CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A chair with a writing tablet that can be configured for use by either a right-handed or left-handed occupant, the chair comprising:

a seating element supported by a chair support structure; ~~and~~

a tablet arm extending laterally from the chair support structure ~~and supporting the writing tablet~~; and

a tablet mounting arrangement coupling the writing tablet to an upper end of the tablet arm;

wherein the tablet arm is pivotally coupled to the chair support structure such that the tablet arm can pivot about a first pivot axis from a right side of the chair to a left side of the chair; ~~and~~

wherein the ~~writing~~ tablet mounting arrangement is pivotally coupled to the tablet arm such that the writing tablet can pivot about a second pivot axis toward and away from the occupant when the occupant is seated in the chair; and

wherein the tablet mounting arrangement allows the writing tablet to slide laterally with respect to the tablet arm.

2. The chair of claim 1 further comprising a mounting arrangement coupled to the chair support structure, the mounting arrangement having one or more pivotable bearings that allow the tablet arm to pivot relative to the chair support structure.

3. The chair of claim 2 wherein the mounting arrangement further comprises:

a pivotable upper bearing and a pivotable lower bearing;

a bearing plate interposed between and coupled to the upper and lower bearings;

an outer shroud coupled to the bearing plate and encircling the upper and lower bearings and the bearing plate; and

a mounting post secured at a lower end to the chair support structure and extending upwardly in the axial direction through apertures in the upper and lower bearings and the bearing plate;

wherein a lower end of the tablet arm is coupled to the shroud such that the tablet arm pivots with the bearing plate and the upper and lower bearings around the mounting post.

4. The chair of claim 3 wherein the mounting arrangement prevents the tablet arm from pivoting more than a predetermined amount around the first pivot axis extending through the chair support structure.

5. The chair of claim 4 wherein the predetermined amount is 305 degrees.

6. The chair of claim 4 wherein the mounting arrangement further comprises a lower bearing casting coupled to the chair support structure and surrounding the lower end of the mounting post.

7. The chair of claim 6 wherein the tablet arm is prevented from pivoting more than the predetermined amount by contact between the lower bearing casting and the lower bearing.

8. The chair of claim 7 wherein the contact between the lower bearing casting and the lower bearing is provided by a key formed on the lower bearing casting that is received within a pivot limiting channel formed in the lower bearing.

9. The chair of claim 8 wherein the lower bearing pivots while the lower bearing casting remains stationary, such that the pivot limiting channel moves about the key until one of two ends of the pivot limiting channel contacts the key.

10. The chair of claim 6 further comprising an upper bearing casting coupled to the lower bearing casting and surrounding an upper end of the mounting post, wherein the upper bearing casting enables pivoting of the seating element around the first pivot axis.

11. The chair of claim 10 wherein each of the tablet arm and the seating element rotates independently of the other about the first pivot axis.

12. The chair of claim 1 wherein the writing tablet is pivotally coupled to the tablet arm by a tablet mounting arrangement that prevents the writing tablet from pivoting more than a predetermined amount relative to the tablet arm.

13. The chair of claim 12 wherein the predetermined amount is 150 degrees.

14. The chair of claim 12 further comprising a semi-cylindrical pivot channel formed in the tablet mounting arrangement that receives a pivot limiting sleeve on an upper end of the tablet arm.

15. The chair of claim 14 wherein the pivot limiting sleeve comprises a semi-cylindrical flange having outer ends and wherein the writing tablet is prevented from pivoting more than the predetermined amount by engagement of the outer ends of the flange with ends of the pivot channel.

16. The chair of claim 1 further comprising a tablet mounting arrangement coupling the writing tablet to an upper end of the tablet arm, wherein the tablet mounting arrangement allows the writing tablet to slide laterally with respect to the tablet arm.

17. The chair of claim 16 wherein the tablet mounting arrangement comprises one or more rails coupled to an underside of the writing tablet and a tablet support bracket coupled to the upper end of the tablet arm, wherein the tablet support bracket is slidably engaged with the one or more rails.

18. A chair with a writing tablet that can be configured for use by either a right-handed or left-handed occupant, the chair comprising:

a seating element supported by a chair support structure; and

a tablet arm extending laterally from the chair support structure and supporting the writing tablet;

a mounting arrangement coupled to the chair support structure, the mounting arrangement comprising:

a pivotable upper bearing and a pivotable lower bearing;

a bearing plate interposed between and coupled to the upper and lower bearings;

an outer shroud coupled to the bearing plate and encircling the upper and lower bearings and the bearing plate; and

a mounting post secured at a lower end to the chair support structure and extending upwardly in the axial direction through apertures in the upper and lower bearings and the bearing plate;

wherein the lower end of the tablet arm is coupled to the shroud such that the tablet arm pivots with the bearing plate and the upper and lower bearings around the mounting post thereby enabling the tablet arm to pivot from a right side of the chair to a left side of the chair.

19. The chair of claim 18 wherein the mounting arrangement prevents the tablet arm from pivoting more than a predetermined amount relative to the chair support structure.

20. The chair of claim 18 wherein the writing tablet is pivotally coupled to the tablet arm such that the writing tablet can pivot toward and away from the occupant.

21. A chair, comprising:

a seating element supported by a chair support structure;

a tablet arm extending laterally from the chair support structure and rotatable about a first pivot axis extending vertically through the chair support structure, the tablet arm including a tablet support portion extending parallel to the first pivot axis;

a tablet mounting arrangement positioned on the tablet support portion of the tablet arm, the tablet mounting arrangement being rotatable about a second pivot axis extending through the tablet support portion of the tablet arm; and

a writing tablet mounted to the tablet mounting arrangement, wherein the writing tablet is rotatable with the tablet mounting arrangement,

wherein the tablet mounting arrangement allows the writing tablet to move laterally with respect to the tablet arm,

wherein the seating element is rotatable about the first pivot axis relative to the chair support structure.

22. The chair of claim 21 wherein the tablet arm ~~is rotatable such that the writing tablet can be configured for use by either a right-handed or a left-handed occupant~~is pivotally coupled to the chair support structure such that the tablet arm can pivot about the first pivot axis from a right side of the chair to a left side of the chair.

23. The chair of claim 21 wherein the writing tablet is pivotable relative to the tablet arm independent of the rotation of the tablet arm relative to the chair support structure.