

August 15, 2016

To: Glynis Ridley, Chair

Department of English

From: Bronwyn T. Williams,

Director, University Writing Center

Re: Writing Center Report AY 2015- 2016

The University Writing Center had a successful year in 2015-6, marked by our move from the third floor to the first floor of Ekstrom Library. Credit for the accomplishments in the Writing Center is shared by the director, Associate Director Cassandra Book, Program Assistant Robin Blackett, Assistant Directors Amy Nichols, Laura Tetreault, Jamila Kareem, and Stephen Cohen, as well as the dedicated and talented staff of consultants.

**Achievements**

**1. Writing Center Consultations:** The Writing Center had a successful year of consultations.

Visits for the 2015-16 Academic Year in Brief:

Fall 2015 – Belknap 2078 Visits

Health Sciences 66 Visits

Virtual 358 Visits

Total 2502 Visits

Spring 2016 – Belknap 1929 Visits

Health Sciences 43 Visits

Virtual 323 Visits

Total 2295 Visits

Summer 2016 – Belknap 326 Visits

Health Sciences 8 Visits

Virtual 128 Visits

Total 462 Visits

Total for 2015-16 5259 Visits

Although the construction in the Library that lasted into autumn resulted in a significant drop in visits at the Belknap Writing Center during Fall 2015, we saw substantial increases on the Health Sciences Campus for both Fall and Spring and an increase on Belknap in during the summer. Given the challenges posed by renovations and our move, we view our overall increase of 103 visits over 2014-15 as a success and look forward to the year ahead in our new location. **2. Exit Survey Results:** Our exit survey indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Writing Center, by both quantitative and qualitative measures. Our survey results were improvements on the results from 2013-14. Highlights of the survey are:

* In answer to the statement: “My Writing Center consultation addressed my concerns about my writing project,” more than 97% of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” (85%) or “Agree” (12%).
* In answer to the statement: “What I learned during my Writing Center consultation will help me with future writing projects,” more than 95% of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” (76%) or “Agree” (19%).
* In answer to the statement: “I plan to use the Writing Center again,” more than 94% of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” (80%) or “Agree” (14%).
* In answer to the statement: “The Writing Center staff were welcoming and helpful,” more than 96% of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” (86%) or “Agree” (10%).

The qualitative responses on the survey were overwhelmingly positive as well. A small group of suggestions requested longer consulting sessions. We feel the length of sessions is currently the most conducive to effective tutoring.

**3. Presentations and Workshops:** During the academic year, University Writing Center staff conducted 37 in-class workshops on writing issues and 88 presentations about our services. We also conducted workshops about effective writing for Residence Life, TRIO, the Cultural Center, SIGS, and other campus organizations.

**4. Move into the new University Writing Center space:** In late October 2015 we moved from our location on the third floor of Ekstrom Library to a new space on the first floor designed for us. Although the move was delayed from August into the middle of the semester, we did not close for a single hour during the move and relocation. We are grateful to the support of Dean Bob Fox for the new space and Dean Kimberley Kempf-Leonard for funding the purchase of new furniture. We held an open house to celebrate the opening in February, 2016. Attendees included Deans Fox and Kemp-Leonard as well as students and representatives from English, UofL Libraries, Delphi Center, Arts and Sciences, and REACH.

**5. English 508 –** We had approved a new course, English 508 – Literacy Tutoring Across Contexts and Cultures. The course will be targeted to interested undergraduate and MA students who can then take part in tutoring internships in the community with organizations such as Family Scholar House and the Louisville Free Public Library.

**6. Family Scholar House:** Assistant Director Amy Nichols organized and facilitated ongoing writing workshops and writing consultations at Family Scholar House. This was an important initial step in our efforts to provide more writing consultation services to the larger community.

**7. Collaboration with Reference:** Since moving to our new location, we have increased our collaborations with Reference Assistance and Instruction. We have held several joint consultations in a shared consultation room and have worked to coordinate efforts with the two staffs.

**8. Faculty and Graduate Student Writing Groups:** We continued to facilitate Writing Groups for junior faculty and for graduate students, providing writing support and feedback.

**9. Dissertation Writing Retreat:** The spring Dissertation Writing Retreat during May was again a success. In the May retreat, funded by SIGS, 14 Ph.D. students representing five different colleges and nine different disciplines spent a week in the Writing Center working on their dissertations. The exit surveys and discussions with the students indicated that the retreat was overwhelmingly successful. We had eight students on our waitlist for the retreat.

**10. Graduate Student Writing Workshop Series:** The Writing Center, in collaboration with SIGS, conducted a series of writing workshops for graduate students on both the Belknap and Health Sciences Campuses. The workshops, some of which were repeated each semester, covered issues including Reading and Responding to Graduate Level Scholarship, Writing for Publication, and Writing a Literature Review. The workshops will take place again in 2016-17.

**11. Writing Center Blog and Social Media:** The Writing Center Blog, to which all members of the staff contribute posts during the year, was viewed more than 10,000 times in 2015-16. The blog has now been viewed more than 36,000 times in the past five years, with the numbers increasing every year. In addition, many of the posts have drawn interest from readers outside the UofL community.

**12. Statewide Writing Center Directors’ Meeting:** The University Writing Center hosted the annual Kentucky “Directors’ Day Out” workshop for university writing center directors from across the state. The one-day workshop focused on long-range planning activities for writing center directors from seven colleges and universities in the region.

**13. Writing Center Scholarship:** During the 2015-16 academic year a number of Writing Center staff presented their scholarship at conferences including the International Writing Centers Association Conference, the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the Southeast Writing Centers Conference, the Kentucky Philological Association Conference, and the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing. In addition, Cassandra Book, the associate director, had a chapter published in an edited collection on Writing Center research.

**14. Learning Commons:** The Writing Center continued to meet with other student support organizations located in Ekstrom Library to coordinate Learning Commons' activities. The offices involved are the Digital Media Suite, Media Resources, the REACH Computer Resource Center, the Reference & Information Literacy Department, and the Writing Center. We also took part in Learning Commons' events such as the Halloween Scavenger Hunt and the Winter Resource Fair.

**15. Creative Writing Program Collaboration:** Assistant Director Laura Tetreault coordinated collaboration with the English Department’s Creative Writing Program that resulted in outreach to instructors, tutoring resources for consultants, and a workshop for students on publishing advice.

**16. Events –** We took part in or hosted a number of events, including Kick Back in the Stacks, the International Write In, National Writing Centers Week, an Open Mic Night with the White Squirrel Literary Magazine, and the Celebration of Student Writing.

**17. Student Artists on Display:** In February 2016, we had an open call for student artists to submit their work for display in the new Writing Center space. The Center now displays eight pieces on loan and two pieces created specifically for the University Writing Center.

**18. New Website Resources. –** We revised and expanded our Writing FAQs and Associate Director Cassandra Book created a new online workshop on writing effective Literature Reviews.

**Plans for 2016-17**

**Events –** We plan to continue and expand our events, including readings, events connected to Banned Books week and the National Day on Writing.

**Axton Reading –** Our ongoing collaboration with the Creative Writing Program will include hosting an Axton Series Reading in February 2017.

**Writing Groups –** We will continue our graduate student and faculty writing groups as well as begin regular writing groups for creative writers.

**DMS Partnership**: A new director of the Digital Media Suite will offer us the opportunity to explore new collaborations in the year ahead.