

EMERGING CONVERSATIONS:

Tutors and students speak out on
first-year writing in nursing education

5th Research Showcase

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WHAT WAS STUDIED?

First-year students and tutors
were asked to share experiences of
teaching and learning a Year 1
clinical writing assignment

LITERATURE

➤ **Intellectual Development**

(Baxter-Magolda, 2004)

➤ **Discipline-specific Pedagogy**

(Bean, 2011; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Miller, 1994)

➤ **Writing & Writing Assignments**

(Troxler & Oermann, 2011; White, 2007; Whitehead, 2002)

METHODOLOGY

- **INTERDISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORKS:** Situated learning, Writing-to-learn, Institutional Ethnography
- **PARTICIPANTS:** Year 1 nursing students ($n=11$) and tutors ($n=4$)
- **ASSIGNMENT:** Community Practice Project
- **METHOD:** Classroom observation; semi-structured interviews; focus group; peer writing sessions; textual analysis of assignment documents
- **ANALYSIS:** Content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002)

FINDINGS

THE SOCIAL NATURE OF LEARNING-TO-WRITE IN NURSING

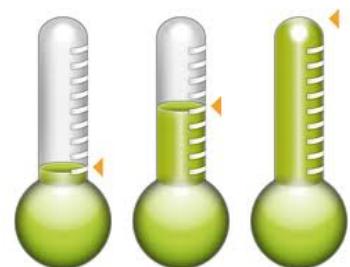
RELATIONSHIP OF ANXIETY TO THE LEARNING PROCESS

Inherent expectations and assumptions

**Provoked
by writing assignments**

YEAR 1 ACADEMIC CULTURE

Students	Tutors
“given” knowledge	“co-participants”
<i>Assumption fuels Anxiety</i>	
Constraints in learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High mark value (60%)• APA style of writing	Constraints in teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6-week course length• Prioritizing learning objectives





Year 1 student's culture:

- Express Ideas
 - Read Documents
 - Write APA Style

OPENING CONVERSATIONS

Year 1 Students	Year 1 Tutors
WRITING PERSPECTIVES	WRITING PERSPECTIVES
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We are looking for the purpose behind your assignments2. We look to tutors to help write clearly about content3. Unexplained complimentary comments are not useful4. Our relationship with tutors is central to our learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Allow peer-group writing sessions2. Provide assignment-specific rubrics and scoring guides3. Integrate teaching-to-write strategies as part of instructional professional development

UNDERSTANDING WRITING CULTURE

①

DISCIPLINARY WRITING IS CULTURAL: Preparing for professional practice is like learning a second language.
Year 1 is a transitional period.

(Alcalay, 2004)



DECODING TUTOR/STUDENT RESPONSES

We thought students/tutors would talk about the assignment.

Instead . . .

We discovered a constellation of personal, political, relational, emotional, and epistemological dynamics that were previously unknown to us.





Thank you.

We WELCOME COMMENTS
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Misunderstanding the assignment: First-year students and the anxieties of teaching

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