find themselves having to borrow money or prove themselves worthy of financial assistance from the Qatari government. These international students must demonstrate and develop a higher level of social capital.

In contrast to Bourdieu, other scholars developed social capital theory in different ways. For example, Coleman (1988), an American sociologist who wrote during approximately the same time as Bourdieu, placed more emphasis on the value of social capital for the marginalized and powerless. Non-Qatari students enrolled in higher education institutions in Knowledge City parallel Coleman's idea of "marginalized and powerless", because they are not entitled to the financial privileges that Qatari students receive. Coleman brought together the fields of sociology and economics and suggested that people had the ability to use the resources available to them in order to become more successful. "Social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible"; furthermore, "social capital inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors" (Coleman, 1988, p. S98). More recently, Putnam (1995) made a passionate call for the reinstatement of social capitalism with his publication *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. He argues that the changing society in America is leading to greater individualism, with less emphasis placed on the importance of social connections and social capital. Although Putman writes from an American framework, his theories are useful to consider in the Qatari society where social connections are paramount (Zaharna, 1995). Putnam's theory that social connections should increase social capital raise questions about the Qatari context – is the ADU-Q writing center, a focal point of collaboration and social networking, thriving because of the local context? If it is not thriving, why not? Furthermore, ADU-Q is an American institution that embraces many of the American values Putnam discusses, such as greater individualism. Does the sense of greater individualism and personal responsibility conflict with the local Qatari context? Do English faculty expect students to invest a greater amount of personal dedication to their writing and academic development? Is there a disconnect between students' expectations of themselves and the writing center staff's expectations of them? A sociocultural investigation into the relationship between faculty and the writing center fits neatly within this framework because how faculty perceive the writing center then results in actions that directly affect student visits to the writing center (as the introductory anecdote clearly demonstrates).

Social capitalism and its relevance to writing center work is particularly noted in *The Writing Center Resource Book*:

As we conceptualize 'The Idea of the Writing Center' for this new century, one of our greatest ethical challenges will be to define and actualize the writing center as a form of social capital that can produce aggregate growth within academic and social communities…we should also recognize the transformative power of writing center work and seek to envision the writing center as a locus of significant social capital for both the academy and the community. (Murphy & Stay, 2006, p. 278)

In 2007, Hall repeated this call to view writing centers through a social capitalist framework in his description of a successful Writing-Across-the-Curriculum initiative (Hall, 2007). Both Murphy & Stay and Hall cite Putnam's recent contributions to the field of social capital, whereby "social capital is found in social connections, from which emerge the most significant types of networking and interpersonal relations that are the basis of community formation" (Murphy & Stay, 2006, p. 278).

These frameworks of sociocultural theory and social capitalism are key and distinctive features in this research study, because they allow a framework for exploring the multiple converging, and sometimes conflicting, elements of perceptions that impact the use of the writing center and the resulting institutional profile of the center.

Writing Center History
Boquet opens *Noise from the Writing Center* by sharing an email communication from another faculty member who felt it was "inappropriate and discourteous to make such a racket as I heard coming from the Writing Center this evening" (Boquet, 2002, p. xiii). Boquet goes on to explain that the writing center, in fact, had been holding a meeting where they were discussing and working on various professional development initiatives. Throughout the book, Boquet continues to discuss the sheer and clear lack of understanding from the faculty about the nature of writing center work.

Clark (1985), Bishop (1990), Perdue (1991), Masiello and Hayward's (1991), and Pemberton (1995) conducted writing center research related to faculty perceptions.   Other research into faculty perceptions of writing centers has been scant and has typically revolved around quantitative data collection and analysis. Most information about faculty perceptions has been conducted through satisfaction surveys at the end of each term, as indicated by the WCENTER listserv, an electronic forum for writing center professionals across the globe. More recently, Mauriello, Macauley, and Koch (2011) have provided an entire edited collection, *Before and After the Tutorial: Writing Centers and Institutional Relationships,* which includes various types of institutional relationships shared with writing centers; the volume, however, is curiously silent about faculty perceptions.

Research relating to composition studies and English language learners typically has its roots in contrastive rhetoric, as introduced by Kaplan (1966). Contrastive rhetoric focuses on the idea that different cultures have different rhetorical patterns, and, therefore, explicit teaching about these differences is imperative to developing successful writers in new academic contexts. Recent years, however, have witnessed considerable growth in research more specific to ELLs within U.S.-based writing centers; this scholarship has tended to maintain a focus on contrastive rhetoric, in addition to concerns of effective pedagogical practices, linguistic differences, and cultural considerations (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Bruce & Rafoth, 2009; Thompson-Panos & Thomas-Ruzie, 1983; Williams, 2004; Williams & Severino, 2004).   Other studies have investigated students' and tutors' perceptions of effective tutorials (Eleftheriou, 2011; Thonus, 2001, 2002; Weigle & Nelson, 2004).

Bruce and Rafoth (2004) made a significant contribution to scholarship on ESL students in the writing center with *ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors*. A second edition of this book, published in 2009, continues to be the sole book of its type specifically designed to

guide tutors in working with ESL students. While the above literature focuses on ELL students' experiences in the writing center, it is also critical to look at one of the most controversial, recurring, and still unresolved themes in writing center scholarship regarding English language learners: the debate between directive versus non-directive tutoring strategies. Current writing center pedagogy tends to purport a very indirect, Socratic method of tutorial teaching (Ryan & Zimmerelli, 2010); yet this model has been primarily based on work with native English speakers. Lefort (2010) summarizes the debate concisely and appropriately concludes that neither one is correct nor incorrect, but rather writing center professionals need to use appropriate instructional strategies that reflect their context. This clear gap in research lends itself well to my research questions: What are faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q writing center? Specifically, what types of practices do faculty perceive *are* or *should be* taking place during writing center tutorials? How does this type of instruction relate to the development of their perceptions of the writing center? For example, occasionally members of the Doha Writing Center Network have commented that faculty have suggested a student has received "too much" assistance in the center. Direct instruction can often be interpreted as too much help and, therefore, raises questions about academic integrity issues. The sociological approach to this study seeks to reveal some of these underlying issues that may raise concerns for faculty, especially with regard to peer tutors. For example, if a peer tutor is less skilled in explaining a grammatical concept, might he or she simply rewrite a passage of the writer's work? On the other hand, some faculty might expect the writing center to provide more editorial-type services, especially for ELLs. While it is not the focus of this present study to directly investigate this particular phenomenon of direct versus indirect instruction, the results of the study may indicate that this key debate does influence faculty perceptions. For example, do faculty who expect direct, explicit instruction (perhaps even editing and proofreading) then get frustrated or confused when a student submits a paper full of errors? Do faculty feel that their students, as language learners or design students, need a particular type of writing instruction? As Bizzaro and Toler (1986) have suggested, do the tutors' and faculty's own writing apprehensions influence the nature of perceptions of the writing center? As Bauer (2009) aptly points out, many faculty are simply not engaged with writing at all; therefore, the directive versus non-directive debate may not even be at a conscious level for many faculty. This lack of engagement with writing was an unlikely scenario in the current research, since the participants were all ADU-Q English faculty and, therefore, were likely to be more engaged with writing. Nonetheless, this study aimed to unearth these varying levels of understanding of writing and viewpoints about teaching and tutoring writing to ELLs in a design institution in Qatar.

A similarly unique perspective is offered in Yavarow's (2012) column "From the Interior Design Studio to the Writing Center: One Tutor's Unconventional Journey to Designing a Tutorial." In this brief article, Yavarow articulates many of the ways in which she views the process of design to be helpful in explaining writing concepts and processes to her peers in writing tutorials. Yavarow's article reinforces the idea that writing can be appropriately adapted and situated in a discipline-specific context, such as at ADU-Q. It also highlights the positive and reflective nature that a peer tutor can offer when working with other peers in the design discipline. Nonetheless, it stops short of investigating faculty perceptions and connections more relevant to the unique language learning environment in Qatar.

Finally, Matsuda and Jablonsky (2000) have wisely cautioned about some attempts to suggest that disciplinary writing is akin to writing in a second language. These authors clearly outline their goals from the outset:

> Our first goal in this paper, then, is to critically examine the "WID as a second language" metaphor and consider its implications for WAC programs. Specifically, we want to argue for a critical approach to the use of this metaphor because, as we will discuss, its broad and uncritical use can mask the complexity of second-language learning and can lead to the marginalization of second-language writers in WAC programs as well as in the professional discourse of composition studies in general. By critiquing the use of the L2 metaphor in composition studies, however, we do not mean to suggest that specialists in both WAC and English as a second language (ESL) have much to learn from one another. Our second goal, then, is to consider mutually beneficial ways of achieving interdisciplinary collaboration between WAC and ESL specialists. (p. 1)

Matsuda and Jablonsky's cautionary, yet optimistic, advice is particularly important and valuable for this present study which investigates language learners in the context of a disciplinary-specific institution.

Peer tutors have played a role in ADU-Q's writing center since the program began in 2011, and, therefore, it is essential to explore the historical background of peer tutoring in academia and in the present context. The concept of peer tutoring has always been complex, and remained a source of constant debate since its inception. In 1983, Harvey Kail wrote "Collaborative Learning in Context: The Problems with Peer Tutoring," which delineated some of the challenges that collaborative learning strategies, those typically used in writing center work, faced in the academic context. While Kail's work critically examined the value of peer tutoring in academia, Bruffee's (1984) work continued to espouse the benefits of collaborative learning. In "Peer Tutoring and the 'Conversation of Mankind,'" Bruffee articulates the foundations upon which collaborative learning was based:

> For American college teachers the roots of collaborative learning lie neither in radical politics nor in research. They lie in the nearly desperate response of harried colleges during the early 1970s to a pressing educational need. A decade ago, faculty and administrators in institutions throughout the country became aware that, increasingly, students entering college had difficulty doing as well in academic studies as their native ability suggested they should be able to do. Of course, some of these students were poorly prepared academically. Many more of them, however, had on paper excellent secondary preparation. The common denominator among both the poorly prepared and the seemingly well-prepared was that, for cultural reasons we may not yet fully understand, all these students seemed to have difficulty adapting to the traditional or 'normal' conventions of the college classroom…to provide that alternative some colleges turned to peer tutoring. (1984, p. 637)

This acknowledgment of poor academic preparation, as well as understanding "conventions of the college classroom" reflects the current status of many students at ADU-Q, who come from a very different and wide variety of educational backgrounds.

Writing center research about peer tutoring has proliferated in recent years (Boquet, 1999; Bruffee, 1984; Eleftheriou, 2011; Fallon, 2010; Fels, 2010; Geller, Eodice, Condon, Carroll, & Boquet, 2006; Kail & Trimbur, 1987; Ronesi, 2009, 2011). The existence and development of such peer tutor initiatives displays the growing professionalism and solid foundation of peer tutoring in writing. Nonetheless, this development primarily stems from the U.S. context with Inner-Circle native speakers as tutors. The current study explores the phenomenon of peer tutoring within the Arabian Gulf context, through the perceptions of English faculty at ADU-Q. Are faculty perceptions, in fact, a result of the linguistic diversity found in Qatar and on ADU-Q's campus? Do faculty experiences in more monolingual educational environments play a role in how they perceive the role of the writing center?

Although there has been a considerable growth of writing centers in the Middle East in recent years, research and scholarship still lags behind that which is produced in the United States. Jodi Lefort, Past President of the Middle East-North Africa Writing Center Alliance (MENAWCA) plainly states, "There is virtually no literature about Writing Centers outside North America." (Lefort, 2008). Another recent contribution to the writing center field investigates perceptions of the tutor and tutee in a Middle Eastern writing center (Eleftheriou, 2011). This study builds on Eleftheriou's research by extending it to the exploration of outside influences, such as faculty perceptions.

Eleftheriou notes, "There is evidence that qualitative evaluation strategies may be better suited than quantitative ones for application in cross-cultural research environments" (Eleftheriou, 2011). Given the unique international and cross-cultural environment and atmosphere at ADU-Q, the qualitative methods adopted for this study are appropriate. Therefore, this study pursues an exploratory methodology, "which seeks to understand how individuals in a given social and educational context make meaning, draw conclusions and make suggestions about their own learning" (Troudi & Jendli, 2011, p. 30). This methodology aligns well with the sociocultural perspective that I take throughout the study because it allows for fluidity in participants' perspectives and an acknowledgment of participant agency.

Primary Research Question: What are English faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q writing center?

Responses can best be captured through the voices of English faculty; perceptions of the writing center were positive overall. English faculty expressed appreciation for the type of work that the Writing Center provided to students, as well as the Writing Center's strong support for assisting and supporting English faculty. Cindy noted:

> Here, I have loved the writing center. I love that we have a writing center. I um…I think it has served me well and served my students well. It has...saved my students…many times. I always have a close connection with the writing center staff and faculty. Um, I consider them part of the….I've always considered them part of the English program really….I think that, um, there is a general regard and respect for the writing center. At least that's the impression I get.

Alice supported this view:

> I've loved the writing center here because I feel like the students cannot… they cannot really benefit from [series of basic English courses], especially those 3 courses without

the benefit, the added benefit of the writing center. I think to rely just on their professor, you know, in the course, I think it's asking…it's just too much. They don't…they need other readers… and of course it helps when they, they…have their peer review in the class, but they often don't trust their classmates, so…uh, no matter how much we try to emphasize how helpful they can be to each other…um…so to have the writing center uh…tutors available um…I, yeah. It's, I just feel like it's most important…

Silvia similarly commented:

I always try to thank the writing center whenever they work with any of my students…and make more comments if I have time. So I want them to know, even if it's just thank you, I want them to be thanked.

When describing his experience at ADU-Q, Jerry compared the Writing Center with his prior institutional experiences:

I wouldn't say that anywhere else that I've taught...has actually had, in my opinion, such a well-defined and developed writing center. And by that I mean, you know, here's a clear schedule, with available um, tutors, and, um, you know, mission statement, and all of that….which, which I actually think is fantastic….umm…at the [name of previous university where Jerry taught], we …if there was any such a thing it wasn't promoted, which is really a shame.

Jerry went on to note that he promoted use of the Center to his students, "I always encourage the writing center, basically with all my classes…."

In contrast, while Julia did not specifically convey a positive or negative attitude about the Writing Center-English faculty relationship, she did indicate a lack of strong ties:

I feel like…often times I feel like the writing center gets forgotten in the minds of the English faculty or not forgotten…well yeah I would say it's put after…work for students … and it's not because I'm like "oh the writing center isn't important" but just in the scheme of things that are, you know, on my plate it's one of the last things that I think of…I feel like it could…there could be stronger ties between the two…

Julia also repeatedly suggested that her lack of collaboration was a result of trying to "mostly just to avoid confusion for you guys" because:

there might be like a….I don't know…a disconnect in terms of understanding like maybe somebody's saying "I would love for you to help my student with this paper" but there's all this backstory that I'd have to give you about where we are in the classroom in order for you to help them, so maybe you should just help them with what they come in with and then see how that goes.

The ADU-Q Coordinator shared this perception of a lack of collaboration, and she added her own perception about how she believes the Writing Center is perceived and has shifted over time:

Well it definitely has changed….when I first came….If a student needed help with writing…. then one of the English faculty, and I don't know how decisions were made, but one of the English faculty probably took that person under their wing and worked with them….the English faculty were accustomed to pitching in because one person could not manage the need that there was at that time. …. the English department considered the Writing Center instructors their liaisons, or their colleagues…we participated in their portfolio reviews, we collaborated with them, if there was a crunch time such as at the end of the semester they pitched in….um, it was just a very collaborative relationship. Then a few years ago the attitude changed, and I think it was with the hiring of a few newer people who were um…not [just] one but perhaps they had been teaching assistants…and they really didn't want to re-live that experience because they wanted to go do the "higher" work, if you will, of teaching in the classroom; in other words they wanted to build their repertoire and their career. Traditionally …the English department considers those who do the writing, you know the writing center people, to be the second-class citizens if you will. And…that attitude certainly emerged in full force. And we had some…notable disagreements and…priorities were made and um, the two departments were more clearly differentiated. So today, um, we're not accustomed to collaborating very much with them, although we do work with them as we do with other professors about the content of their courses. But the, the spirit of collaboration we once had really is not there.

Participants' experiences with writing centers, receipt of tutorial session reports, and general experiences (personal friendships, hearing from students, having peer tutors in the classroom) are the strongest contributing factors to what influences English faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q Writing Center. Participants' experiences with writing centers prior to ADU-Q were highly varied. The Coordinator had never heard of a writing center prior to coming to ADU-Q, whereas some of the English faculty had worked in them in the United States. Some English faculty had utilized writing center services as clients, while others explained that they felt their writing was at a high enough level that they often did not seek out support. Explaining his understanding of a writing center's role, Randy stated:

…my understanding is that they were there…they were there to help without writing the paper. They were there to make suggestions, um, that could be very specific at times but could be very broad at others. Um, and they were just…generally helping me to improve everything that goes into writing, including the thought behind it….I mean I think why I stopped using them was that at, when I was at [university] I would bring my stuff to the writing center and they just wouldn't have anything to say. You know they would just say, "Wow this looks really good, I'm not sure, I think you're writing sort of 'above' my level". Because often they were you know, undergrad tutors, maybe some from the graduate school but even then they'd be in other disciplines and they would just say, you know, your… maybe a couple commas to point out of something like that, but they really stopped being sort of helpful at the level that I was at.

Despite the fact that Randy stopped using a writing center when he felt it stopped being helpful, his belief of the writing center's role did not solely encompass remedial-type work. He clearly stated, "I think the writing center's role is to help them think." Cindy had been trained

and educated as to the nature of writing center pedagogy in the U.S. context, but she also noted the ways in which it needed to be adapted for the ELL population at ADU-Q.

In addition to previous personal experiences with writing centers, English faculty understandings of the Writing Center were also influenced by the tutorial session reports they received. Randy stated, "I appreciate the reports, I read them carefully, I respond to ones that merit response…um I save them, I keep track of them…" Jerry further indicated:

> one thing that I truly appreciate is the level of depth in the feedback that I get from the email…um…for each visit. I think that's fantastic. Because, you know, despite the fact that we're somewhat spoiled in having relatively small classes, um, still to get to that level of…um…knowledge of your students' writing on a one-to-one basis is very time-consuming. So that we have a writing center where you or [name of Writing Center staff] or [name of Writing Center staff] or even some of the tutors now that you have the peer tutors can write up something and say I've seen this person, and this is what they were dealing with. It's just a tremendous help for me to understand that student, you know? And to help to support them.

Silvia indicated that she appreciated the reports, although simultaneously confessed that her grammar abilities were at a far lower level than that of the Writing Center instructors', "It's just…I don't even understand when she writes some of the notes back about some of the things they did…you know, that they addressed in the writing center I'm like I don't know what those terms mean…dangling whatevers and…". Julia also talked about how emailed reports could help her, not necessarily in understanding the Writing Center, but in working with her individual students:

> I do talk to students about their experience post [writing center tutorial session] – especially if I get an email about them going I talk about that with them and see, you know, how it went ….but if they, if you guys have talked to them about a specific thing then that's something I'll be sure to bring up the next time I sit down and talk with them about their paper.

Samantha, the ADU-Q Coordinator, further validated the importance of session reports for faculty:

> in the case of a few professors I think we win them over when, you know, they receive the reports that we write from working with the students….and once they begin to read those reports and get those reports and they compare what those students are doing or they realize what those students are doing compared to some of the others…. they begin to realize, you know what, I don't have to read these half-written, poorly punctuated things, and it's going to make life easier for me if I send them.

Experience with writing centers and interaction with the writing center through the receipt of emailed reports emerged as the greatest influential factors in how English faculty perceptions of the Center had been shaped. Nonetheless, other factors undoubtedly influenced individual opinions, such as hearing back from students, the intimate work environment, and more. Cindy also indicated that the small work environment allowed individuals to get to know each other professionally during personal time:

some of us are personal friends…I mean [name omitted] is my neighbor, has been for years, and a personal friend of mine, and I know she's that way with [name omitted], she and [name omitted] came, started at the same time. Um…so, that's, you know, some of us are personal friends and then I think that, um, there is a general regard and respect for the writing center.

Ongoing experience and interaction with the Writing Center at ADU-Q are the overarching themes of how English faculty have formed their perceptions and understanding of the Writing Center. These insights offer possible critical implications for the disciplinary faculty who have far less experience with/interaction with the Writing Center.

Another overarching theme was that students should receive priority in receiving writing center support. As Jerry said, "I do feel that the first line of services...is…you know, basically, the students come first. And it has to be like that." Randy clearly expressed, "I think the only way it seems to me to go about it is to give the people the most support that need it." Silvia went further by discussing ways in which the Writing Center should not assume responsibility for teaching subject matter that faculty might not be interested in teaching:

The writing center is there to support the classrooms not do all the heavy lifting that you don't want to do in the classroom. And I think particularly at an art and design school it's very difficult for designers who are uncomfortable with writing not to just throw everything on the writing center.

There was also constant recognition that ADU-Q is a unique and entirely different context in the ways that it employs many ELLs as faculty and staff. Consequently, participants seemed to be searching for a model as a guide when it came to writing center support for faculty and staff. When discussing faculty and staff clients in the Writing Center, Silvia stated:

I wonder though if it unduly strains the writing center, particularly the types of writing that they're bringing in which tend to be like dissertations or, you know, articles for scholarly journals….these aren't like a couple of pages. Um…and I don't know of any other writing center that caters to professors, um…so it's a wonderful service…

Jerry reinforced this concern:

…my concern…for the writing center, though, is whether or not those requests from faculty overtax the resources… something to think about is how, how are the work flows managed? Can those requests from people like me and other faculty members really be accommodated without sinking the ship?

Alice expressed similar concerns:

I think it's a little tricky because I hate to think that they're….that they're taking up too much of the time, and that students then can't get in which happens so often toward the end of the semester…which of course, that's not the time for students to be waiting to go but, but I do worry that if faculty is taking up too much time then students….it's…not fair, yeah. So I don't know what the solution is there….

In contrast, Julia bluntly voiced her opposition to helping faculty and staff:

I really don't like it. I feel like it takes away from time that you guys should be spending with students or could be spending with students or should be. I think that…this is something that I…struggling with from the Master's thesis point of view too, at what point do you cut somebody off from the service that's offered freely and what point does it become a professional or, you know, money exchange service?

While Julia expressed her dislike for time spent on working with faculty and staff as clients in the writing center, she offered advice for how this challenge might be overcome, such as offering workshops to a group of faculty.   Samantha also noted the overwhelming demand placed on the Writing Center by faculty and staff clients:

The problem, here, one thing needs to be noted, we're an atypical situation because so many of our faculty are second language speakers. And once they find out what the writing center can do, we have them as students. Uh, so we are at times, very overwhelmed in our responsibilities.

English faculty and the Writing Center staff perceptions seem to align with regard to offering priority services to undergraduate students before assisting faculty and staff. Further quantitative research may offer insight as to the depth of the challenges with prioritization.

As expected, many of the English faculty expressed that one of the primary roles of the Writing Center was that of providing grammar-related English language assistance. Cindy noted how the role of ADU-Q's Writing Center was unique as a result of the local context and demographic composition of learners:

…it's slightly different from perhaps on the home campus. Um, yes, generally I think that it's a support at any stage to the student in their writing.…but I think, too, that what's…an important component is working with students on grammar, and sentence construction, and punctuation, these sorts of things. Because we don't have a lot of time to go over that in class. Um, we're teaching the same things that are taught on the home campus, and it's expected that the student has all these sorts of skills and…um, developed, and established before they get here. That's not really the case here.

Silvia also echoed Cindy's perspective that the curricular requirements assumed many of these skills were in place for students when they entered ADU-Q:

…helping them build those critical skills…um…dealing with the ESL mechanical grammar issues…that's the biggest help to us because we don't have the ability or the time or both to do that as much as we can, and there's really no room in the curriculum for teaching grammar…all the [course] outcomes are based on other things that assume that those elements are already in place…

Julia also acknowledged the problem of underprepared students but, when asked if these weaker students should be required to visit the writing center, she offered a slightly more radical response:

I think it's something that should be headed off at the pass in Admissions if that's an issue. And I think that we really haven't addressed it enough here, but… if a student's

not capable of writing at the university standards coming in, then…they should probably not have been admitted to the school… I don't think that's fair to the student….So maybe that means a readjustment of expectations from the university and a changing of the curriculum of the lower level classes, or…um…restricting admission for students who aren't prepared…

Julia further explained:

…if there's a student who is collectively not getting a lot of things then I'll recommend that they come see me or that they…go to the writing center for help with this particular thing that…that issue…if it's grammar-related or if it's usage related…

Later, Julia also noted how she viewed her own support and that of the Writing Center as equivalent:

I usually say that in tandem...either come to my office hours or go to the writing center because, um…you know, if it's super-busy here I don't want them to feel like they can't come to see me for the same problem, you know?

Time constraints were cited by all English faculty. Randy plainly stated:

I think what it comes down to for me is a matter of time.…if I see that there is just a student that is struggling with writing on so many different levels, I will often send them to the writing center as well as continue to work with me because they need, obviously, a lot of um…one-to-one instruction and time.

Similarly, the ADU-Q Coordinator commented on the importance of basic English language support. She noted that this is one area in which the Writing Center and English faculty may diverge in their roles, "Where we differ is I think we also have uh, the responsibility of the more elementary parts of writing such as the grammar and the punctuation and um…the clarity and…and conciseness and those things."

When discussing language issues related to writing, English faculty and the Coordinator often discussed the critical connection between thinking and writing. Samantha stated, "My motto is clear writing means clear thinking. …And the courses we have here are very much involved with teaching our students to think." Randy articulated this as one of the roles of the Writing Center, "I think the writing center's role is to help them think. …they're there to give suggestions and help them think through things, and things like that…". Alice echoed this challenge, "I think one of the biggest problems is the critical thinking." Cindy went on to note the value of thinking in a different language than their native tongue:

… there are certain kinds of thinking that come around in English.…So I, I'm wondering if, I think it helps people you know, if you're used to thinking in certain patterns in your native language, to learn another language, you might find out that you're thinking in different patterns.

This recurring theme offers validation that while somewhat dated, Kaplan's (1966) discussion of contrastive rhetoric and cultural thought patterns remains a concern in the present day.

One interesting finding was that although English faculty recognized that they were in a design school, they felt no particular need to teach to or within the disciplines. They seemed to recognize that the issue of disciplinary writing may be part of their teaching context, but, as Jerry commented, "…to be honest with you, other than trying to ground my students more in I guess, academic um…register…um, I don't find a heavy onus on me…I don't feel that...heavy onus to sort of teach to the field of design." Randy felt that connecting design with English was relatively natural in the ways that they share similar concepts, "…most of the skills or tools or concepts or ideas that I articulate to them I will often try to, to re-articulate through the framework of art and design in some way." Alice similarly commented on how the English faculty build on design studies to help shape their courses, "For example…[course name]…what used to be that first essay….now it's the writing about a piece of artwork."

One of the oft-cited concerns from English faculty related to how their work connects with a discipline-specific institution was that of the lack of transfer from English classes to other classes (McHarg, 2013a, 2013b). This theme of problems with transfer of skills is another key issue that could yield stronger social capital for the ADU-Q Writing Center within the entire institutional context.

English faculty perceptions of the use of peer tutors were another aspect of this study's investigation. Cumulatively, English faculty perceived peer tutors as a positive addition to ADU-Q's writing center. Most suggested a general feeling of skepticism at the beginning; as Silvia stated, "I think people were skeptical at first, um…but it has become a really strong program…". The ADU-Q Writing Center Coordinator, Samantha, further validated this sentiment when she voiced how her perspective had changed over time:

> Well, you have convinced me, actually, with the peer tutor program. You know [name omitted], who trained me, uh, when…when I first began talking with her she said "Don't even try peer tutors. The students will not use them because they don't trust their peers." …we really had a changing student body, and we really had enough demand that we needed peer tutors. …I'm tickled to see our students learning that these students who have training can help them.

The English faculty voices indicate a positive perception of the peer tutor program; however, feedback tended to focus on more general ideals of peer tutoring – being a positive model or mentor, being closer in age to students, etc. – rather than any specific language and writing development. Jerry commented:

> Overall, I think it's a fantastic, really a fantastic, um, endeavor, and uh…very worthwhile because it feeds back into the whole idea of the culture of writing, and when you have peers that can model to, you know, a freshman or whatnot, like "one day maybe you will be a peer tutor" or you can be, you know, you'll move to that level of confidence…that sort of thing I think is…sends a really positive message, a hopeful message to our students…as writers….but just by virtue of A) having more people available to work with them; B) having people…much closer, proximity I guess to their age group, umm, and who are typically also students, whether here or elsewhere, uh, I think just sends a really, really strong message to our writers that "you know what, you know, you can move in this direction", you know one day you can be a peer tutor here, you know.

Cindy also stated:

> I think it's a great program. I really do….Again, we are helping to develop student leaders. And because they are responsible for helping other students with language, I imagine that this will make them more conscious of language, conscious about how to write well…I have a feeling it will help them develop in their, help them develop their own ideas and also in their writing.

Silvia also responded with a positive perception of the peer tutor program:

> I think it's fantastic! …and I think people were skeptical at first, um…but that it has become a really strong program, I think a peer can impact a student in even a different way than an instructor can because the student feels like they can relate to this peer a little more, but it also gives them something to aspire to like "here's somebody like me who writes well…" and can teach others and help others, um…so I think it breaks down that idea that we can't be good writers because we're not native speakers or we're not…or because we're ESL…I think it's a fantastic program…

Julia further noted how the peer tutors and English department offer very similar methods of teaching:

> …and also it's something that we do in our own classrooms you know, at least for [course name] I can't constantly be…I mean I can model thesis writing but I also have to let them work in small groups a lot and so in some ways they are tutoring each other, even and helping each other through the process of writing even…without having the official peer tutor title so it's not that strange or…you know…or like beyond the scope of what they're already doing.

Some English faculty still freely expressed their reservations about the questionable competency of peer tutors. For example, despite Jerry's great enthusiasm for the program, he noted:

> …the only concern that I've had, and it's maybe crossed my desk once…? Once or twice… is the actual level of competence, writing competence, of some of the peer tutors. …one or two maybe… emails from the peer tutors, after a visit from, with one of my students. And I've seen some grammatical errors in their email. Now I routinely…make errors in my own email….but they don't strike me to be that type of error, you know, of just sort of quick writing, it's more sort of verb accord, so to speak, and so that poses, for me, a slight concern …still that small con is far outweighed by the pro of having another student there who can write something coherent and can look for coherence in a piece and can help spot the, the larger grammatical issues…

Randy similarly expressed concerns about peer tutor competence:

> …there are some worries that they might not be as qualified as they could be, to help other students.…I'm a little bit concerned that um…that they may not be getting the same quality or level of instruction that is given from someone who has a lot of experience and someone who has been well-trained in it.

Cindy echoed Randy's concerns with her feedback about peer tutors:

> …I have a slight concern about maybe their um, level of achievement or their expertise because they are second language, uh, still in college, students, um, but I trust the writing center faculty to supervise and work with them on this. So it's a concern that's not really deep. It doesn't run deep, I just have wondered about it at times.

Despite any reservations or hesitations, all English faculty returned to being strong supporters of the peer tutor program and perceived the tutors as a positive addition to the Writing Center.

In addition to responses from the interview questions, some additional themes emerged during this study. The first, perhaps most salient theme was the emergence of unsolicited suggestions and recommendations for ADU-Q's writing center. Many of these stemmed from questions about the role of the Writing Center in assisting faculty and staff. English faculty indicated that although services for faculty might be valuable, necessary, and appreciated, they should only be offered only if writing center staff time permits. Another emergent theme related to the purpose and existence of the American higher education institution within Qatar. Responses suggested almost an existential questioning of the governmental mandate in the region. Jerry questioned the purpose of his mission when discussing the use of English in an Arabic-speaking context:

> … it's really a philosophical slash ideological um…question. And it goes to the core of what the purpose of, you know, the Knowledge City campuses are. Is it Westernization slash modernization? Is it globalization? Um…or is it enhancement of local culture and local skills? I think…clarity is desirable…

Randy said:

> …you know, ideally we would not be here. I mean that's sort of my opinion. Ideally they would not need us nor want us...the powers that be that have invited all of these branch campuses. I mean the upper levels of government, right, are the people that are spearheading this whole endeavor. I mean…it's so difficult because the system is set up in such a monolingual way. You know like myself for instance…I can't help them with their Arabic, that's just the reality of my position. I can help them enrich and strengthen their speaking, writing, thinking skills in English…um, but I can't help them with their Arabic and…ideally they would… have some kind of system that that would be multilingual or maybe focuses almost exclusively in Arabic with English as an option… but the political…it's so complicated, you know, the story of why we're here goes back hundreds and hundreds of years…

While English faculty tended to question their role in the country's scheme, Samantha felt the country's vision was somewhat clear, "[W]e are here for…a particular reason, for a particular time, and they don't want us to have citizenship, they don't want us to stay, this is their country."

Undoubtedly, Qatar remains in a stage of rapid development that will continue to transform the spheres of education, society, and politics. Participants also discussed this phenomenon in relation to how they view Qatari and non-Qatari students. While Silvia admitted "I don't even really know a lot of times which ones are Qatari and which ones are not….," most

faculty indicated a clear distinction between the two groups. Jerry noted that despite the benefits and services prioritize for Qatari students, this may, in fact, be a drawback:

> I know this sounds funny to say this almost an at-risk population [Qatari students] when it comes to equal access to um, the job market and education. And why I say that is…basically inviting people to do something and having them actually do it are two different things…

Alice shared this concern of Qataris becoming an at-risk population:

> …because of the way their [Qatari] elementary and you know, all of that early learning was happening the way it took place, um…it has…it's penalized them a little…it's put them behind, so that when these other students from other places, other countries come shining through….it's….it's not fair, it's kind of sad…but I think….I think it's changing….

Randy echoed similar concerns about Qatari students being "left behind".

> I feel like the Qatari students are kind of getting left behind somehow. And that the expat students because they're so…they seem to be so well-educated, motivated, and everything else to begin with, they're the ones who are getting the most out of this education. And the Qataris are somehow getting left out. Not intentionally…I think it's, it's, it's a sort of a product of the situation.

Another emergent theme related to questions of ethical responsibility related to helping students. The question of ethics related to writing was an issue for both English faculty and the Writing Center in terms of how much assistance students should receive. Randy explained his conflicted feelings, "You know, when I'm going in to evaluate papers I think to myself, "How much specific advice, you know, should I give?" Should I do sort of these line-by-line scans and edits….is that really helping them to learn?" Alice indicated that her position had changed throughout her years at ADU-Q, "…I've tried more and more through the years is to steer away from doing that line-by-line editing, proofreading and I try to emphasize with my students the 3 levels of, of revising." Jerry offered this question of levels of help as one of his reasons for referring students to the Writing Center, "I feel, ethically, a little bit better if they're able to sit in with somebody else and work with them on their writing and then bring it back to me." Interestingly, Samantha also hinted that she did help too much at times, "I'm sure I earned a couple of Bachelor's degrees along with some of the students. I had repeat students who came in daily, essentially, because their language use was ….not up to par." Finally, although English faculty questioned to what level and degree they should provide direct language assistance, they were also optimistic about their students' willingness to read feedback and incorporate suggestions into their writing. Silvia recalls:

> They ask for feedback more than they did in [home campus]. They follow feedback more. Students here, and I've actually had to sort of limit this…they will revise until…the last second… Students here, if you give them a C, they're going to revise until…they're not at a C anymore.

Cindy repeated this sentiment, "…they get tons of feedback and they appreciate it and they read it."

Results of this study reinforced the appropriate selection of a sociocultural framework. Almost all participants' responses related to notions of what it means to be teaching and working in the local Qatari context. Work and life are inextricably linked. As Julia noted, "[E]verything in my life is completely connected to this job, if I lost my job I would lose where I live."

The local context also dictates that ADU-Q prioritizes local Qatari students. Interestingly, this need for prioritization does not seem to transfer into the classroom. Despite government requests and laws for developing Qatari nationals' human capital, preference is not given to Qatari students in the classroom. English faculty at ADU-Q maintain egalitarian principles in the classroom, and, therefore, do not seem to give additional time or attention to any particular group of students.

Other critical implications for the ADU-Q faculty-Writing Center relationship lie in the social, cultural, and political trajectory of the country, which aligns well with the sociocultural perspective of this study. Participants' voices repeated a refrain of uncertainty with regard to their own positionality and that of the students. The current institutional mandate is for them all to teach solely through English medium, and yet recent political decrees and societal undercurrents suggest that the country may be moving towards a bilingual society. Furthermore, despite the prioritized services for Qatari citizens, these students seem to be falling behind the educational curve in the classroom. What implications do these changes have for faculty in all disciplines at National Institution? At ADU-Q?

Another unique finding relates to the first research question: What are English faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q Writing Center? The participants' voices, both from the English faculty and Writing Center Coordinator, suggest that while English faculty perceptions of the Writing Center may be positive, they have changed over time. These voices also offer insight as to the possible sources of a changing dynamic and possible growing disconnect. In other words, while Julia suggested that she may not collaborate as much due to time constraints and not wanting to confuse the students or Writing Center staff, Samantha viewed this decrease in collaboration as a reflection of the traditional lower status that writing centers have within an institutional framework. She noted that ADU-Q's Writing Center was similar to most "typical" writing centers by its lesser prestige compared to other departments. Samantha also made comments that echoed Perdue's (1991) assertion that "Writing-center directors have another kind of powerful evidence at hand…the progress reports and case histories we and our tutors write…" (p. 18). ADU-Q English faculty perceptions related to conference summaries reinforce Cogie's (1998) findings that conference summaries do provide additional insight for faculty to understand and appreciate the value of writing center work. Cogie's survey "confirmed the value of the weekly reports for the responding instructors" (Cogie p. 55).

While English faculty tended to agree that students should receive priority in receiving writing center support services, there was also clear indication of the perceived need for writing instruction for faculty and staff. As Silvia aptly stated, "We really do have professors who are seriously ESL". Therefore, there is an identified need and an identified possibility for improving the level of English writing proficiency for ADU-Q faculty and staff. This finding may have implications for the future of staffing at ADU-Q's Writing Center; the level of staffing remains

low, but with a demonstrated need to fill, the administration may consider the Writing Center a more key component of the overall institutional success.

Another finding specific to the needs of Qatar is that most of the English faculty and the ADU-Q Writing Center Coordinator commented on the need for more basic grammar instruction with in the writing center. There was a shared acknowledgment that the Writing Center, indeed, was an appropriate place to address the challenge of language development, in particular when students entered the institution less prepared than most of their peers. This finding tends to contrast with general writing center scholarship that recommends writing center work begins with higher order concerns. And while some English faculty embraced this type of teaching themselves, other English faculty participants saw it better-situated in the Writing Center. As Silvia stated, "I'm like I don't know what those terms mean…dangling whatevers and…" English faculty and the ADU-Q Coordinator seem to agree that higher order concerns remain a priority in the Writing Center, but the technical, lower order concerns of grammar and mechanics also play a fundamental role in the work within ADU-Q's Writing Center – more so, perhaps, than in other contexts.

English faculty and the ADU-Q Coordinator shared the common stance that although the genre of writing at a design school was seemingly of no major concern for own their teaching practices, they all worked to support the design faculty through the teaching of writing. Furthermore, there was agreement that transfer of knowledge between and across disciplines remained a concern while working with students.   This shared concern was one that offered another avenue for future research. How can English faculty and the Writing Center at ADU-Q work collaboratively and effectively to support disciplinary-specific writing?

English faculty also raised concerns about the relative academic weaknesses with which many Qatari students enter into the classroom. This population of students, which receives preference and priority services according to government mandates, may, in fact, be "falling behind". These sentiments echo recent news reports that suggest a level of underpreparation the Qatari students face (Khatri, 2011). The ADU-Q Writing Center, a support service for university students, faculty, and staff, may be best positioned to provide the language and critical thinking support that English faculty indicate is needed. However, there remains uncertainty as to how the various levels of administration and hierarchy within ADU-Q and National Institution may implement such a prioritization. For example, American higher education institutions are bound by egalitarian principles and legal constraints for all stakeholders – how might this conflict with National Institution's vision to give preference to all Qatari citizens? Participants' voices echoed similar concerns with questions about the direction in which the country planned to proceed. While it was not the aim of this study to answer these types of questions, they do bring these challenges to the forefront of education in Qatar.

Silvia asked the question about what English faculty might do for the Writing Center. Walker (1991), who writes about the importance of a solid faculty-writing center relationship, offers one way to enhance this collaboration: "A third way to involve faculty directly in the Writing Center is to invite them to make short presentations to the tutors in an area of their expertise" (p. 13). This suggestion is also worthy of further investigation. If English faculty such as Silvia are offering expertise and others, such as Julia, are hinting that a more formalized faculty-writing center relationship be formed, then Walker's invitation to make presentations

may be a likely solution at ADU-Q. Another key findings of this study relates to the challenge that students face with regard to transferring skills across the disciplines. This perception related to the English faculty-Writing Center relationship because both groups expressed concern that students were not able to utilize the skills they learned in their English classes by transferring those to their design majors. This challenge has great implications for future research, in particular for enhancing the social capital of the Writing Center within the institution. The ADU-Q Writing Center is positioned in such a way that gives Center staff access to students throughout their entire university education – not just in particular courses or during particular years of their studies. Therefore, it may be a positive benefit for the ADU-Q Writing Center staff to focus on this opportunity to maintain continuous interaction with students. Would it be meaningful and relevant for each student to be assigned to a particular Writing Center instructor or tutor throughout their education at ADU-Q? What types of training strategies could be implemented in the Writing Center to ensure continuity of teaching for each individual learner?

Interestingly, Silvia concluded our interview by asking, "What would the writing center here want from the English program different than what we're doing now? Like in an ideal world, what could we be doing better for the writing center?" Her question began to indicate the importance of simply conducting research – by asking questions and involving English faculty, I was beginning a conversation that could extend to the future. Despite this sense of optimism, the recurring theme of time restrictions and limitations remained pervasive, and suggests that collaborative efforts between faculty and the Writing Center may need to be implemented, at least initially, by imposing a top-down approach.

Taking the time to simply schedule a formalized meeting time and getting feedback offered insight into English and Writing Center faculty perceptions. Participants felt actively engaged; furthermore, they all expressed interest in learning about the results. For example, Jerry ended our interview with the following sentiment:

> [J]ust to do this, to just have that focus on writing center uh…I mean…clearly you're using here specifically, but as a wider area, um…I think is really, really valuable…umm, you know, and for the same reason that I'm a believer in what the writing center does. So that anything you can do that, to enhance its role, and its effectiveness, I'm all for it.

Silvia also concluded our interview with offers of assistance by asking, "What would the writing center here want from the English program different than what we're doing now? Like in an ideal world, what could we be doing better for the writing center?" Her question opened the door for increased dialogue between the Writing Center and English faculty. These positive interactions suggest an optimistic future for the development of English faculty-Writing Center relations, and suggest that additional research is worthy of exploring.

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[i] Selections of this article were taken from the original study; see (McHarg, 2013b).

[ii] See Appendix for sample interview questions.

[iii] All names and institutions are pseudonyms. To ensure confidentiality, any potentially identifying information has been modified or omitted in this document.

[iv] While statistics reflect the pervasive dominance of English in these fields, the linguistic imperialism of English is not without controversy; Pennycook (1994, 2007) and others continue to problematize this linguistic imperialism.

v Knowledge City is an area of Doha that houses the branch campuses of the imported American universities. For a more detailed description of the development of Knowledge City, see Kane (2011).

vi While it is not within the scope of this study to examine the differences between the various centers, it is notable that they do vary considerably and are constantly changing. Trimbur's (2000) work on the changing identity of global writing centers offers a clear indication of some of the changes that writing and academic centers in Knowledge City struggle with now.

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APPENDIX
Sample Interview Questions for English faculty Participants

1. Tell me about yourself — where were you born, where have you lived, what language(s) did your parents speak, etc.
2. Tell me about your educational background (where did you go to school – which country(ies), what was the language of instruction, public/private, etc.).
3. How long have you lived in Qatar?
4. How did you end up working at ADU-Q? Tell me about your experience at ADU-Q so far.
5. As you know, I'm interested in investigating your perceptions of the writing center. Therefore, I am interested in any experience you have with writing centers, either in the past or the present. When you were a student at other universities, did those institutions have a writing center? What was your perception of it and/or interactions with it? What about as a faculty member?

6. I've seen a wide range in the way faculty interact with their students, especially in the smaller, intimate environment at Knowledge City institutions. For example, some faculty are very close and friendly with their students, while others keep a greater distance because of cultural differences. What kind of relationship(s) do you typically have with your students?

7. What type of language or other academic support do you give your students? How does this affect the relationship between you, students, and writing center? Does gender play a role in how you interact with a student? Nationality? What other factors influence your work with students and the writing center?

8. What do you think is the role of the writing center at ADU-Q?

9. A lot of faculty (generally speaking, not specifically ADU-Q faculty) have told me that students whose native language is not English should be required to go to the writing center for a quick grammar check and proofread. Can you tell me about your thoughts on that?

10. You're an expert in _____ (literature/English/other). Some people say that because you're in the English department, you should provide every type of English support. Since most students at ADU-Q are not native English speakers, they often need more language assistance. What do you think is your role in providing ESL support? The writing center's role?

11. Can you describe the relationship between the English faculty and the Writing Center? How do your roles intersect and/or differ?

12. Tell me about your experience with the writing center at ADU-Q (have you worked with the Coordinator, do you know students who have visited, have you referred students?)

13. How does writing in the disciplines (WID) affect your role as English faculty? The Writing Center's role?

14. Have you ever been a client yourself to the writing center? How do you feel about faculty and/or staff as WC clients?

15. How do you feel about yourself as a writer? (Do you like to write, do you feel you are a good writer, what kinds of things do you write, do you receive support while you are writing, etc.? What do you think your own strengths and weaknesses are as a writer?)

16. What do you know about peer tutors in the writing center? How do you feel about the use of peer consultants (generally speaking and/or specifically at ADU-Q)?

17. How does the location of the Writing Center have any impact on your use of/relationship with it? Please explain.

18. How do you think the writing center connects with students' overall academic experience at ADU-Q?

19. Obviously the mandate by NI is that English is the medium of instruction just as it is on the home campus. However, it is also clear that many of the students will ultimately use Arabic as their primary language in the workplace. What are your thoughts on this? What do you think about being trained in English and then using Arabic in the workplace? Is there a role for the writing center in this?

20. I have heard that sometimes faculty advise students not to visit the writing center. From your personal experience, and/or from anecdotal experience, can you talk about that?

21. The program is primarily aimed at attracting Qatari students. Furthermore, National Institution has clearly stated that Qatari students should be the primary recipients of services, including academic support. How do you see this playing out in admissions procedures, the classroom, and the institution?

22. Do you see differences in the classroom between Qatari and non-Qatari students? Please explain.