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On Location

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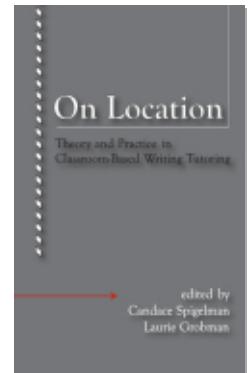
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PART ONE

Creating New Alliances and Connections Through Classroom-Based Writing Tutoring

Fostering diplomatic relationships, building bridges, creating intensive-care communities, establishing trust and common ground: these are the concepts that resonate through part one of *On Location*. They point to the many connections that are fostered by and through the hybridity of classroom-based writing tutoring programs, and they emphasize new relationships formed between writing centers and students, tutors and faculty across the disciplines, tutors and students. These associations, in turn, yield additional benefits: writing group facilitation assists students to create knowledge together and improve their writing abilities; tutors develop their writing, critical thinking, and social skills; writing centers witness increased respect for and use of their services; and faculty across the disciplines find needed support to bring productive writing assignments to their students.

Thus, Teagan Decker describes the productive “diplomatic partnership” between the writing center and classroom instructors fashioned through on-location tutoring. Classroom tutors act as “emissaries,” promoting conversations among teachers, the writing center director, and various groups of students. From a different angle, Mary Soliday addresses connections between disciplinary discourses, revealing that tutors with generalist literacy training can successfully bridge specialized writing situations in WAC courses. Taking a “writing in the course” approach that considers the teacher’s specific expectations, she argues that peer tutors, regardless of major or course, can enhance undergraduate teaching by assisting with general writing strategies.

A very different kind of discursive bridging occurs when peer group leaders are effectively integrated into the classroom culture. According to Laurie Grobman, tutors can create a theoretical bridge between the discourses most familiar to students and those of academic communities. She argues that undergraduate classroom-based writing tutors are best suited to this task because they can simultaneously model academic response, guide writing group conversation, and maintain their status as college-level peers. Also focusing on basic writing, Jim Ottery, Jean Petrolle, Derek Boczkowski, and Steve Mogge discuss peer tutors’ central role in a successful summer Bridge Program learning community. They describe how classroom-based writing center consultants were able to provide academic support

and, even more important, to foster a welcoming and caring environment for their students. In so doing, peer tutors helped Bridge students establish a college identity while giving faculty a unique opportunity to consider their roles as teachers. Likewise, Casey You reveals that peer group leaders can foster a sense of connection and community among writers of varied proficiency by encouraging students to take on leadership roles within their groups and by validating each student's accomplishments.

As we reflect on and celebrate the varied connections and new relationships that these chapters suggest, we note that these collaborations are never without tension and never completely settled. From our perspective, this is exactly what makes hybrid practices so exciting.