



University of Northern Iowa
Classic Upward Bound TRIO Program
Quarterly Newsletter: July 2008



THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

There is big news in TRIO this summer as President Bush has signed the Higher Education Opportunity Act into law. This legislation reauthorized the Higher Education Act of 1965 and will provide for many positive changes that will benefit TRIO programs and students, including:

- Extending all grant terms to five years. (The UNI CUB Program was already awarded a five year grant for the high score it received.)
- Allowing grantees to target "students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youths, students who are in foster care or aging out of the foster care system, or other disconnected students."
- Killing the entire Absolute Priority, including the evaluation.
- Requiring that one-third of participating students be low-income individuals, first generation college students, or students who are at a high risk for academic failure (the third category is a new addition.)
- Instructing the Secretary to implement an evaluation of Upward Bound by June 30, 2010. However, this evaluation shall not (A) require programs to recruit more students than normal or (B) deny services to eligible students. Additionally, in designing an evaluation, the Secretary must consider (A) the burden placed on program participants and institutions and (B) whether the evaluation meets the standards of institutional review boards.

Thank you for your support of the UNI Classic Upward Bound TRIO Program and our continuing goal of assisting low-income and first generation students in achieving at least a four-year college degree!



WORDS OF WISDOM

"It is better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret."

-Jackie Joyner-Kersey

"Have no friends not equal to yourself."

-Confucius



COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY PROFILE

Our newsletter features a variety of colleges and universities to assist you in learning about more institutions. In the last edition, we profiled the three university systems with the largest enrollment in the United States: Ohio State University, Arizona State University, and University of Florida. This month, we will be examining three private schools in central Iowa: Central College, Grinnell College, and Simpson College. For more information on any of the above universities, speak to an UNI Upward Bound staff member.

Central College

- Private 4-year liberal arts college affiliated with Reformed Church in America
- 1,502 degree-seeking undergraduates
- 84% of applicants admitted
- SAT or ACT required.
- 2006-2007 Annual Costs: Tuition/Fees - \$21,222; Room/Board - \$7,224
- Contact Information: admissions@central.edu, (877) 462-3687

Grinnell College

- Private 4-year liberal arts college affiliated with Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- 1,546 degree-seeking undergraduates
- 45% of applicants admitted
- SAT or ACT with writing and application essay required.
- 2006-2007 Annual Costs: Tuition/Fees - \$29,030 Room/Board - \$7,700
- Contact Information: askgrin@grinnell.edu, (800) 247-0113

Simpson College

- Private 4-year liberal arts college affiliated with United Methodist Church
- 1,899 degree-seeking undergraduates
- 87% of applicants admitted
- SAT or ACT required.
- 2005-2006 Annual Costs: Tuition/Fees - \$20,911; Room/Board - \$5,922
- Contact Information: admiss@simpson.edu, (800) 362-2454

2007 College Handbook. The College Board: New York, 2006.



Happy Birthday!

<u>JULY</u>	<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u>
2 Kate Kalahar	4 Jerome Dale	15 DeShaun Schoonover
Shaudae Moore	10 Mikeala Murray	22 Bryana Smith-Scott
3 Alexis Montover	13 Terrance Roberts	24 JyLeahia Horton
Dominique Western	14 Jasmine McGee	
4 Makayla McDonald	17 Collin Apling	
13 Marisa Vivians	20 Makiesha Jones	
21 Christopher Walton	Lizabeth Petrick	
22 Katee Thein	23 Anora Jackson	
24 Devon Albrecht	25 Samantha Foley	
Andres Martinez		
25 Trayvis Redd		
26 Tara Taylor		
30 Richard Pieper		



THE IMPORTANCE OF WRITING SKILLS – NOW AND IN YOUR FUTURE, PART EIGHT

*“The pen is mightier than the sword.”
~ Edward Bulwer-Lytton*

In this series, we have been stressing the importance of writing skills. They are one of the most essential abilities for students, but are often also one of the most lacking. With that in mind, what follows is information on another common question in writing – **DANGLING MODIFIERS**.

Modifiers are words or groups of words that give information about other words in a sentence. Modifiers “dangle” when they give information about the wrong thing in the sentence (or nothing in the sentence).

Rule 1: When a modifier comes at the beginning of a sentence, what it modifies should come immediately after.

Common Mistake: Stressing about the exam (*modifier*), exercise calmed John down. (*This sentence makes it sound as if exercise was stressing!*)

Correction: Stressing about the exam, John exercised to calm down.

Common Mistake: Reaching out for support, Arista’s stress level went way down. (*This sentence makes it sounds like Arista’s stress level reached out for support.*)

Correction: Reaching out for support, Arista was able to lower her stress level.

Rule 2: Modifiers can also dangle at the end of sentences.

Common Mistake: Deep breathing to reduce stress was an adjustment, having no prior experience. (*Deep breathing had no prior experience?*)

Correction: Deep breathing to reduce stress was an adjustment for me because I had no prior experience.

Common Mistake: Tracy recognized her stress cutting back on sugar and caffeine. (*Tracy's stress cut back on sugar and caffeine?*)

Correction: Tracy recognized her stress, so she cut back on sugar and caffeine.

Now get some practice by fixing these dangling modifiers:

1. Lying on the floor, I could feel my muscles relaxing with eyes closed.
2. Neatly written and posted on the refrigerator, Tara thinks her weekly schedule keeps her stress level low.
3. When overwhelmed by stress, alcohol and other drugs are not the answer.
4. Feeling stressed about her trip, Mia's heartbeat grew faster.

Answers:

1. Lying on the floor with eyes closed, I could feel my muscles relaxing.
2. Neatly written and posted on the refrigerator, Tara's weekly schedule keeps her stress level low.
3. When overwhelmed by stress, you should not use alcohol or other drugs.
4. Feeling stressed about her trip, Mia felt her heartbeat grow faster.

Source: "Getting Your Writing Right: Skills to Help You Avoid Common Writing Mistakes." South Deerfield, MA: Channing Bete Company, 2006.



Critical Thinking: Why is it so Critical?

Resolve this school year to increase the role critical thinking plays in the way you study and learn. Critical thinking means having a "healthy skepticism" about what you hear or read. This involves more than learning new concepts, understanding new information, understanding your emotional responses, or mastering a skill. Critical thinking is active learning because it requires you to challenge a new concept or new information. Thinking critically about information means questioning whether: 1. the information is accurate, 2. the information is complete, 3. the information makes sense in a particular context, and 4. you can trust the source of the information.

We're bombarded with commercial messages on TV, radio, billboards, magazines, newspapers, and the Internet. Most of us question whether the advertisements are "too good to be true." Sometimes the message is direct: You'll look years younger after using the product for several weeks, or this mouthwash will make your fresh breath last longer. Sometimes the message is subliminal, not really stated. People in commercials, brochures, and other advertising are almost always happy, attractive, and enjoying life. By an early age you probably learned not to trust most of these messages. By this point in your life you might not even realize that you regularly engage in this type of reality check. This skeptical evaluation is what we mean when we use the term *critical thinking*.

You may not be as practiced in questioning whether information in articles, books, news broadcast, and on the internet is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing, but the truth. How will you determine whether an author is an expert? If two experts disagree, how will you know which one to trust? Success in academics and life requires that you practice critical thinking skills. Learning to apply this healthy skepticism will pay off in your personal life and in your future career.

In your personal life, thinking critically about your emotions, or the emotions you see in others, means questioning why you (they) feel the way you (they) do and whether these reactions make sense given what you (they) are responding to. You might be feeling a strong emotional response to a stranger, only to discover upon reflection that she looks a lot like a former classmate you never liked. Or someone may be pretending to like you, when all they're really doing is trying to get your vote, borrow your car, or in some other way take advantage of you. How can you evaluate whether your feelings are accurate or whether others are being sincere? You need to ask yourself difficult questions about what might really be motivating you or the other person. You might need to talk about your situation with a trusted friend or family member to seek a more objective opinion. Or you might just need a bit of time to reflect, to "sleep on it," to come up with a conclusion.

In your education and future career, critical thinking can increase your ability to concentrate, manage the stress in your life, and solve problems. As you begin to think more critically about what you learn, you'll develop skills that will allow you to learn at a higher level than merely memorizing information. Developing these skills require you to cultivate the ability to analyze a situation and to synthesize different abilities and information to come up with an answer.

To thoroughly analyze an interpersonal or professional situation or a problem, it's sometimes necessary to find out who might be involved, why, what's at stake, how different individuals will be affected by different decisions, and what the various possible solutions or outcomes might be. It can be valuable to try to state the problem from other people's perspectives. You might ask them to state their understanding of the situation; then try to restate their words. If they agree with your restatement, you've accurately reported what they're saying. This strategy will help you understand their point of view. Once you understand another person's perspective, you may even begin to respect a point of view that you don't agree with.

When you synthesize, you're figure out how different things fit together in order to come up with a new solution. You may need to bring together different aspects of a problem, different, but related problems, and/or different individuals' needs. Synthesis is the most difficult and most creative type of critical thinking. You have to thoroughly understand the problem, who or what is affected by the problem, and, conversely, what affects the problem.

By analyzing and synthesizing information and others' perspectives, you might see ways to provide a solution or outcome that's better than other suggested outcomes. In an interpersonal or business situation, this may be an outcome that helps everyone – a "win-win" situation. Or it's possible that each outcome you propose might be beneficial to some, but not all involved. In this latter case, it may still be necessary to find ways to compensate the "losers" that will be acceptable to the "winners," to turn the situation into a win-win outcome.

Critical thinking allows you to evaluate information, sources of information, emotions, and skills to determine when it's appropriate to use particular information. Academic success requires you to practice and improve your critical thinking skills. For more information on how, see an Upward Bound staff member.