

Center for Writing Excellence
2014 - 2015 Academic Year Report
 Dr. Kathleen Richards

Mission & Programs

The UNA Center for Writing Excellence has two primary missions: 1) to provide UNA students at all academic levels with instruction and resources for writing, reading, and writing-as-critical thinking skills development and 2) to provide UNA faculty with teaching resource support and professional development opportunities in Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and Writing in the Disciplines (WID).

The above missions are accomplished through a collection of programs categorized into two areas:

1. University Writing Center
 - a. Individual and Group Consultations, conducted face-to-face or online
 - b. Classroom Presentations and Workshops
2. Faculty Professional Development
 - a. Individual, Group, Departmental, College, or University-level Presentations and Workshops
 - b. Faculty Writing Retreats

University Writing Center

The primary activity of the Center for Writing Excellence is to conduct writing consultations: one-to-one or group interactions between a consultant and a client or clients, conducted in the center or online. Clients may, and often do, participate in multiple consultations throughout a semester, year, or across years.

Who uses the writing center, and how is it used? The results are revealed in Figure 1.

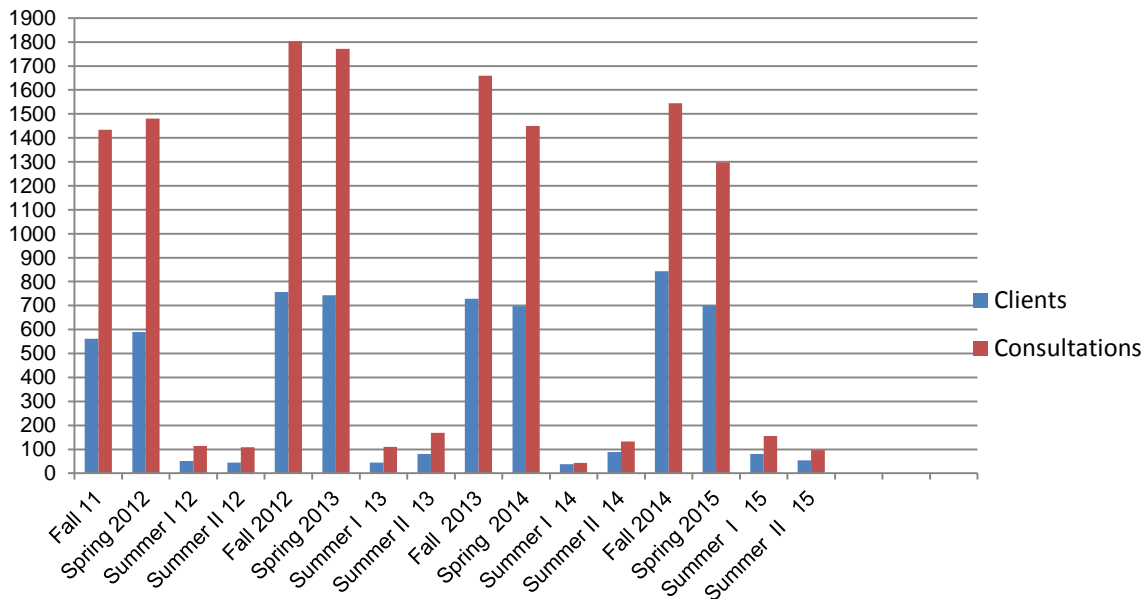


Figure 1: Total Number of Active Clients and Consultations over 4 Years

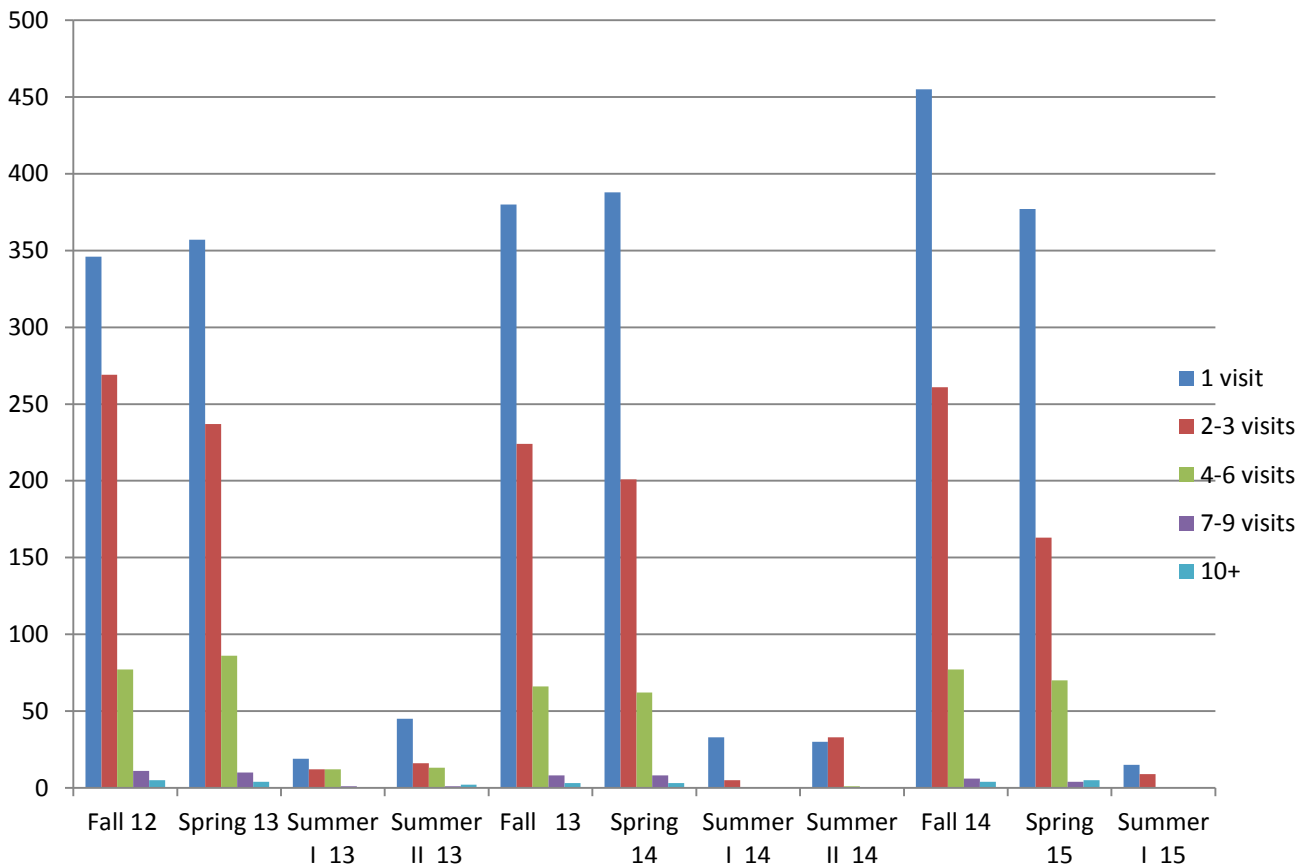


Figure 2: Clients by Number of Tutorial Visits

Figure 2. suggests that, given the current resources, both clients and consultations are continuing to increase. The CWE welcomes approximately 500-800 clients per year for a total of 1200-1900 consultations during the fall and spring semesters. This data also suggests that clients often return for assistance on numerous occasions. While the number of clients who visit one-time remains somewhat constantly higher, the number of multiple visit clients remains about the same, especially in the 2-3 visit and the 4-6 visit range during the fall and spring semesters. This is generally a positive indicator that the writing center is making a positive impact, especially since the center advocates a three-visit policy among faculty who require or expect students to attend consultations. In fact, a large number of students who visit the CWE repeatedly are English, history, and nursing students.

Consultation Evaluations

Clients of the CWE have the option of providing an evaluation of their experience via a paper survey at the end of their consultation. These result in unusually high and positive overall evaluations.

CWE Workshops

Formatting and Writing Workshops continue to be a popular component of services offered by the CWE. The most popular requests continue to be writing center orientations, workshops in formatting (APA, CMS, MLA styles), overviews of academic research papers, avoiding plagiarism, preparing for the Educator Preparation Program entrance essay, and strategies for collaborative writing. Table 1 reveals the workshops given at the University Success Center for the Fall 2014/Spring 2015 semesters. Before 2014, workshops were presented in classrooms around campus per the request of professors. Writing center orientations are still conducted in the classrooms, particularly in EN 111/112 and First Year Experience.

Table 1. CWE Writing/Formatting Workshops, 2014-2015

	Workshops	Fall '14	Spring '15
1	American Psychological Association (APA)	24	79
2	Chicago Manual Style (CMS)	0	9
3	Modern Language Association (MLA)	0	1
4	Avoiding Plagiarism	11	20
5	Educator Preparation Program Essay	6	4
6	Collaborative Writing	4	0

Table 1. reveals the total number of attendees during the past two academic years.

In Fall 2014, the CWE had just moved into the Commons building. The CWE began holding all workshop presentations in the University Success Center. Previously, all writing/formatting workshops had been given in separate classrooms across campus per the requests of professors. Because of this change, the number of student attendance decreased for a short time. Professors were used to the workshops being presented in their classrooms. This took some adjusting. Now, most professors have been requiring students to visit the workshops at the USC, and emails are sent to professors regarding students' attendance. The number of student attendees (and occasionally faculty members) is increasing every semester. However, the Assistant Director visits some classrooms due to the requests of the instructors/professors, in particular business classes, ESL, and the Presidential Mentors Academy. Classroom presentations for formatting/writing workshops and writing center orientation are not included in the numbers above.

Formatting/writing workshops are evaluated by paper surveys. At the end of each workshop, students are asked to fill out a quick 5 question survey with a comments section at the bottom. These surveys are used to structure the content and assess the effectiveness of each presentation.

Comments:

APA Formatting/Writing Workshops:

"Thank you for doing this because it really helped me understand APA format. I found this presentation very useful!"

"This helped me out so much! It made my semester a little less stressful."

"Great and valuable information."

"Useful information. However, presentation was a little long."

"I think it would be helpful to show students good reliable resources for us to use."

Collaboration:

“Power Point presentation helped a lot.”

“Thank you. That was very useful.”

“Very clear and concise. Tips in Microsoft Word were very helpful.”

“Great presentation! This kind of subject usually puts me to sleep, but you kept it interesting.”

“I really liked this workshop presentation.”

Education Preparation Program Essay:

“I feel like your presentation really helped me prepare for this essay. Thank you for all your help!”

“I loved this presentation and the interaction you had with us!”

“This was a great presentation and it was taught effectively.”

“Great lecture. Very informative.”

CMS Formatting/Writing Workshop:

“Very informative. Even though I have written several papers in CMS, I learned something new today.”

“I loved the way you explained the reasons behind using this format.”

“Very clear and informative.”

Professional Development

The CWE has refocused its efforts from professional development in teaching to professional development in research, offering a one-week writing and research retreat each May, in conjunction with Collier Library and the Office of Academic Affairs. Dr. Kathleen Richards, CWE Assistant Director and Ms. Leigh Thompson and Mr. Derek Malone, Instructional Librarians, provide writing and research support.

Table 2. reveals which faculty members have participated in the writing retreats from 2010-2015.

Table 2. Faculty Writing Retreat Participants, 2010-2015

	Name	Department	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1	Austin, Linda	Nursing	X					
2	Barske, Carrie	History					X	X
3	Bibbee, Jeffery	History		X	X			X
4	Blankenship, Lisa Anne	Biology		X	X	X	X	X
5	Bulman, Jay	English	X					
6	Carrasco, Gabriela	Psychology	X	X				
7	Coleman-Reed, Freda	Social Work	X	X				
8	Crabtree, John	CIS	X			X		
9	Darby, Wendy A.	Nursing			X			
10	Davis, Ernestine	Nursing		X				
11	Duques, Matt	English						X
12	Englett, Jill	HES					X	
13	Franklin, Sarah	History				X	X	X
14	Goode, Jill	HES			X	X		
15	Harris, Felecia	Education		X				X
16	Hearn, James	Music Management	X					
17	Hodges, John	Social Work		X		X		
18	Hunt, Andrea	Sociology				X	X	X
19	Infanger, Scott	Foreign Languages				X	X	X
20	Keys-Matthews, Lisa	Geography	X					
21	Kim, Nanhee	Art		X	X			

22	King, Michele (adjunct)	English	X	X				
23	Kingsbury, Pam	English	X					
24	Kinnamon, Eric (adjunct)	Business	X	X				
25	Kirch, Lisa	Art History	X	X	X	X	X	
26	Kirkman, Tera	Nursing	X	X	X			
27	Lee, Dongh	Geography				X	X	
28	Lee, Marilyn (Chair)	Nursing	X	X	X		X	
29	Little, Amy (adjunct)	English						X
30	Lott, Anna	English	X					
31	Maddox, Lamont	Education				X	X	X
32	Mauriello, Nick	English		X				
33	McClellan, Eleanor	Music & Theatre		X				
34	McGee, John	Ed Tech	X					
35	Mighty, Mario	Geography						X
36	Padgett, Gary	Education				X	X	
37	Paulk, Amber	HES			X	X	X	X
38	Peterson, Lesley	English	X					
39	Purser, Chris	Political Science						X
40	Qiu, Chong	Chemistry				X	X	
41	Ray, Jeffrey M.	Biology			X			
42	Sim, Sunhui	Geography		X		X	X	
43	Simms, Jonathan	Library					X	
44	Simpson, Jill	Education		X				
45	Takeuchi, May	Sociology	X		X			
46	Thompson, Brian	Physics		X				
47	Underwood, Lynn	Nursing	X		X	X	X	
48	Wardell, Brenna	English						X
49	Wells, Shannon	Placement	X					
50	Whitten, Leah	Education						X
51	Williams, Laura	Nursing	X					
52	Williams, Yaschica	Criminal Justice		X	X	X	X	X
53	Winner, Tammy	English						X
54	Zayac, Ryan M.	Psychology			X	X	X	
55	Zhang, Paul	Computer Information	X					

Each year, a call is sent via email across campus, announcing the faculty/staff writing retreat which is offered every third week of May. Due to limited funding, only 22 vacancies are available. Both the Collier Library and the CWE split the costs for this retreat. The expenses for this retreat include food and beverages for the entire week, including continental breakfast and lunch. The idea of including food is so that the faculty/staff do not leave the retreat so that they can concentrate on their writing projects without distractions.

Comments by Participants:

What did you like about the retreat?

“Being in a confined quiet space to work with no distractions”

“Chinks of time that actually allow me to be productive”

“I look forward to the time to write”

“Dedicated time and space for working on writing projects. The lunches provided were also very nice. Having like-minded colleagues working alongside me to bounce ideas off of and encourage each other.”

During these retreats, the participants brainstorm and develop new project ideas; complete and submit conference proposals; and review, revise, and submit articles for publication. The following list includes publications from the participants who attended the faculty/staff writing retreats.

Publications by Faculty

Bibbee, Jeffrey. 'William John Birkbeck', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2012.

Blankinship, L.A. (2012). Determination of the antibiotic resistance profile of student cell phones. *Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education*. 13(2), 425-yy.
doi:10.1128.jmbe.v13i2.425

Blankinship, L.A., Cotton, B. L., & Gaston, J. L.. (2013). Survey of antibiotic resistance in cell phone and computer keyboard isolated bacteria. *BIOS*, 84(3), 165-172.

Blankinship, L.A., and Bullard-Burcham, K. (2015). Evaluation of three community based-hospitals for control and prevalence of *Clostridium difficile* infection. *BIOS* 86(4): 193-200

Keeley, J., Afful, S. E., Stiegler-Balfour, J. J., Good, J. J., & Leder, S. (Eds.), *So You Landed a Job –What's Next? Advice for Early Career Psychologists from Early Career Psychologists*. Retrieved from the Society for the Teaching of Psychology web site:
<http://teachpsych.org/ebooks/ecp2013/index.php>

Kirch, M. H. (2013). Death on the Danube. In J. Davies (Ed.), *Aspects of violence in Renaissance Europe* (pp. 61-82). Abingdon, Oxon, UK: Ashgate.

Kirkman, T. R. (2013). High fidelity simulation effectiveness in nursing students' transfer of learning. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*, 10(1), 1-6.

Paulk, A., Dowd, D., Zayac, R., Eklund, A., & Kildare, C. (2014). The relationship of culture, geographic region, and gender on body image: A comparison of college students in the Southeast and Pacific Northwest regions of the United States. *Sociological Spectrum*, 34, 442-452.

Paulk, A., & Zayac, R. M. (2013). Attachment style as a predictor of risky sexual behavior in adolescents. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 9, 42 – 47.

Thompson, L., & Blankinship, L.A. (2015). Teaching information literacy skills to sophomore level biology majors. *Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education*, 16(1): 29-33.
doi: dx.doi.org/10.1128/jmbe.v16i1.818

- Underwood, L.M., Williams, L.L., Lee, M.B., & Brunnert, K.A. (2013). Predicting baccalaureate nursing students' first semester outcomes: HESI admission assessment. *Journal of Professional Nursing Supplement*, 29(2), S38-S42. doi: 10.1016/j.profnurs.2012.07.003
- Williams, Y.(2013). Review of the book *The Cycle of Juvenile Justice*, by T. J. Bernard and M.C. Kurlychek. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*. doi:10.1080/10511253.2012.759768.
- Zayac, R. M., & Paulk, A. (2014). Interteaching: Its effects on exams scores in a compressed schedule format. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 14, 1-12.
- Zayac, R. M., Ratkos, T., Frieder, J., & Paulk, A. (2016). A comparison of active student responding modalities in a general psychology course. *Teaching of Psychology*, 43, 43-47.