

**A shared cabin in the woods:
The presence and presents of writing in residential academic writing retreats**

Snežana Ratković
Brock University

Michelle K. McGinn
Brock University

Dragana Martinovic
University of Windsor

Ruth McQuirter Scott
Brock University

Abstract

In this paper, we investigated a model of academic development based upon a recurring residential academic writing retreat combining individual writing times, workshops, work-in-progress groups and one-on-one consultations with shared meals and informal gatherings in a natural environment. Using a case study research approach, we analysed data accumulated from seven annual residential writing retreats for education scholars. Participants included 39 academics, administrative staff, senior doctoral students and community partners from multiple institutions. We found evidence that the retreats enhanced participants' knowledge of writing and publishing processes, advanced their academic careers, built scholarly capacity at their institutions and strengthened writing pedagogy. The data indicated that the presence of writing and writers at the residential academic writing retreats generated presents (i.e., gifts) for the participants. The presence of writing time, writing goals and writing activities in the company of other writers were key to the retreat pedagogy. Participants appreciated gifts of time and physical space and described giving and receiving peer feedback and emotional support as forms of gift exchange within the community. The resulting writing strategies, competencies and identities provided the gift of sustainability. The analysis confirmed that this ongoing, immersive, cross-institutional, cross-rank, institutionally funded model of academic development was effective and responsive to the needs of individual scholars.

Keywords

Academic Writing; Writers' Retreats; Authorship – Study and Teaching; Qualitative Research; Case Method

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‘Having five days in a row to focus on writing is an unheard-of luxury in my little [academic] world!’ (testimonial, 2013)

Introduction

With the pressure on academics and doctoral students to be productive and influential scholars, it is important to develop institutional supports for academic writing. Much of the literature on academic writing emphasises struggles and negative emotions (Murray, 2013; Wynne, Guo and Wang, 2014). For example, Kamler (2008:290) described doctoral student writing as a process of ‘tremendous effort and struggle’ and Murray (2013:30) warned that for experienced scholarly writers ‘guilt, fear and anxiety do not disappear, but they do diminish’. Lee and Boud (2003) identified scholarly writing as a key site for fear and anxiety, as well as desire. Although writing pedagogies have been documented (e.g., Belcher, 2009; Boice, 1990; Paltridge, 2016), more studies are needed to articulate how academic institutions can support academic writers.

Writing group pedagogy is promoted in academic development (Badenhorst et al., 2016; Grant, Munro, McIsaac and Hill, 2010; MacLeod, Steckley and Murray, 2012; Paltridge, 2016) and doctoral education (Aitchison, 2009; Bommarito, 2015; Jones, 2018; Kamler, 2008; Wegener, Meier and Ingerslev, 2016; Wynne et al., 2014). A recurring theme in this literature is the need for writing support that is more substantial and sustainable than handbooks or occasional workshops (Castle and Keane, 2016; Kornhaber, Cross, Betihavas and Bridgman, 2016; Singh, 2012). Murray (2015) argued that writing retreats should be regular writing strategies. Writing retreats not only facilitate publishing and scholarly socialisation of writers, but also encourage academics to honour writing in their lives (Murray, 2015; Murray and Newton, 2009).

Colleagues from two universities conceptualised a multi-institutional writing retreat while working together on other joint projects. The retreats were initially funded by the Dean at one university and the Research Leadership Chair at the other university. The pedagogy for the retreats was underpinned by two key theoretical concepts: (a) writing as discursive social practice (Kostouli, 2009; Lillis, 2001) and (b) writing as simultaneously text work and identity work (Ivanič, 1998; Kamler and Thomson, 2011; Ploisawaschai, 2015).

Through a case study of seven residential academic writing retreats (2007--15), we investigated how education scholars benefited from the retreat pedagogy. Inspired by Grant’s (2008) approach, the retreats combined individual writing times, workshops, work-in-progress groups and one-on-one consultations with shared meals and informal gatherings in a natural environment. This paper will be of interest not only to established and emerging academic writers, but also to individuals and institutions charged with supporting academic writers, nurturing writers’ identities and celebrating the presence and presents of writing.

Literature review

The purpose of an academic residential writing retreat is to foster the creation of a community of writers in a setting removed from the everyday work environment. In such a community of writers, knowledge building and identity formation take place for all group members (Wegener et al., 2016). Building on Aitchison and Lee’s (2006) conceptions of mutuality, expertise and writer identity as key elements in peer group learning, Wegener et al. (2016) described mutuality within writing groups as delicate interactions and negotiations related to struggles and insecurities, expertise as insights contributed from diverse perspectives to build common language and understandings, and writers’ identities as accomplishments that emerge from questions of voice, authority and writer location within a learning landscape. Due to these

challenges and complexities, academic writing is often mystified, triggering ‘acute anxiety for many students, academics and professionals’ (Murray, 2015:1). Although difficult and daunting, writing is important for learning, assessment of learning, career progression, clarity of thought, knowledge production and societal well-being. Murray (2015:2) describes writing as a social act often practiced in isolation:

When we write we are influenced by the society of writing around us, [but writing] is not generally discussed in those terms. In some settings it is not discussed at all – it is the very opposite of ‘social’ in that sense. This is paradoxical: a social process that is practiced without the use of social processes. Moreover, when the process of writing is ‘secret’, ‘denied’ or ‘not shared’ it can be difficult to build skills, networks and habits required for writing.

Structured writing retreats and their pedagogies can address this paradox (MacLeod et al., 2012). Retreats work by making writing the primary task, discouraging procrastination and managing writing-related anxiety (Grant and Knowles, 2000; Moore, 2003). Paltridge (2016:200) argued that writing retreats with a pedagogical focus support writers not only in enhancing but also in sustaining their writing: ‘Participants come away from the retreat, not only having produced more writing, but also having learnt more about the context of how their writing will be evaluated and ways in which they can get feedback on, and thereby improve, their writing’.

In the literature, writing retreats have been conceptualised as an intervention (Murray and Newton, 2009), professional-development model (Murray, 2015), peer-mentoring program (Grant and Knowles, 2000), international collaborative writing group (Healey and Matthews, 2017; Marquis, Healey and Vine, 2016) or pedagogy (Paltridge, 2016). The retreats described in these published studies were 2 to 5 days long, structured or semi-structured and attended by 7 (Grant and Knowles, 2000) to 69 participants (Marquis et al., 2016), including academics in their early careers (Paltridge, 2016), experienced writers (Moore 2003), academics across ranks (Dobozy, 2012) or doctoral students and academics at varying ranks (Marquis et al., 2016). Some retreat participants completed individual writing projects such as journal articles, book chapters and doctoral thesis chapters (Grant and Knowles, 2000) whereas others jointly produced anthologies (Dobozy, 2012) or special issues of journals (Healey and Matthews, 2017). Retreats involved scheduled writing activities such as individual writing time, reflection on writing goals and peer review, as well as social activities such as walking and informal networking. Retreat outcomes included enhanced productivity, publications, enjoyment, sense of achievement, emotional support, confidence, motivation, collegiality, understandings of writing and publishing processes, new writing habits, writing partnerships and sense of self as a writer.

Although there are institutional supports in place for student writing, writing supports for academics are often limited, especially social writing opportunities. Few authors have discussed institutionally funded writing retreats (Murray and Newton, 2009; Paltridge, 2016). For academics, social writing has remained on the margins of academic work, viewed as corrective or developmental and approached through short-term funding or proposed quick solutions to writing and publishing ‘problems’. To complicate matters further, these issues are rarely discussed in academia: ‘There may be no reference to the act of writing at all in institutional workloads, procedures and discourses’ (Murray, 2015:105). However, social writing – including structured academic writing retreats – provides opportunities for writers to discuss the complexities of writing and negotiate their work and identities in the contested space of academic writing and publishing.

Theoretical framework

The pedagogy underlying the residential academic writing retreats was informed by two key theoretical concepts: writing as discursive social practice (Kostouli, 2009; Lillis, 2001) and writing as simultaneously text work and identity work (Kamler and Thomson, 2011).

As Ploisawaschai (2015:46--7) states, ‘People display who they are to one [an]other in different contexts through different discourses’. Academic writing is a discursive social practice (Fairclough, 1992), a form of discipline-specific social interaction embedded in institutions, social structures and communities of practice. Kostouli (2009) argued that academic writing retreats are learning contexts, or at least contexts that open learning opportunities, in which participants get inducted into a social-communicative practice of academic writing. This social view, which links individual ability with participation in communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), theorises writing as a ‘dynamic and adaptive set of practices necessarily bound up with the salient activities of a particular scholarly community’ (Bommarito, 2015:268). Academic writing is more than a skill (Lillis, 2001), it includes sharing values and norms with one’s academic group. Learning academic writing is difficult because novice writers are expected to decode writing practices that appear ‘universal to long-time members’ (Paré, Starke-Meyerring and McAlpine, 2011:223). Such a conception of writing development highlights the importance of mentoring and writer communities in the process of writing and being writers.

Writing is ‘an act of identity’ (Burgess and Ivanič, 2010:228) and a representation of self (Ivanič, 1998). Academic writers enact their identities by using discourses that are privileged in academia. Writers’ identities are augmented by the voices of those whom they cite (Ploisawaschai, 2015). The notion of identity can be described as fluid, relational and constructed:

[Identity] is in a constant state of flux, varying from one time and one space to another. . . . It includes the ‘self’ that a person brings to the act of writing, the ‘self’ she constructs through the act of writing, and the way in which the writer is perceived by the reader(s) of the writing. (Burgess and Ivanič, 2010:232)

Kamler and Thomson (2011:19) argued that a scholar and a text are simultaneously produced, for texts are ‘an extension of the scholar and her/his scholarship’. Additionally, Thomson (2015: para. 1) described writing as a contested site of text production, identity formation and authority building:

When we write we not only produce text, we also produce ourselves as scholars. As we make textual decisions – what to write about, who to cite and who to leave out, what evidence to include, how we use language to craft our ‘voice’ – we are also writing ourselves as scholars. . . . Authoring a text is also producing an author – one who speaks with authority.

Drawing on the notion of text work as identity work, we approached group writing pedagogies as activities, processes and practices of identity formation (Fairclough, 2003). We worked with the assumption that social components of writing can help writers not only to make time to write, increase productivity and develop writer identities, but also to ‘find meaning, pleasure and satisfaction in their academic writing’ (Murray, 2015:2).

Retreat structure

A common theme among writers of every genre is the wish to carve out time for creative activities away from everyday demands and distractions. Some may fantasise about a cabin in the woods that has only the bare necessities. Others may envision joining a colony of writers who share the same passion for their work. Academics are no different in their need to find focused time for writing. Although many academics have access to office space in their institutions, they are often unable to concentrate on writing without being drawn away by the myriad tasks that make up the life of an academic.

In 2007, we invited Dr Barbara Grant (University of Auckland) to host a residential writing retreat for academic staff. The retreat was held in a rural conference centre 120 kilometres from the university. The goal of the retreat was for each participant to produce a scholarly paper (e.g., an article ready for publication or a book chapter). The retreat combined extensive quiet writing time with collegial discussion and peer feedback through work-in-progress groups, workshops and individual writing consultations with Dr Grant. Building on this retreat experience and Grant's (2008) facilitator guide, we hosted an annual five-day residential writing retreat (see Appendix A for a sample retreat schedule).

Understanding writing as a social practice (Koustouli, 2009; Lillis, 2001), we intentionally created a retreat structure that facilitated writing as a social endeavour and supported identity work as writers (for details, see McGinn et al., 2019). Consistent with Grant's model, the facilitators engaged as writers and modelled the expected commitment to writing and being writers; we use the term 'writer-facilitators' to cue this dual role. We refer to other attendees as 'writer-participants' to cue that they have no facilitation responsibilities but are expected to prioritise their identities as writers and actively participate throughout the retreats.

The setting of the retreats was integral to their success. Of the seven retreats that form this case, six were held in the same rural conference centre. This continuity allowed returning participants to adjust quickly to the retreat setting. Participants were assigned single rooms in a building separate from other site users. Each room had a desk to allow participants to work in their rooms, but many congregated around the common table in the large meeting room to work independently on their projects. The retreat centre served nutritious meals at specific times and every effort was made to accommodate the dietary needs of each person. As participants shared the meals, they came to know one another in ways seldom promoted in typical institutional settings. People mixed across departments, academic roles and institutions. The atmosphere was punctuated by ideas, laughter and storytelling. During free time, participants chose to walk trails, stroll the onsite labyrinth, read indoors or at picnic tables around the property or participate in informal gatherings. Every effort was made to promote balance between intensive writing and relaxed unstructured time. The collegial atmosphere fostered networking and relationship building, factors that Wegener et al. (2016) identified as important to identity development.

The five-day retreat structure was generally consistent from year to year; however, changes were made based upon participant feedback. Participants were encouraged to submit responses to Brown's (1994/95) questions prior to arrival on site. These questions prompt academic writers writing journal articles to take time at the beginning of the writing process to think about anticipated publication outlets, intended readers, the central question, the main message, methodological approaches, contributions to theory and practice and any remaining issues (see Appendix B).

The retreats began on a Sunday evening with introductions and an overview of the retreat structure and expectations. Participants came prepared to introduce their writing projects and to

describe briefly what they wanted to accomplish over the five days. Residential writer-facilitators introduced the ground rules: respecting writers and writing, ensuring quiet workspaces, minimising disruptions, maintaining confidentiality, committing to reciprocity and staying focused on writing goals. These group norms fostered mutuality (Aitchison and Lee, 2006), the social agreements that enable knowledge building and identity formation.

Each of the subsequent four days began with breakfast, followed by individual writing time for the morning. Afternoons involved a mixture of quiet writing times, workshops provided by residential writer-facilitators or other workshop presenters and one-on-one consultations with writer-facilitators. The workshops and one-on-one consultations were practically focused to build participants' confidence and enhance their knowledge about academic writing. These activities were intended to alleviate some of the anxiety around writing that academics often experience, particularly in early career stages (Wegener et al., 2016).

After dinner on days 2, 3 and 4, participants met for an hour for work-in-progress groups, composed of three or four members. Group members decided who would share their work each evening. Participants usually distributed a few pages to group members before dinner, allowing time to read the material before the meeting. Those presenting began by describing the purpose of their text and any concerns or questions they have. Other members of the group then provided concrete, constructive feedback, with one person designated as recorder. The balance of the evening was devoted to socialising, walking or writing. Participants were free to decide which activities suited their needs.

The work-in-progress groups were vital to social practice and writer identity formation. Groups were purposely structured to include a diversity of background affiliations and academic ranks. As participants assumed different roles as writers, editors and critics in their work-in-progress groups, they 'tried on' various aspects of a writer's identity (Burgess and Ivanič, 2010). The sharing of knowledge and expertise (Aitchison and Lee, 2006) with peers from diverse perspectives promoted the simultaneous building of text and identity (Kamler and Thomson, 2011). The collegial nature of the work-in-progress groups encouraged networking and relationship building and modelled key aspects of writing as discursive social practice.

The retreats concluded mid-afternoon on the fifth day with a closing workshop where participants debriefed about what they had accomplished and how they intended to sustain their writing over time. Participants completed an evaluation that was used by writer-facilitators to plan subsequent retreats.

Overall, the pedagogy underlying the retreats served to foster an environment that addresses obstacles to successful academic writing, promoting writing as discursive social practice and as simultaneous text and identity work. For many participants, this retreat model provided a proverbial 'shared cabin in the woods'.

Research methods

Using a case study design, we set out to answer the following research question: *What is the perceived value (individually and collectively) of a residential academic writing retreat combining individual writing times, workshops, work-in-progress groups and one-on-one consultations with shared meals and informal gatherings in a natural environment?* Similar to Yin (2003:1), we argue that case study is the appropriate strategy 'when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context'. We define case study design as an exploration of 'a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) . . . over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and

reports) . . . [in which the researcher] reports a case description and case themes' (Creswell and Poth, 2018: 96--7). In this paper, we present a case study of seven academic writing retreats.

The four authors are writer-facilitators and a writer-participant who have attended multiple retreats. We are simultaneously participants and researchers. Hence, the research can be considered a self-study case (McGinn, Shields, Manley-Casimir, Grundy and Fenton, 2005).

Participants

Over the years, 34 academic writer-participants (24 women and 10 men) and 5 residential writer-facilitators (all women) participated in the retreats. There were academics from all ranks, including 13 with tenure, 14 pre-tenure (2 of whom returned for subsequent retreats after receiving tenure) and 3 in non-tenure positions, as well as 4 university staff members with research portfolios, 3 senior doctoral students and 2 community partners. All were education scholars. Most participants (33) were affiliated with one of the two host universities from Ontario, Canada. Research collaborators and colleagues from other institutions (universities and school boards) participated in some retreats, coming from Canada (3), the US (1), New Zealand (1) and Australia (1). Half of the participants (20 of 39) participated in multiple retreats (10 attended two times, 3 attended three times, 3 attended four times, 2 attended five times and 2 attended all seven times). As a result, the 39 participants represented a total of 84 retreat engagements as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Number of Participants by Role and Academic Rank, and Associated Data Sources From Each Retreat

Year	2007	2008	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	total
Number of Participants	18	9	12	11	13	11	10	84
Retreat Roles								
writer-participants	14	6	9	8	10	8	7	62
writer-facilitators	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	22
Academic Rank								
tenured academic	7	5	6	7	4	5	5	39
tenure-track academic	7	2	3	2	5	3	0	22
non-tenure academic	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	4
university staff	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	13
doctoral student	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	4
community partner	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Data Sources								
retreat booklet	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	5
Brown's questions	0	0	7	5	5	3	2	22
workshop slides	0	0	5	3	3	1	1	13
debrief notes	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
retreat evaluations	17	0	0	8	11	8	9	53
publishing reports	7	0	6	3	1	2	0	19
online questionnaires	0	0	0	0	0	7	6	13
testimonials	1	0	0	5	3	0	1	10
organiser reports	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	8

Since 2011, three residential writer-facilitators collaborated across two universities to develop, facilitate and sustain annual writing retreats. The residential writer-facilitators balanced their dual responsibilities of writing and supporting other writers by sharing facilitation tasks and

by inviting external workshop presenters in 2013 and 2014 to lead writing workshops. Unlike writer-facilitators, external workshop presenters did not provide data and were not considered participants for the purposes of this analysis.

All retreat participants were invited to serve as co-researchers to analyse data accumulated from the seven retreats. Four participants collaborated to write this paper. These authors are the four most frequent retreat attendees. The two people who attended all seven retreats have been the retreat organisers and residential writer-facilitators since 2007. Their commitment to the retreat and to professional development for writers in their Faculty (and beyond) was evident not only in their consistent retreat attendance, but also in their ongoing efforts to obtain funding and enhance the retreat model, experience and outcomes. A third writer-facilitator and one writer-participant complete the research team.

Data sources and analysis

Developing and delivering the retreats produced a rich set of data but with some variability in the specific information available from year to year, which is suitable for case study research. Table 1 identifies the specific data sources available from each retreat. This variability allowed us to triangulate across participants, years and data sources. Although data triangulation contributed to the trustworthiness of our analysis, we were mindful of the potential biases arising from our roles as participant-researchers, including our “knowledge, skills, methodological strengths, capacity for imagination” (Norris, 1997:174) and our commitment to residential writing retreat pedagogies.

We supplemented naturally occurring data with structured online questionnaires about participants’ goals and writing accomplishments for the final two retreats. This case study draws upon the following five main types of data:

- 1) *Retreat Materials*. Writer-facilitators prepared a booklet for each retreat with agendas and descriptions of the expectations. Participants were encouraged to submit a description of their writing projects prior to each retreat based upon Brown’s (1994/95) questions. Writer-facilitators kept workshop slides and debrief notes from the retreats.
- 2) *Participant Retreat Evaluations*. The final session at each retreat included an evaluation and debrief. Writer-facilitator notes from these sessions, as well as written responses from participants were used as data.
- 3) *Participant Publishing Progress Reports*. Writer-facilitators sought occasional updates from participants about their progress on writing projects from retreats. Online questionnaires after the 2014 and 2015 retreats documented writing goals and publication progress.
- 4) *Participant Testimonials*. Individual participants shared spontaneous comments with the writer-facilitators about their perceptions of the value of the retreats (typically in the form of emails and thank-you notes). A subset of these testimonials was available for analysis.
- 5) *Retreat Organiser Reports and Funding Requests*. Two residential writer-facilitators prepared various reports and funding requests in their efforts to obtain financial support for the retreats.

Our institutional research ethics review committees provided clearance for this research. Participants were informed at each point that their evaluation comments would be used for assessment purposes and for planning subsequent retreats and other writing support activities. Evaluation forms and debriefing comments were collected anonymously or stripped of identifying information whereas testimonials, Brown’s questions and some progress reports included identifying information. The online questionnaires were created and administered for

assessment and research purposes, so we sought explicit consent prior to using those data in this research. We adopted a team-based approach to qualitative coding (MacQueen, McLellan-Lemal, Bartholow and Milstein, 2008; Saldaña, 2016). Each author took primary responsibility for preliminary coding of different data sources. We then met to discuss our first-order coding from the data. Our first-order codes led us to focus upon what was happening during the retreats, who was involved, how participants characterised the value of the retreats and what were the associated outcomes. Through extended conversation, we came to the realisation that the generative nature of the homophone *presence/presents* would allow us to organise our preliminary codes to document the value participants ascribed to the retreats. Each author then returned to her datasets to undertake second-order coding focused on the *presence* of writing and the *presents* (i.e., gifts) of writing. After further group discussion, each author took responsibility for writing the results subsections most associated with the data she had analysed while also incorporating relevant data from other authors.

Presence of writing

Writing and writers are key to our academic writing retreats. The writer-facilitators organised a schedule to promote individual and collective writing activities and participants came to write. In our pedagogical model, the presence of scheduled writing time, writing goals, writing activities and writers were central conditions for participants to engage in a discursive social practice of writing (Kostouli, 2009; Lillis, 2001).

Presence of scheduled writing time

The retreats prioritised writing time. Mornings and most afternoons were set aside for individual writing. The writer-facilitators adjusted the schedule over the years based on writer-participant feedback to allocate more time to individual writing. In 2007, just over 17 hours were scheduled for quiet writing time, whereas by 2015 the scheduled quiet writing time had grown to 20 hours. Some participants continued with individual writing during unscheduled time in early mornings and late evenings.

Workshops were scheduled some afternoons. Topics dealt with many aspects of academic writing (e.g., responding to reviewers' comments, moving beyond text and writing more than one paper at a time) and were often based upon participants' pre-retreat suggestions. As scheduled time gradually increased for individual writing time, there was a corresponding reduction in workshop time. In early years, workshops were 90 min, but reduced to 75 min after the first two years. At least one workshop-free day was introduced after the first two years and some workshops were specifically labelled as 'optional'. The total time allocated for workshops dropped from 5.5 hours in 2007 to 2.5 hours in 2015. These reductions in scheduled workshop time were direct responses to writer-participants' requests to shorten the workshops to '(keep participants wanting more) or have a workshop-free day' (debrief notes, 2011). Less time scheduled for workshops left more time for individual writing.

Presence of writing goals

Retreats encouraged participants to establish and assess writing goals in multiple ways. The stated goal identified each year in the retreat preparation materials was that each participant would produce a scholarly paper by the end of the retreat. To achieve such a goal required participants to identify a writing priority, organise needed resource materials and set aside other responsibilities. As one participant reported, 'I spent the weekend prior to the retreat finishing off

feedback and marks submission for my just-completed course so that I could be ready to concentrate, and concentrate I did!’ (testimonial, 2013).

Writer-facilitators invited participants to submit written responses to Brown’s (1994/95) questions prior to each retreat to help them plan their work toward a scholarly paper. We do not have complete records from the first two retreats, but records from subsequent retreats show a steady decline from year to year in the proportion of participants who submitted Brown’s questions prior to the writing retreats from 58% compliance in 2011 to 20% in 2015 (see Table 2). In some cases, however, the writing projects involved collaboration between multiple participants (3 in 2011, 1 in 2013 and 2 in 2015) such that one set of Brown’s questions covered multiple participants. The final row of Table 2 shows the decline in the number of writing projects for which Brown’s questions were submitted: from 75% of writing projects in 2011 to 25% in 2015.

Table 2

Completion of Brown’s Questions Prior to Academic Writing Retreats

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
responses received	7	5	5	3	2
participants	12 (58%)	11 (45%)	13 (38%)	11 (27%)	10 (20%)
writing projects	9 (75%)	11 (45%)	12 (42%)	11 (27%)	8 (25%)

Although not all participants prepared and submitted Brown’s questions prior to the retreats, this decline in submission rates does not necessarily mean participants were not using Brown’s questions. Some participants identified completing Brown’s questions as key tasks for a given retreat. For example, one participant explained that she planned to complete Brown’s questions during the retreat:

I am unable to complete the Brown’s question prior to the retreat this year as completing the Brown’s questions will be one of my goals DURING the retreat. You see, I will be submitting an article for publication this week, so that during the retreat, I will decide which new article to work on next. (Brown’s questions, 2013)

Another participant reported that writing responses to Brown’s questions at the retreat for a book chapter and for her overall book project more than fulfilled her goal of writing outlines for the chapter and the book (online questionnaire, 2015). Brown’s questions helped her ‘to ensure I have my head sorted out and have all needed materials’. She was not the only participant who found Brown’s questions useful. Others extolled the value of Brown’s questions in shifting their attention toward their writing tasks, facilitating their preparation for the retreat and guiding the production of their writing outputs. Brown’s questions were identified as one feature that contributed to achieving writing goals during a retreat:

I found this year’s Academic Writing Retreat to be the most productive and satisfying of all the retreats I have attended. Perhaps it was that I am now familiar with the need to have a good idea of what I want to accomplish before coming to [the retreat] – the requirement that we answer Brown’s questions is an effective way of focusing our intentions. This was supported by the opening night activity of outlining our goals for the week and discussing them with a colleague. (testimonial, 2013)

Other participants did not perceive Brown's questions as beneficial preparation for the retreat. For example, one participant suggested the retreat process could be improved by 'developing diverse forms of retreat task preparation', elaborating that 'Brown's Questions don't work for everyone' (evaluation, 2014). Other participants found it difficult to apply Brown's questions to writing tasks other than scholarly papers. For example, one 2015 participant submitted a document entitled Brown's questions, but every question was modified to match her writing task, which was to complete an application for ethics review.

At the opening workshop on the first evening of each retreat, writer-facilitators asked all participants to identify their writing project or projects and the associated goals for the retreat. One participant characterised 'the need to identify goals ahead of time and to refine them the first evening' as a key factor that made the writing retreat productive (online questionnaire, 2014). Participants also found that the work-in-progress groups prompted accountability for sustained daily writing that 'helped to keep writers focused to accomplish something in the block of time available' (debrief notes, 2011).

In 2014 and 2015, we formalised this exploration of writing goals with a request after the retreats for participants to complete online questionnaires identifying their stated goals and progress during the retreat. In 2014, their goals were to revise a book chapter, finish a chapter, analyse project data and write a personal narrative for a grant application, restructure and finalise an article for publication and complete a methodology section of a doctoral thesis proposal. The questionnaire prompted participants to indicate what percentage of the goal had been accomplished from nothing (0%) to twice as much as anticipated (200%). All participants perceived major progress toward these main goals. They rated average level of completion as 114% (i.e., 14% more was accomplished than the initial goal), with a range from 84% to at least 200% (the upper end of the scale). In 2015, participants identified the following primary writing goals: producing an outline and first draft of a book chapter and preparing an application for the research ethics review board for proposed dissertation research. This time, the main goals were 58% achieved (ranging from 16% to 98%).

Despite a strong commitment to identifying and working toward writing goals during retreats, occasionally participants recognised that a planned goal should be revised. For example, one participant acknowledged that her original goal to complete a shared writing task could not be accomplished because it was not a shared goal for all co-authors: 'Recognition that original writing goal was unrealistic given the need to brainstorm/converse before writing could be done' (online questionnaire, 2015). Another participant identified the following important outcome of a retreat: 'I finally abandoned a piece I should have, long ago' (progress report, 2007). The emphasis on assessing writing goals during the retreats encouraged ongoing goal setting and assessing beyond the retreats.

Presence of writing activities

Throughout the retreats, participants worked from shared group spaces or within private spaces (e.g., at desks in their individual bedrooms), sometimes shifting over the course of a writing block, depending upon their needs or preferences at a given moment. In the shared group spaces, the low-level sounds of keyboards clacking, pens scratching the surface of pages and paper spooling from the printer were audible evidence of a large volume of text generated at each retreat. One participant noted, 'Having a big meeting room is also good, nice, a table with nothing else except writing and food, and seeing people working. Silent social environment. Typing, and typing, and typing' (debrief session, 2014). During the retreats, and in the days,

weeks, sometimes months following the retreat, the resulting texts moved through publication processes, each at their individual speed.

The act of writing is not confined to putting words on a page (or screen). Sometimes the required goal is to reduce rather than add words. Furthermore, writing is multifaceted. It could involve any scholarly product intended for sharing with an audience in written, visual or oral form (e.g., some participants worked on conference presentations and app development). Reading, working with data, exploring visual representations and talking through ideas are all key parts of scholarly communication. Beyond producing text, other tasks were aligned with writing:

Re the balance b/w reading and writing – I often find when I’m working on [a scholarly paper] – I have stacks of books on go – journal articles on-line, sometimes I spend hours just reading and making notes in between my drafts of writing. (progress report, 2011)

I met today with software developers for the [topic] app and they were most impressed with the detailed analysis of apps I was able to conduct during the retreat. (testimonial, 2012)

Walking, talking, sketching and meditating all contribute to writing. As one participant noted, ‘Writing is thinking’ (debrief session, 2015). Each year, participants identified a range of writing projects: conference papers, journal articles, book chapters, books, dissertations, play scripts, research grants and more. Table 3 presents an analysis of the narrower range of writing projects identified in Brown’s (1994/95) questions as submitted prior to the various retreats. Most (13 of 22) submissions indicated journal articles; other submissions include 5 chapters, 2 books, 1 play script and 1 ethics application. As discussed above, not all participants submitted responses to Brown’s questions. We suspect the fact that Brown’s questions are best suited to developing a journal article might have contributed to the relative portion of responses focused on journal articles and not necessarily that most participants were, in fact, writing journal articles at the retreats.

Table 3
Types of Writing Projects Identified in Brown’s Questions

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Journal article	6	3	3	1	0
Chapter	1	1	1	1	1
Book	0	1	0	1	0
Play script	0	0	1	0	0
Ethics application	0	0	0	0	1

Furthermore, some participants were engaged in multiple simultaneous writing projects. For example, one participant described progress across multiple writing projects at the 2013 writing retreat:

I almost finished [a] Book Proposal;
I brought a research manuscript to about 75% completion;
I brought a literature review to about 90% completion;
I finished over 50% of Chapter 1 in my current book contract (approx. 2,500 words).
(testimonial, 2013)

Another participant characterised the importance of having a ‘variety of writing [projects] so there are options to switch up when you need a break’ (debrief session, 2014).

The online questionnaires completed after the 2014 and 2015 writing retreats provided fuller information about the numbers and types of writing projects that participants pursued. Table 4 shows the mean number of writing projects was at least twice as high as the number of participants (mean of 2.6 writing projects per participant in 2014 and 2.3 in 2015).

Table 4

The Number and Type of Writing Projects Pursued at the 2014 and 2015 Retreats

	Journal article	Book chapter	Grant application	Other	Total
2014 (N = 7)	9	5	0	4	18 (mean = 2.6)
2015 (N = 6)	4	3	3	4	14 (mean = 2.3)

Journal articles, book chapters and grant applications were the most common writing projects. Other writing projects included writing a plan for a book, writing a book proposal, editing a book, completing a portfolio to fulfil the comprehensive examination requirements of the doctoral program, preparing an application for a research ethics board, organising data and creating presentation slides. These writing projects were at various stages of development from initial outlining and proposal development, to writing first drafts, to re-writing in response to editorial feedback. Writing occurred in many forms at the retreats.

Presence of writers

Participants acknowledged the presence of other writers as uplifting and encouraging for their writing. The commitment of a peer group motivated and pressured one to write: ‘Being around people who do the same thing – competition – motivating. No matter how nice your office is; I leave the most difficult work for this retreat’ (debrief session, 2014). Knowing that others in a group are also writers creates an opportunity to learn how other academics write and may serve as ‘excellent models of other [academics] around me, who were carefully avoiding phone messages and email alerts for the course of the retreat [to create] even more time to write’ (testimonial, 2013).

Many participants extolled the value of writing in the same room with others. They identified the ‘working energy during the retreat’ (evaluation, 2013), the ‘respect shown for others for quiet writing time’ (evaluation, 2013) and ‘being around positive people who are writing hard and always ready to help’ (evaluation, 2013). The presence of others was a factor for meeting goals:

I was far more productive than usual because of the silent presence of others. (evaluation, 2013)

It was great to find someone in the large meeting room throughout the day, not to chat with, but simply to work alongside. (testimonial, 2013)

Simply hearing others talk about how important their writing was to them helped me find motivation to persist. (progress report, 2007)

Writing retreats are not just about writing but also about writers. The physical presence of other writers mattered. However, conflicting schedules, parenting responsibilities, health issues, completed degrees, relocation or demanding administrative positions (e.g., during their service as Department Chairs or Associate Deans) prevented some participants from attending multiple retreats. Additionally, a few participants chose not to return to subsequent retreats because they found writing in isolation more rewarding than writing in the company of other writers.

Presents (gifts) of writing retreats

Participants perceived the retreats as valuable in many ways. One 60-word testimonial included ‘thanks’ four times and three exclamation marks, along with the terms ‘wonderful’, ‘terrific’, ‘kind’ and ‘support’ (testimonial, 2012). Participants liked the venue and the length of the retreat, the engagement of writer-facilitators and the inclusion of workshops that promoted group discussion and sharing. One participant noted, ‘arrival on [the] evening before really helps to be settled for the first day of writing’ (debrief session, 2011). Individual comments mentioned that the retreats were ‘well-organized and ran seamlessly’ (evaluation, 2013) and that ‘predictable days’ (2013, evaluation) and ‘structure, with flexibility built in’ (evaluation, 2015) helped in achieving their writing goals. Other general comments included the following:

These retreats are very important, very stimulating, and very helpful. I think each of us should attend such a workshop every couple of years to keep fresh. (progress report, 2011)

When the offer for a writing retreat was sent out [to] the faculty, it did not take much time to decide that, YES (emphatically), I should attend! As a new, untenured [name of institution] faculty member, certainly writing and publication is a priority. Having funding in place for our attendance made the decision even easier, and I liked the idea of having more than one university faculty group in attendance. (testimonial, 2013)

This was [professional development] at its best. Focused activities, no distractions, excellent facilitation, good venue, and lots of support in achieving our goals. (evaluation, 2007)

Throughout this section, we describe the many presents (gifts) participants identified from the writing retreats. Gifts of time and physical space provided a context for the retreats where gifts were exchanged between and among participants. Other gifts provided sustainability to extend writing beyond the retreats.

Gift of time

Participants in each year valued the time the retreats provided for writing. In post-retreat evaluations, from 2012--5, 34 of 36 participants strongly agreed that ‘the quiet writing time was beneficial’. One participant appreciated the ‘opportunity to focus on a few projects with minimal interruption in a lovely location, rather than the need to juggle multiple projects with frequent interruption’ (evaluation, 2015). Another participant echoed similar sentiments:

I’m sure I would not have made time for such a concentrated task had I been elsewhere. (testimonial, 2012)

Participants each year identified the importance of having large blocks of writing time away from everyday distractions.

Gift of physical space

Many participants appreciated the venue itself as a factor in enhancing their productivity and enjoyment. They found the workspaces and walking trails conducive to writing (see Figure 1).

[FIGURE 1 NEAR HERE]

Figure 1. The map of the retreat venue with images depicting walking trails, individual writing time and workshops.

From 2012--5, all retreat evaluations indicated that the rural venue selected was either ‘good’ or ‘very good’ for a writing retreat. Individual comments cued the importance of meals provided by others, individual rooms, walking trails, a space removed from everyday commitments and the quiet, friendly atmosphere:

Having my own room provided the needed flexibility to set my own writing times and location. (evaluation, 2014)

The venue makes it possible for me to really focus: good quality food prepared for us, comfortable space, great trails, returning to the same place has built familiarity so no need to find my way around. (evaluation, 2014)

One participant mentioned the availability of Internet connection as a source of stress-reduction: ‘Internet availability during breaks makes it possible to keep on top of things, so I don’t have to worry about work waiting for me’ (evaluation, 2014).

Shared meals also contributed to participant satisfaction, as indicated by the following comment:

I also enjoy the meals together – at first I wasn’t sure about this – as I tend to sometimes work throughout meal times – but I found it provides structure to the day – and also provides a nice break from your mind – it encourages you to escape your thinking for a while!! The after dinner social time was fun too – humour/play and writing stress are a great combination! (progress report, 2011)

A participant summarised the overall value of the combination of setting, retreat structure and collegial atmosphere as follows:

Having all meals provided and a large, comfortable room with air conditioning helped make this concentration possible. . . . The long blocks of morning, afternoon, and early evening writing went by very quickly, and the provided meals (carefully and freshly prepared with many options for a range of dietary needs) allowed me – and others – even more time to write. (testimonial, 2013)

The physical retreat setting was conducive to writing and hence valued by the participants.

Gift exchange

Although participants certainly appreciated having time to write in a congenial atmosphere away from the distractions of the office, many also highlighted the specific assistance the retreats provided to them as writers. The afternoon workshops targeted key aspects of academic writing. Presenters and writer-facilitators were also available for one-on-one consultations. Participants wrote:

The period of time focused on related workshops after our lunch meals together allowed us a time to learn more about writing and publication, perhaps especially important for a faculty member at my early stage, career-wise. (testimonial, 2013)

Our presenter on Monday and Tuesday was excellent. [She] was knowledgeable, flexible, and extremely generous with her time and support. She helped me to see how strategic academic writing needs to be – that consideration must be given to the stage of one’s academic career, the best journal to approach, the way to pitch an idea, even the need to know what articles on your topic have recently been published in the journal and by possible reviewers. (testimonial, 2013)

Equally important to participants were the reciprocal gifts shared among colleagues during work-in-progress groups. Retreat evaluations from 2012--5 revealed that 35 of 36 respondents described the work-in-progress groups as beneficial to their writing. The following comments reveal that the work-in-progress groups were challenging and enriching for participants:

Although my favourite place to be is at home with my family, I felt surprisingly (to me) comfortable throughout the retreat, and I have our facilitators to thank for that. The only moment of discomfort was a positive one, as I met together with my writing-in-progress group. I don’t think I have shared my writing with anyone but co-authors and peer reviewers since the day of my PhD dissertation. This was an activity that stretched me, but in a good way. I left this group with many notes about what to do next and ideas on how to improve my manuscripts. (testimonial, 2013)

The small work-in-progress groups were very useful and affirming. . . . I appreciated the specific feedback, and the suggestions of how other papers could emerge from my interest in [paper topic]. I also enjoyed reading and discussing the plans of others in my small group. It helped to see that everyone struggles with questions of audience, organization, clarity, and argument. There was a strong sense of collegial support as we showed progress from one day to the next. The Wednesday evening sharing time was important, as we could see how each person had taken the suggestions from previous sessions and worked with them. (testimonial, 2013)

These structured opportunities for feedback on writing were strengthened by expressions of emotional support, as reflected in the debrief notes:

Take time to relax after this productive week. (debrief notes, 2012)

Have a safe journey home and hope to hear about your project completions next year. (debrief notes, 2012)

Don’t get disappointed if you don’t achieve ambitious [writing] plan. (debrief notes, 2014)

Staying connected was constantly emphasised through the retreats (debrief notes, 2012, 2013). As each retreat ended, participants expressed their appreciation for the enhanced relationships that not only made the week pleasurable but also supported their growth as academic writers. The above testimonials and debrief notes demonstrate that academic writing is a discursive social practice (Kostouli, 2009; Lillis, 2001).

Gifts of sustainability

Some of the identified gifts extended beyond the writing retreats. We categorised these ‘carry-on gifts’ or ‘give-aways’ as gifts of sustainability. Attending the retreats helped participants

‘maintain momentum and tackle the difficult parts of writing’ (debrief notes, 2014). As the following quotation illustrates, the retreats provided motivation, inspiration and strategies to carry forward beyond the retreats:

The last night of the retreat I had so many ideas of what I wanted to do as a follow-up that I could not sleep. I finally got up and made notes on the various projects I needed to work on and specific next steps for when I returned home. I have kept that list and am crossing items off as they are completed. (testimonial, 2013)

Participants highlighted the influence of the retreats on their work and scholarly lives. They described enhanced writing strategies, competencies and identities that had clear potential to sustain their writing. In accordance with Murray and Newton’s (2009) and Paltridge’s (2016) findings, participants identified enhanced relationships with other participants that led to richer understandings and planned collaborations. Half of the participants established ‘writing days’ with one or more colleagues to continue the momentum, including one participant who reported: ‘I regularly have colleagues who want to write come to my house for writing days. One in particular who was at the retreat with me has spent a number of days here with both of us writing’ (progress report, 2007). Two participants launched academic writing retreats at their home institutions; these two individuals and others have also published scholarly work about writing retreats. Building our writing retreat pedagogy on writing as a social activity that is simultaneously text and identity work (Ivanič, 1998; Kamler and Thomson, 2011; Ploisawaschai, 2015), our aim was not only to increase writing productivity, but also to assist retreat participants in developing their writer identities. Participants’ unfinished papers represent ‘our personal history . . . our identity as a writer’ (debrief notes, 2015) and going back to those papers to publish them (or to discard them) is important identity work. Participants viewed the retreats as sites for developing confidence as writers, advancing careers and building scholarly capacity in their fields and at their institutions.

Discussion and conclusion

The residential writing retreats described in this paper were valuable because they were conducive to participants’ writing and their identities as writers (Fairclough, 2003). Our community of writers honoured the presence of writing and the gifts of writing in our retreats. The retreats were intended to address participants’ immediate writing goals and build sustainable writing practices. Participants were generally positive in their reflections and evaluations, despite some challenges that were noted. Although the writer-facilitators provided a flexible organisation for the retreats, they encountered challenges when people attended a retreat only for a day or two because those absences hindered gift exchange and reciprocity (i.e., people failed to support each other through work-in-progress groups and peer feedback). To deal with a challenge of last-minute cancellations from funded writer-participants, the writer-facilitators introduced a non-refundable facilitation fee.

Another issue was that not everyone came to the retreat fully prepared to write. Academic writing is a complex process that includes reading the literature, developing ideas, gathering facts, analysing data, reflecting, developing an argument, connecting to a body of knowledge, editing and proofreading (Hayes and Flower, 1980). For writers of specific scholarly products (e.g., grant applications and theses), writing can include other tasks such as preparing a budget or developing methodology. Creative academic works may include multimedia. Participants came to the retreats with different goals and at different stages in their writing projects. Although this diversity of goals and stages provided insight into academic writing, this also challenged the

writer-facilitators to organise workshops and group activities that would be useful and interesting for most participants.

During the retreats, writers' identities and skill development were nurtured through the group's mutuality, shared expertise and identities as writers (Aitchison and Lee, 2006). Mutuality was evident in that participants felt pressure to write (to go through tenure, finish a thesis, secure a research grant or deal with pressing deadlines) and were challenged in carving time for doing so (e.g., competing demands from teaching, family or administrative responsibilities). Echoing Grant and Knowles' (2000) findings, the participants considered the retreats as respite from the usual working environment and everyday interruptions. Recognising that mutuality is situational, writer-facilitators intentionally created opportunities for enhancing mutuality through work-in-progress groups (e.g., reading each other's work, providing feedback and learning about each other's scholarship). Groups included people from different institutions and those that otherwise did not work on the same writing projects. This approach allowed sharing of perspectives and knowledge from different educational fields, different types of scholarly writing (e.g., children's books, plays, journal articles, books, grant applications) and different cultural contexts. Even in the first two years when all participants were from one institution, they learned about their colleagues' work and developed deep professional relations. In the later years when the retreats became multi-institutional, one of the outcomes was development of writing projects, relationships and research collaborations across institutions.

For some retreat participants, the writing retreats created new space for mutuality and collaboration that happened beyond the retreats and sustained their academic writing. Although most participants considered the retreats as professional development, some came only once to satisfy an imminent professional need and others embraced the retreats as part of their professional lifestyles. Writing is a process; it has different forms and one constantly learns to write (Paltridge, 2016). Although most literature speaks about pain, fear and anxiety of writing rather than joy, passion and gifts of writing, as a community, we demystified writing and turned it into a pleasurable activity (Murray, 2015) that featured presence of others, various gifts and their exchange. Our residential retreats made the act of writing visible and brought it to the centre of academic life and identity work (Ivanič, 1998; Kamler and Thomson, 2011; Murray, 2015; Ploisawaschai, 2015) while honouring it as a social, developmental and discursive endeavour (Kostouli, 2009; Lillis, 2001; Murray, 2015; Murray and Newton, 2009; Paltridge, 2016).

This study adds significantly to the literature on writing retreats by presenting a model of academic development that enhanced writing, writers and writing community. Other authors have described gifts (i.e., benefits and joys) of writing retreats, but we explored and substantiated the evidence of a range of gifts through specific examples and quotations from participants that address structure, outputs, identities, and relationships. Whereas the focus of many retreats is limited to enhancing the productivity of writers, our recurring retreats built toward a sustainable community of discursive social practice (Kostouli, 2009; Lillis, 2001). Each person contributed to the growth of others by being a writer-facilitator working alongside writer-participants or as a member of a work-in-progress group. In doing so, there was intentional fostering of writing and of identity as writers (Ivanič, 1998; Kamler and Thompson, 2011; Ploisawaschai, 2015).

Writing produces scholars (Burgess and Ivanič, 2010; Kamler and Thomson, 2011), which is critical for senior doctoral students, pre-tenured academics and staff in administrative positions who want to keep their scholarship alive. Writing group pedagogies have been used occasionally in academic development (Badenhorst et al., 2016; Grant et al., 2010; MacLeod et al., 2012;

Paltridge, 2016) and doctoral education (Aitchison, 2009; Bommarito, 2015; Jones, 2018; Kamler, 2008). Rather than hiring an external facilitator to lead a specific audience such as graduate students (Aitchison, 2009; Bommarito, 2015; Jones, 2016; Kamler, 2008), our retreats drew academics, staff, and students from across institutions. The multi-institutional, multi-role composition encouraged diverse perspectives and rich feedback.

Sustained support was provided within the community of discursive social practice to encourage participants to attend annually and to establish their own writing groups between retreats. As a writing community of education scholars from multiple institutions, we enhanced the practice of academic writing development through our residential writing retreat pedagogy. The recurring retreats assisted the writer-facilitators in building institutional professional-development capacity and inspired some writer-participants to establish writing retreats at their institutions. Although we anticipate such outcomes have occurred from other writing retreats, these have not been foregrounded in the published literature. Furthermore, unlike other studies, we documented the ways the retreat structure evolved over time in response to participant feedback and as a result of the openness and embedded flexibility of the retreat pedagogy.

This paper has the potential to assist academic writers (academics, doctoral students and independent scholars) in writing and publishing by demonstrating a model of academic writing retreats that transforms writing into pleasurable social activity. Organisers of academic professional development may find the model of academic writing support described in this paper inspirational for supporting writers in overcoming isolation and the fear of writing, honouring writing in their lives and designing their own shared cabin in the woods. Institutional funding is vital for sustaining such professional-development opportunities and for enhancing scholarly capacity at academic institutions and in the field. Based on our research findings, we argue that academic institutions should make residential writing retreats an integral part of academic and doctoral professional development, making institutional academic development intentional, systematic, sustained and responsive to the needs of individual scholars.

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Appendix A
Sample Writing Retreat Schedule

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS
	BREAKFAST @ 8	BREAKFAST @ 8	BREAKFAST @ 8	BREAKFAST @ 8
	Individual Writing Time	Individual Writing Time	Individual Writing Time	Individual Writing Time
	LUNCH @ 12:30	LUNCH @ 12:30	LUNCH @ 12:30	LUNCH @ 12:30
	Workshop (1:15--2:30)	Optional Workshop (1:15--2:30)	Individual Writing Time (consultation by request)	Individual Writing Time (1:15--2:45)
	Individual Writing Time (consultation by request)	Individual Writing Time (consultation by request)	Individual Writing Time (consultation by request)	Retreat Debrief (2:45--4:00)
	DINNER @ 5:30	DINNER @ 5:30	DINNER @ 5:30	
Writing Warm Up (7:30--8:45)	Work-in-Progress Presentations (7:00--8:00)	Work-in-Progress Presentations (7:00--8:00)	Work-in-Progress Updates (7:00--8:00)	

Appendix B

Brown's Questions Used in Preparation for the Academic Writing Retreats

1. What is the working title of your paper?
2. Who are the authors?
3. Where will it be published?
4. Who are the potential readers (identify 4--6 by name) and why would they be interested in your paper?
5. What is the central question your paper will pose?
6. What is the answer your paper will provide?
7. What one sentence best summarises your paper?
8. Why did you do the work?
9. What did you do?
10. What happened?
11. What can you add to theory?
12. What can you add to practice?
13. What remains unresolved?

These questions have been modified from Brown (1994/95).

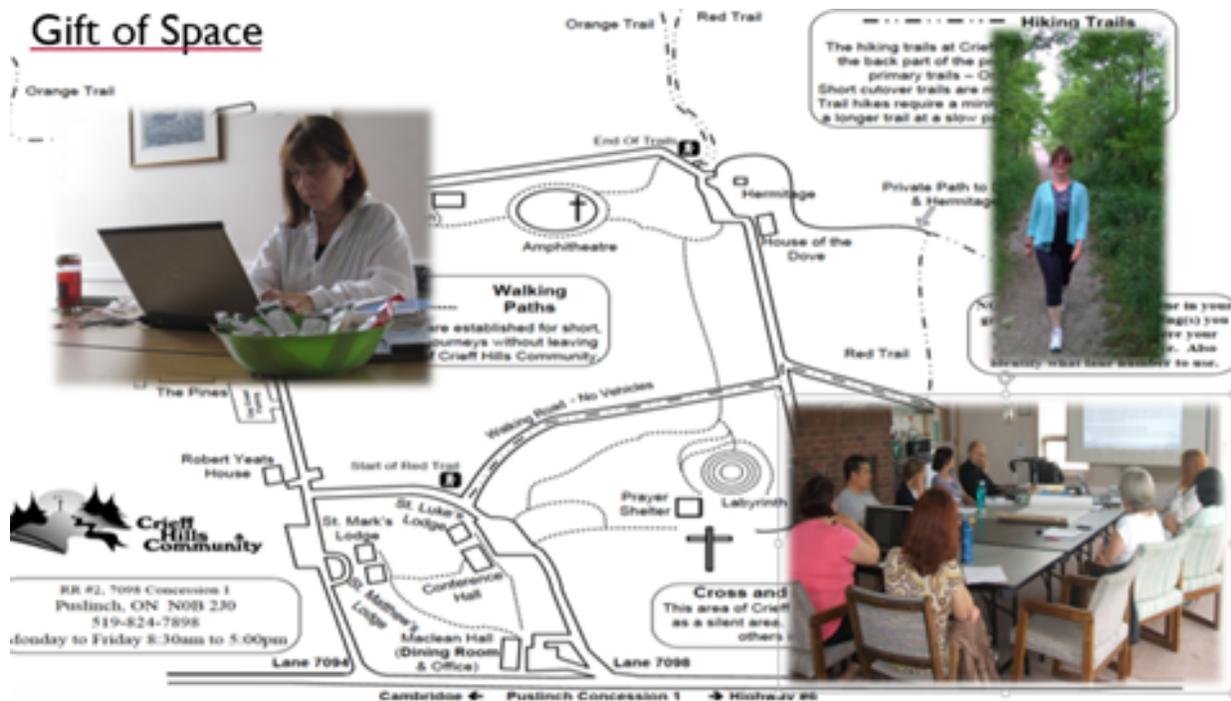


Figure 1. The map of the retreat venue with images depicting walking trails, individual writing time and workshops.