

Executive Summary

The Programs of the Center for Writing Excellence have all been firmly established and are growing quickly. The University Writing Center more than doubled its business from Fall 2007. A record 462 clients participated in 924 tutorials during the Fall term, while orientations and workshops set records as well, with over 35 reaching nearly 600 students.

Faculty Professional Development in Writing Across the Curriculum and Writing in the Disciplines continues to grow. A dedicated core of about a dozen faculty regularly communicate regarding interest in the workshops, while other faculty members have inquired more about the nature of the WAC/WID and Writing Center Programs.

Town and gown relationships have been strengthened with the creation of the Florence High School Writing Center and participation in the One Book Program at Florence-Lauderdale Public Library. The library workshop was so successful that three more writing workshops will be offered in 2009.

The Academic Athletic Mentoring Program has also k Prk P -3 (r)k /F1.0 Tf [(T) -2 (-1 (hd)-2 (0.120000 72 5 -1 (L)(e) -:

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2008

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INTRODUCTION

The mission of the UNA Center for Writing Excellence (CWE) is three-fold: to provide UNA students at all academic levels with instruction and resources for writing, reading, and writing-as-critical thinking skills development; to provide UNA faculty with teaching resource support and professional development opportunities in Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and Writing in the Disciplines (WID); and to facilitate and develop community-oriented writing, reading, and writing-as-critical thinking programs while building community relationships.

The CWE is comprised of four major programs:

1. The University Writing Center (UWC), which includes
 - a. Writing Tutorial Services,
 - b. Classroom Workshops, and
 - c. Student Reading and Writing Groups
2. Faculty Professional Development in Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) & Writing in the Disciplines (WID)
3. Community Programs, which include support for
 - a. Florence High School Writing Center, and
 - b. Florence-Lauderdale Public Library Writing Workshops
4. Academic-Athletic Mentoring Program (AAMP)

In Fall 2008, the CWE employed 19 students: 16 tutors in the University Writing Center and 3 academic coaches in AAMP. The Center for Writing Excellence is located in UNA's Stone Lodge, 2nd floor.

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

The most visible component of the Center for Writing Excellence is the University Writing Center (UWC), located in Stone Lodge 2. The UWC provides writing tutorial support for all students, conducts classroom workshops as requested by faculty, and provides a forum for student reading and writing groups. This Fall, it was staffed by 16 students from across the disciplines, ranging from sophomore through graduate levels, who offered 104 tutorial hours each week: 96 face-to-face and 8 online.

Contacts

A contact is a visit to the University Writing Center, whether made by the same individual or by different individuals. One useful way to consider a contact is to think of it as an opportunity for teaching and learning, as opposed to a label attached to each student in a one-to-one ratio. It is therefore not only possible, but also often the case that one student provides multiple contacts. Contacts are recorded via a log book at the front desk; however, because this is an imprecise means of recording (students neglect to sign in or out, or include inaccurate information), it is only useful for conservative estimates.

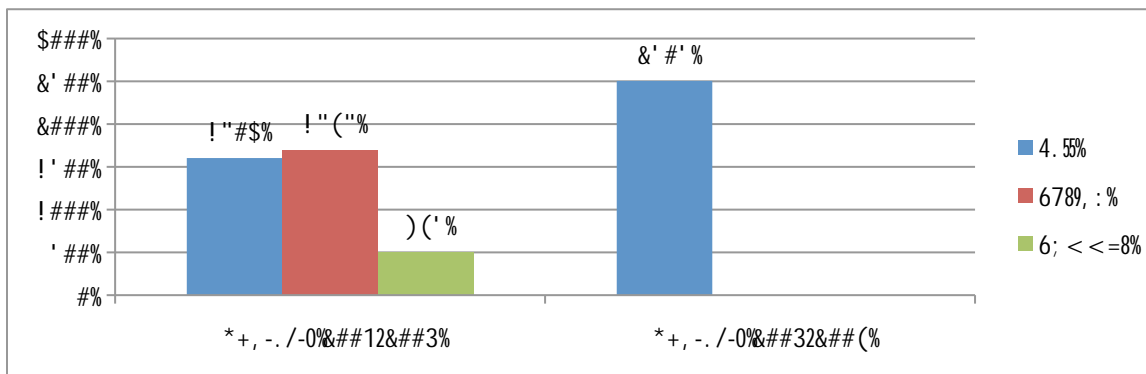


Figure 8: Contacts by Semester

At present, the retention goal has been met among Project OPEN students, and is steadily progressing toward the ESL goal. EN 099 appears to be lagging, despite orientation visits to classes. For Fall 2008, we have begun monitoring the involvement of two other demographics as well: the Presidential Mentors Academy and the Academic-Athletic Mentoring Program.

Tutorial Evaluations

Clients anonymously submitted 584 tutorial evaluations, in which they were asked whether or not they agreed or disagreed with several statements using a scale of 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). The statements and results, with prior semester comparisons, are provided in Table 1.

Writing Tutorial Evaluation Survey Results				
Statement	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Summer 2008	Fall 2008
The Writing Center atmosphere is welcoming and comfortable.	4.92	4.9	4.97	4.80
The Tutor was friendly and courteous.	4.93	4.92	5	4.84
The tutor knew or knew where to find information that was important to me.	4.92	4.9	4.9	4.74
The Writing Center website is a valuable resource.	4.56	4.9	4.71	4.63
My experience in the Writing Center was useful to me.	4.89	4.91	5	4.78
I would visit the Writing Center again.	4.94	4.9	4.95	4.79
I would recommend the Writing Center to friends.	4.92	4.89	4.9	4.78
I would recommend my tutor to friends.	4.89	4.85	4.95	4.77
Average Score of all responses averages.	4.87	4.9	4.9	4.8

Table 1: Tutorial Evaluation Scores

Although the scores appear to have decreased, this may be attributed to a large sample. Furthermore, as with other semesters, students often did not read the survey before completing it, scoring the tutorial experience poorly, yet providing positive comments. A sample of the comments follow:

“Felt very comfortable and learned a lot. My questions were answered”

“Gave me good ideas to help improve my essay and express my points”

“I absolutely love this place! My tutor was awesome!”

“I had a great time :) Thank you for helping me”

“I wish the school I transferred from had this set up”

“It's really amazing, everytime (sic) when I come here I take lots of things with me which can help me forever!!!”

“It was more helpful than I thought and completely worth it”

“The tutor was actually more helpful than my professor”

“Very helpful, but encouraged me to do it for myself”

Classroom Workshops

The UWC also conducted 35 orientations and workshops during Fall 2008, reaching a closely estimated 590 students -- more than any previous semester. Orientations were conducted in 17 classes, reaching approximately 301 students. Content



students to meet with professors to discuss writing and publication issues. Its Fall schedule included the following events and speakers:

- 9/16 General Interest Meeting
- 9/23 Professional Resume Writing (Ms. Melissa Medlin, Career Services)
- 10/7 Publishing Social Science Research for Academic Journals (Dr. Alex TakeuchiTakeuchi)

Five faculty members attended this brainstorming session in which they shared their common writing processes, discussing everything from where and when they wrote to how they researched, revised and edited their documents. The core idea was to encourage faculty to examine how they bring their own practices and expectations to bear on the assignments and deadlines they provide.

Workshop Evaluations

Although they were collected using a student workshop questionnaire and were also overlooked for the third workshop, faculty did provide positive feedback on the WAC/WID Workshops. A better evaluation survey must be produced and used in Spring 2009.

WAC/WID Workshop Survey Results		
Statement	Audience	Collaboration

Statement

Fall 2008

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Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment. (2008). *University of North Alabama Data Book, August 2008*. Retrieved December 11, 2008, from http://www.una.edu/research/Data%20Books/DataBook_2008.pdf