

The Write Way

"Master the Word and You Shall Master Your World"

A Northwest Vista College Publication from the Centers for Academic Reading and English Support (CARES) in Juniper Hall

June 3, 2013

Vol. II, Issue IV

Summer School Is A Commitment To Your Future

It may not be easy to forgo a summer vacation, especially after a grueling spring semester, but if you have elected to attend summer school this year, rest assured that the decision to do so is a positive commitment to your future.

Although there may be a downside to skipping a summer vacation to go to school such as curtailed leisure time with friends and family, the upside is that not only are you going to get ahead of your degree plan, but it will also teach you an invaluable lesson in discipline because that is what it takes to make it through summer classes. In essence, summer school ramps up your motivation



to concentrate on your studies.

Anyone who has attended collegiate summer school will tell you that it is hard because classes run at such a fast pace, but most will also tell you that it is worth the effort.

Those who struggle with a specific subject during the regular semester will find it easier to concentrate on it during summer school, especially if it is the only course they are enrolled in. Getting through a class in summer school that you find challenging will also make it easier to understand and complete your courses in the fall semester.

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The CARES Labs

The College English Center

JH216 Mon -Thurs: 8AM-9PM
Fri-Sat: 9AM -2PM

Developmental English Lab

JH229 Mon -Thurs: 9AM-9PM
Fri - Sat: 9AM -2PM

Developmental Reading Lab

JH110 Mon -Thurs: 9AM-5PM

Advocacy Center

JH308 Mon - Thurs 8AM - 5PM

Visit us at:

<http://www.alamo.edu/nvc/tutoring/cares/>



CARES Student of the Month

Never Giving Up Drives Schirmer to Academic Success

Life can sometimes be so hard and cruel that it takes a monumental effort and motivation not to just throw up our hands and give up.

That would be the case with Northwest Vista College business major Denise Schirmer, who has overcome overwhelming odds to succeed not only in academics, but in life as well.

"Never give up on your dreams no matter what is happening in your life, and one day you will find those dreams really coming true like I have," Schirmer explained.

It is because of this positive attitude that she has garnered near perfect grades here at NVC and is also the reason she has been selected as the CARES Student of the Month for



Denise Schirmer

June 2013.

Born to poverty in a rural village in the north-western part of Brazil, Schirmer was orphaned at a young age and was then raised by an abusive aunt.

"Yes, it was a very poor place to live," she recalled, "and there were absolutely no amenities like we see here in America. That made life very hard for me, but I never gave up trying to go to school and trying my best to succeed."

She could only endure the abuse and poverty for so long, and when she was 13 she made her way to the big city of Sao Paulo, some five hours away from her town. In Sao Paulo, she continued with her schooling, but when things became very difficult, she reluctantly had to drop out of the 11th grade.

As her life continued to evolve, she eventually married and later emigrated to Seattle, Washing-

(See Schirmer, Page 2)

... From the English Faculty

Technical Writing Is Helpful For All Academic Majors

Along with its composition, creative writing and literature classes, Northwest Vista's English department offers English 2311, Technical Writing.

So, what is this class and why would anyone want to take it? According to the college catalog's course description, it involves the "Intensive study of and practice in professional settings. Focus on the types of documents necessary to



John Schulze

make decisions and take action on the job, such as proposals, reports, instructions, policies and procedures, e-mail messages, letters, and descriptions of products and services. Practice individual and collaborative processes involved in the creation of ethical and efficient documents." Richard Johnston-Sheehan, the author of the textbook used for this class at NVC, *Technical Communication Today*, has a short definition of technical writing as "a process of managing technical information in ways that allow people to take action." The most obvious way of allowing people to take action is writing instructions or recipes that tell them what to do, step by step. But it can

also take the form of an analytical report or a proposal that helps people understand an issue so they can make an informed decision.

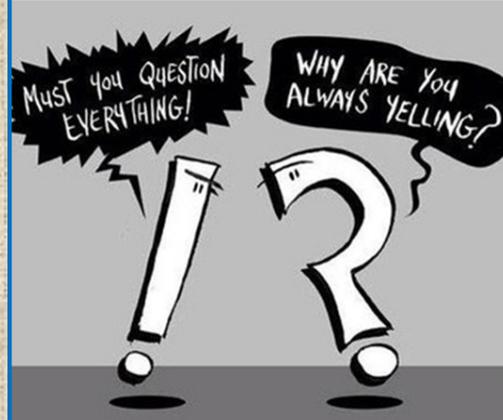
In general, It's a class that covers the types of writing people would use in their jobs. Other schools may title the equivalent course Professional Writing." For example, students studying business would pick up skills in the areas of letters, memos, and analytical reports. Computer science majors would find the lessons on technical specifications, instructions, and documentation useful in their work. There's something of use in this class for every major, and there are general sections on subjects useful to everyone: presentations, working in teams, ethics, design, and graphics.

Most importantly, the technical writing class teaches how to write clearly and concisely for specific audiences. The emphasis is on using what's called "plain style" in writing. And, as the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the class content includes

designing websites and using social networking tools. It's a class that teaches communication skills that are useful in any profession.

Who should take technical writing? It's a good choice for anyone who wants to develop communication skills that will help them succeed in any field!

Grammar LOL



- Q: What's another name for Santa's elves?**
- A: Subordinate Clauses.**
- Q: "What letter of the alphabet has got lots of water?"**
- A: "The C"**
- Q: What begins with T, ends with T and has T in it?**
- A: A teapot.**
- Q: What five-letter word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?**
- A: Short**
- Q: Is there a word in the English language that uses all the vowels including "y" ?**
- A: Unquestionably!**
- Q: What is the longest word in the English language?**
- A: Smiles. (There is a mile between the first letter and the last letter.)**
- Q: What's the longest word in the dictionary?**
- A: Rubber-band -- because it stretches.**

Schirmer (continued from Page 1)

ton, but soon lost her husband to disease. After a brief time in California, Schirmer decided to move to San Antonio to rebuild her life and continue on with her academic quest..

"Before I could get accepted to Northwest Vista, I had to get my GED, but that was no problem as I also ended up testing out of five different classes, so it was a good start," she explained.

Schirmer, who speaks three languages, has maintained a 4.0 GPA in all of her studies so far and remains a dedicated student who plans on obtaining her BS in Business and then a Master of Business Administration from the University of Texas at San Antonio.

However, Schirmer is not waiting around to succeed in business while she finishes her academic education as she has already launched an online business project called

Runners Relief.
 "My business sells medicinal products for horses that have to do with the problems they have with their muscles, ligaments, and tendons. Texas is just the perfect place to sell these products, and that is why Runners Relief has been doing so well!"
 Meanwhile, Schirmer's favorite hobbies are exercising and running, and she plans on participating in various 5K and 10K marathons until she feels confident enough to compete in San Antonio's annual Rock n' Roll marathon.
 When asked what advice she has for students, Schirmer said, "America is such a great place to live because there are so many opportunities to succeed. There is no other place like it, and I think that students should keep in mind that they live in such a wonderful country where they can succeed if they want to".

Reaching Out To English Students One at a Time

To teach or write for a living were the options facing Adolfo Butch Cárdenas during graduate school at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, but little did he imagine that he would be doing both at Northwest Vista College's Center for Academic Reading and English Support (CARES).



Adolfo Butch Cárdenas

"I took the tutoring job here at NVC to help pay the bills while submitting and soliciting various writing projects I have completed," he explained. "However, I never thought that I would find tutoring English to be such a rewarding experience."

Cárdenas has worked for CARES since 2010 and tutors college-level English composition as well as American, British, and World literature along with Creative Writing in the English Writing Lab in Juniper Hall.

"Unlike classroom teaching where instructors and professor usually have to wait until the end of the semester to see the fruits of their academic labor," Cárdenas noted, "we tutors see the results of our work almost immediately, especially when students proudly return to the Writing Center to show us their grades. For me, this is very rewarding and is the reason I will not quit my day job here at NVC."

Meanwhile, in late 2012, Cárdenas was published by Floricanto Press of California, and his Young Adult Literature novel *Por La Calle North Claremont: Beto Stories* is currently being sold online worldwide through numerous companies like Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

"Getting published has been a long, hard road," he explained, "but if you truly believe that your writing has literary merit and if you never give up no matter how many rejection slips you may get, the end result will be a publishing contract and the realization of a dream come true." He added that having his book sold around the world has been a pleasant surprise, but is especially proud to join the pantheon of published authors in American Literature.

A native son of South Texas, Cárdenas is a former Vietnam-era Marine sergeant and has worked as a veteran award winning political newspaper journalist throughout the American Southwest and Mexico.

Because he is a military veteran who has used his Veterans Administration benefits to educate himself, Cárdenas is able to help out those veterans attending NVC and seeking help with their English courses.

As a 2005 honor graduate from Texas A&M - CC with a degree in English and a minor in Creative Writing, Cárdenas has completed his graduate coursework in Composition and Rhetoric. As a graduate assistant, he served as technical writer for two years with A&M- CC's Department of Computers, Media & Telecommunications.

An avid creative writer, he has been previously published in academic literary journals and reviews. Aside from writing, his hobbies are playing acoustic guitar, cooking, and gardening. Cárdenas tutors in the Writing Center in JH 216 on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays.

Summer School

(continued from Page 1)

Now that you have committed to attending summer school, here are some things that you may want to keep in mind to get you through the summer semesters:

- Know and establish what your academic goals are for the summer.
- Once you have enrolled, scrutinize the course syllabus and plot your time accordingly.
- Because of the fast pace of summer school, do not put off reading and writing assignments until the last minute.
- Do not miss any classes because one summer class session is equivalent to missing two weeks of the regular semester.
- Finish your homework early so that you can have a little leisure time to enjoy the long summer days.
- Keep a healthy balance between summer schoolwork and leisure time.
- Try to stay ahead of all of your assignments.
- Do not let friends who are not attending summer school become a distraction, and
- Stay motivated!

Because summer classes each day are long, be sure to have a good breakfast or lunch (depending on your class schedule), and ease up on the caffeinated beverages.

Be sure to use the facilities in our library and remember that it is not a bad idea to study and complete your reading and writing assignments in the library before going home after classes.

It may not seem like it now as the summer semesters begin, but in the end you will realize that choosing to attend summer school may be one of your best decisions in your academic career. Good luck!



"Sorry to interrupt, but you've got subject-verb disagreement in the third stanza."

Stay Healthy and Breeze Through Summer School

There are several things that you have to worry about for the summer semesters such as course availability, financial aid, school-books, and supplies. However, one very important thing that you should also take into account is your health.

In this month's edition of *The Write Way*, and in particular, its column "Student Health & Wellness", health issues and concerns will be addressed that will help all of our Northwest Vista College students attending one or both summer school sessions succeed academically.

The first three health and wellness topics to be addressed are diet, exercise, and sleep, which are all important factors that can contribute to your academic success or failure.

Diet — What goes into your body and how much have a direct effect on your health. Learn proper portion sizes and remember that just because food is labeled as healthy or low

fat does not mean you can eat more and not gain weight. Vary your healthy meals so that you won't get bored with eating the same thing every day.

Begin your day with a healthy breakfast and avoid those embarrassing stomach rumbles during class. Be sure to pack some healthy snacks to munch on during or in between classes, avoid the junk food, but don't skip any meals! Drink plenty of water and try to eat lots of fruits and veggies.

Exercise — A regular regimen of exercise will help you concentrate on your studying and will give you enough energy to make it through the day. Choose an activity that will challenge your physical abilities or one that you can do with family members or friends.

Before beginning your exercise activity, be sure to stretch your muscles and limber up your body, especially if you haven't worked out in a while. Properly stretching will help avoid pulled or strained muscles that could make it hard to

walk, much less attend class and concentrate on schoolwork.

Take advantage of NVC's Health & Wellness Center (located in Huisache Hall), which is free this summer to all students, faculty, adjuncts, and staff (full and part time). Keeping your body attuned to regular exercise will also prevent stress that seems to go hand-in-hand with summer school.

Sleep - It is no big revelation that college students usually stay up late and then get up early to attend class or work. However, getting enough sleep is an important part of staying healthy. When you sleep, your body begins to repair itself, so it is important to get adequate sleep to allow for this process.

Normally, the human body requires seven to nine hours of sleep, but because of your work and/or school schedule, this may not be possible. However, do try to get a full night's sleep whenever possible.

If you feel that you have to take a nap during the day when your schedule allows, do so! A short or "power" nap can do wonders to sharpen your concentration, but do not take one close to your scheduled bedtime.

Be sure to avoid any caffeine or energy drinks late in the day or evening as this will keep you from falling into your natural sleep cycle and affect your day as you will obviously feel sleepy, but you will also be cranky as well. Create and adhere to a regular sleep schedule to insure you are getting enough sleep.

So, these are just some of the things that will help you maintain your health during summer school, but are also a great routine to follow throughout the school year. In July's issue of *The Write Way*, this column will address stress, mental health, and other miscellaneous issues.

If It's Free, It's At The Huisache Hall Health & Wellness Fitness Center!

Keeping healthy is an essential part of getting through college, and in particular, summer school. Exercising on a regular basis will keep your wits sharp and help you concentrate on your class and home work. Summer school can be a particularly stressful time, but once again, NVC's Health & Wellness Fitness Center and gym are opened to all students, faculty, and adjuncts as well as to all full and part time staff members during the summer. To get started on a healthier footing at The Center, you must be 18 years old and have a current summer ID card.

If you are a first time visitor, as a student you must provide a copy of your summer school registration, and you must sign a waiver. The Center's hours of operation are:

May 20 – May 31, Mon – Fri: 7:30 am - 6 pm. Closed on Sat & Sun

June 3 – Aug 2, Mon – Thurs: 7:30 am – 7 pm. Closed Fri Sat & Sun

August 5 – August 23 - Mon – Fri: 7:30 am – 6 pm. Closed Sat & Sun

Please keep in mind that the gym is open for use when Kinesiology classes are not using the gym. Also keep in mind that the Fitness Center, gym, and track is closed when NVC's main campus is closed and classes are not in session such as on the Fourth of July. However, hours may be adjusted due to non-usage. For more information, please contact the Fitness Center Desk at 486-4612.

The C.A.R.E.S Newsletter Staff for June 2013 was comprised of English Composition, Developmental Reading, and Writing instructors and tutors.

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