



Friday @ the Center: February 23, 2007

Writing for Everyone: Part 4

GLOBAL TIP: In the shaping phase of any writing project, developing writers often fail to support their arguments or adequately flesh out their descriptions. A “thin” essay suffers from a lack of supporting evidence or detail. *The Everyday Writer* notes that in one research study, questions about the paucity of supporting evidence accounted for 56 percent of reader comments on student papers.

STRATEGY: While students are working on a writing assignment, discuss the kinds of supporting evidence that would be most appropriate for the type of paper they are writing: facts, data, opinions of authorities, results from other tests, examples, textual evidence, reasons, vivid details, etc. Provide concrete examples of a generalization, plus several items of supporting evidence. Perhaps write a claim on the board and then have the class come up with some of the evidence that would provide support. In other words, have them practice connecting claims and evidence.

FINISHING TIP: The fourth most frequent punctuation error in college writing, according to Lunsford’s research, is **using the wrong word**. The shorthand comment I make on papers for this problem is “diction” (as in “dictionary”). A word can be wrong for a number of reasons: it sounds similar (there/their; illusion/allusion), it has the wrong connotation (reckless thesaurus use?), or it means completely the wrong thing.

SPU 2007 Meyer Prize Nominee

The essay “The Justification of Intellectual Property: Contemporary Philosophical Disputes,” by Ken Himma, Associate Professor of Philosophy, has been selected to as the SPU nominee for the 2007 Arlin G. Meyer Prize. This prize is awarded annually to a fulltime faculty member from a college or university in the national Lilly Fellows Network (LFN) for a work that highly exemplifies the practice of the Christian academic vocation. This year’s prize will be given to a work of serious intellectual, academic, or scholarly character in the humanities. Each LFN school can nominate one work for the national competition, and the award will be announced at the October LFN national conference. Ken’s essay brings implicit Christian thought to bear on ethical issues related to intellectual property rights, arguing that content-creators have legitimate, but limited, intellectual property rights in their creations. The campus selection committee included Dr. Joyce Erickson, Emeriti Professor of English; Dr. Les Steele, VPAA; and myself.

Friendship: Symposium and Call for Papers

The inaugural Baylor Symposium on Faith and Culture, “Friendship: Quests for Character, Community, and Truth,” will be held this coming October 25-27, at Baylor University. The

Symposium will consider the topic of friendship and its transformative possibilities—personal, civic, and spiritual. Featured speakers will include C. Stephen Evans (Baylor University), Paul Griffiths (University of Illinois at Chicago), Thomas Hibbs (Baylor University), Alan Jacobs (Wheaton College), Dominic Manganiello (University of Ottawa), Mary Nichols (Baylor University), Charles Pinches (University of Scranton), Robert Putnam (Harvard University), Robert C. Roberts (Baylor University), Nancy Sherman (Georgetown University), Paul Wadell (St. Norbert College), and Caroline White (University of Oxford). Papers from scholars in any discipline that reflect on all aspects of friendship are welcome. Possible session titles include: Friendship with God, Christian Critiques of Friendship, Friendship and the Virtues, Literary Expressions of Friendship, Spiritual Friendship, Friendship and Reconciliation, Friendship and Law, Friendship in Contemporary Culture. For the full CFP see <http://www.baylor.edu/ifl/friendship>.

Your friend,

Susan

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