

September 5, 2023

To: Karen Chandler, Chair
Department of English

From: Tim Johnson,
Director, University Writing Center

Re: Writing Center Report AY 2022-2023



I am pleased to report that I have inherited a writing center that had an excellent 2022-2023 academic year. Credit for the accomplishments in the Writing Center is shared by the Director, Bronwyn Williams; Associate Director Annmarie Steffes; Senior Program Assistant Maddy Decker; Assistant Directors Liz Soule and Kendyl Harmeling; as well as the dedicated and talented staff of consultants.

The Writing Center contributed to all three elements of the University's mission throughout this period of time. I outline these contributions, here.

Student Support

UofL Mission, Point of Emphasis #1: "Teaching diverse undergraduate, graduate, and professional students in order to develop engaged citizens, leaders, and scholars"

The Writing Center is an integral part of the educational mission of the University. We contribute to this mission via individual consultations, workshops, events, and resources.

Consultations

During the 2022-2023 academic year, The University Writing Center held 2,995 appointments (1,334 unique users from 50 different majors) at its two locations and virtually. The numbers break down as follows:

	Ekstrom Library Location	Virtual	Health Sciences Campus	Total
Summer 2022	108 (50 unique)	166	—	274
Fall 2022	978 (512 unique)	Total- 463 (256 unique)	22	1,463
Spring 2023	719 (421 unique)	Total: 548 (248 unique)	13	1,280
Total	1,805	1,177	35	3,017

Importantly, exit surveys indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Writing Center, by both quantitative and qualitative measures. Highlights of the survey are:

- In answer to the statement: “My Writing Center consultation addressed my concerns about my writing project,” more than 96% of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” (88%) or “Agree” (8%).
- In answer to the statement: “What I learned during my Writing Center consultation will help me with future writing projects,” more than 94% of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” (79%) or “Agree” (15%).
- In answer to the statement: “My Writing Center consultations made me feel more confident as a writer,” more than 86% of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” (71%) or “Agree” (15%).
- In answer to the statement: “I plan to use the Writing Center again,” more than 97% of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” (83%) or “Agree” (14%).
- In answer to the statement: “The Writing Center staff were welcoming and helpful,” more than 98% of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” (90%) or “Agree” (8%).

The qualitative responses on the survey were overwhelmingly positive as well. A number of these qualitative responses suggest that, in addition to lessons related to writing practices, the services provided by the University Writing Center raise students’ sense of belonging and self-efficacy.

Workshops

In addition to individual consultations, the University Writing Center planned and facilitated a series of workshops for faculty both on issues of using writing effectively in their courses, and also on thoughtful and creative ways to respond to the development and use of more sophisticated AI in writing. We also held our regular workshops on issues of graduate student writing, organized through the Graduate School.

Dissertation Writing Retreat

At the end of the school year, fourteen Ph.D. students representing and ten different disciplines spent a week working on their dissertations and receiving daily feedback and workshops. The exit surveys and discussions with the students indicated that the retreat was overwhelmingly successful.

Events

This year, we successfully hosted a Halloween Open Mic Night, Valentine’s Day Open Mic Night (co-sponsored by Miracle Monocle) and International Mother Language Day.

Writing Groups

We continued to facilitate the Graduate Student and Faculty Writing Group; Creative Writing Group; and LGBTQ+ Writing Group.

New Video Resources. – We created new video workshops on the new version of the APA manual and writing as a graduate student.

Research

UofL Mission, Point #2: “practicing and applying research, scholarship and creative activity”

The University Writing Center both contributes to the success of researchers across the University of Louisville through its services and serves as a nationally-recognized research site. This year, we are happy to report three publications work related to the center:

Adepoju, Olalekan T. (In Press) "Discursive Practices in Recurring Asynchronous Writing Center Consultations" *Writing Center Journal*.

Williams, Bronwyn T. "Writing Centers, Enclaves, and Creating Spaces of Change Within Universities," *Writing Center Journal*: Vol. 40 : 3,:2. (2022) 7-20.

Williams, Bronwyn T. "Making Sense of How Things Feel: Attending to the Emotional Experiences in Writing Programs. in *Sensemaking for Writing Programs and Writing Centers*. Rita Malenczyk, Ed. Utah State University Press. (2023). 85-106.

In addition, Annmarie Steffes, Associate Director, presented “Instructor Autonomy: Exploring the Role of OER in Composition Classrooms” at the Conference on College Composition and Communication.

Community Engagement

UofL Mission, Point #3: Providing engaged service and outreach that improve the quality of life for local and global communities.

The Writing Center successfully ran the third annual Cotter Cup in collaboration with the Western Branch Library. This event is designed to “engage Louisville’s youngest poets in authentic conversations around literacy and self-expression.”

Finally, the Writing Center engaged in a number of other activities that support and enhance these central initiatives:

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 11,000 times in 2022-23. In addition, many of the posts have drawn interest from readers outside the UofL community.

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.

Student Artists on Display: We continued with our rotating display of student art.