



The Northern California Writing Centers Association
2015 Annual Conference



San Joaquin River, watercolor by Rollin Pickford

FRESNO STATE

Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

Tutoring the “Untutored Tongue”:
From Careless Speech to Careful Writing

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2015 Annual Conference



Blossom Branch, watercolor by Rollin Pickford

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California State University, Fresno | March 6-7, 2015

WELCOME

Welcome to the 2015 NCWCA Conference

The Writing Center at California State University, Fresno, welcomes you to the annual Northern California Writing Centers Association Conference organized in collaboration with writing centers at junior colleges in our area: Clovis Community College Center, College of the Sequoias, Fresno City College and Reedley College.

We are delighted to bring together all of us—tutors, staff and directors—from writing centers all over Central and Northern as well as Southern California, and from the states of Nevada, Colorado, Arizona and Texas.

We have two days of exciting events designed to bring us together as a community, eliminating the distances that separate us, so we can exchange research, practices and experiences. Take advantage of the opportunity to make connections and gather ideas to take back to your writing centers.

As part of the Conference, we also prepared a special event celebrating 35 years of Fresno State's Writing Center. We invite you to participate with us in marking this historic occasion and in honoring all those who have worked in our Writing Center over the past 35 years.

Wishing all of us a stimulating, fruitful and enjoyable conference!

Magda Gilewicz
Conference Coordinator

NCWCA



NCWCA Board Members

Julia Bleakney, Stanford
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Magda Gilewicz, CSU Fresno
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Conference Organizing Group

Magda Gilewicz California State University, Fresno
Joshua Geist College of the Sequoias
Teresa Ishigaki Clovis Community College Center
Rebecca Snyder Reedley College
Jennifer Simonson Clovis Community College Center
Kirk Stone California State University, Fresno
Tabitha Villalba Fresno City College
all the wonderful tutors at Fresno State's Writing Center

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Peter Elbow

Professor of English, Emeritus
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

"I don't see us so far away from a world where *everyone* can say

I have something I want to write. I find writing easy, but I find it very hard work to get my thoughts and words clear and strong. I'm sure I'll be frustrated trying to craft it till it's good—and even copy edit. But I'm looking forward to the work because I know that the *medium* I'll be using—the clay I'll be trying to shape into something I love—is *my own language*."

Peter Elbow *Vernacular Eloquence*

"The untutored tongue" is a concept Peter Elbow developed in his latest book, *Vernacular Eloquence*. In it he shows ways to help students call on everyday unplanned speech to create good writing. He says that of course we can't transcribe unplanned speech as it comes out of our mouths and call it good writing. But the weakness in much careful writing, he argues, can be overcome by calling on linguistic and rhetorical qualities that are found in most people's unplanned speech.

First, he argues that writing can be effective for many readers—even fairly conservative readers—if it has noticeably spoken or oral qualities. This is an argument for loosening some of the strict usage rules for serious writing—and in particular for academic writing. But he goes further. He argues that even when we want to produce writing that conforms to the strictest conventions for correctness, we can improve our writing by calling on features in unplanned speech.

Peter Elbow is Professor of English Emeritus at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and former director of its Writing Program. He is a renowned scholar, ground-breaking practitioner, theorist, and author of nine books, including *Writing Without Teachers*, *Writing With Power*, *Embracing Contraries*, and, most recently *Vernacular Eloquence: What Speech Can Bring to Writing*.

He's published numerous essays on writing, teaching, and evaluation. He served on the Executive Committee of the Modern Language Association and the Executive Committee of the Conference on College Composition and Communication.