

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA
UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER
FALL 2007 REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University Writing Center enjoyed a very successful first term of formal operation, despite the challenges that it faced, and will continue to face, as part of a growing and changing campus.

The Center faced several limitations: the lack of a dedicated space limited its hours of operation. The lack of a personnel budget caused an over-reliance on volunteers, leading to incomplete training as volunteer participation fluctuated. Finally, the lack of a supply budget caused the University Writing Center to rely heavily on the English Department for supplies.

Despite these challenges, the Writing Center finished the term with remarkable first semester numbers. Overall lab attendance reached 1603 visits by 595 students. Writing Tutorials were conducted 426 times for 201 students; these students ranged from first semester freshmen to graduate students, from members of the International student community through graduate program nurses. Writing Center tutorials were held for students in every College and the CELL program. English led the way with 228 tutorials for students enrolled in the Liberal Arts and EN 099 courses, but students in four Departments in the College of Arts and Sciences: Communications, Geography, Psychology, and Sociology, combined to participate in another 75 tutorials. The University Writing Center also began participation in university retention efforts, reaching 7% of the campus EN 099 population and 13% of the campus English as a Second Language population. In addition, the Center held 24 Orientations and writing workshops, reaching approximately 489 students.

The results from Fall 2007 operations show that the University Writing Center was able to quickly reach across the campus community to begin impacting the quality of writing at UNA. Student evaluations were consistently high, whether they participated in writing tutorials (4.87/5.0) or workshops (average overall scores between 4.45/5.0 and 4.96/5.0), supporting the perception that the Center is a valuable writing resource regardless of discipline.

The University Writing Center should continue to receive increasing financial and academic support from the UNA community. Plans to complete an ambitious set of Spring 2008 goals are currently underway. These goals include the creation of a fully developed peer tutor training guide; the implementation of a grammar workshop series for students and a professional development writing across the curriculum series for faculty; and offering online tutoring for students enrolled in distance education Nursing programs. In addition, the Writing Center will continue to offer supplemental writing instruction, writing workshops addressing a variety of needs from writing process and grammar concerns to APA style, and it will continue to participate in and encourage student retention.

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INTRODUCTION

For the University Writing Center, the Fall 2007 academic semester was in many ways groundbreaking: this was the first semester in which the Center operated under the leadership of a full-time director. Attendance this semester set operating benchmarks for hours of service (47 hours/week), different student visitors (595), contact opportunities (1603), and writing tutorials (428). This was also the first semester in which the Writing Center offered workshops on writing issues, grammar, and documentation styles to the campus community. The impact and success of the University Writing Center could be felt in many quarters of the university campus, and the overall reception by students, faculty, and administration was extremely warm.

Despite these successes, there is plenty of room for improvement. Challenges in location, budget, and staffing remain unresolved. A formalized training course or seminar program for tutors must be developed. The University Writing Center Workshop Series on Grammar has yet to be implemented, and faculty professional development workshops addressing writing across the curriculum are as yet unrealized. Once these and other related issues are addressed, the University Writing Center should be able to establish higher levels of university participation. This should better situate the Writing Center to serve as a "Center" for the university writing community, strengthening university programs through supplemental individualized instruction and workshop opportunities.

WRITING CENTER OVERVIEW

The mission of the University of North Alabama's University Writing Center is to provide students with supporting instruction and resources related to writing development at any academic level, and to provide faculty with teaching resource support related to writing in the disciplines. To achieve this mission, the University Writing Center offers individual writing tutorials provided by trained peer tutors, support resources in the form of books, handouts, and web resources, and instructional workshops that may be scheduled during class times or offered as independent skills development opportunities. This mission is consistent with the University of North Alabama *Strategic Plan* to strengthen the university community by "Support[ing] initiatives that enhance basic competencies/skills: (a) math; (b) writing; (c) reading; (d) time management; (e) study; and (f) life and career planning. (p. 10)

Location

During Fall 2007, the University Writing Center was housed on the second floor of the Stone Lodge, a 1930's Civilian Conservation Corps. building at the center of campus. The second floor houses 29 wireless workstations in a lecture configuration, with an additional projector and lecturer's workstation. In addition to housing the Writing Center, this space served as a classroom and testing space throughout the semester. The Writing Center itself is located on a small stage and at the rear of the room. Furniture includes three bookcases of writing resources, two filing cabinets, a desk, a set of shelves that serve as tutor mailboxes, and two tutoring tables, each with three chairs. Total seating capacity for Stone Lodge 2 is approximately 36.

Although Stone Lodge 2 houses the University Writing Center, its primary function is to provide classroom space; additionally, because it is a computer lab, it is also used as a testing space. The Stone Lodge is therefore configured for its primary function: a traditional and formal instructional space. It easily accommodates neither the general needs of a student support service office nor the specific needs of a Writing Center, where a less formal space and a more accessible arrangement of resources help attract and retain students.

The functional overlap of Stone Lodge creates scheduling conflicts as well. While the Writing Center and computer lab have common purposes that mutually benefit from overlap, the Center cannot be open during classes. During the Fall semester, the following courses met in the Stone Lodge, necessitating a reduction of University Writing Center hours:

- EN 112: College Composition II (Hybrid Course) MWF, 9:00-9:50
- ED 299: Human Growth and Development T, 9:30-10:45
- COM 442: Public Relations Campaigns 2 Meetings
- ECE 306: Arithmetic for Early Childhood Education 2 Meetings

In addition, testing has either closed the Center or limited its effectiveness as a student workspace. Students demonstrated reluctance to enter when a class was in session, a perception that persisted throughout the term despite notification to the contrary posted at the Center entrance. Two courses and the English Department used Stone Lodge 2 as a testing site this semester.

- ES 121: Earth Science 12 Meetings
- BI 141: Human Anatomy & Physiology I 5 Meetings
- English Department MFT Exit Exam T 11/27 & W 11/28, 2:00-4:00

In the case of ES 121 and the English Department, the Writing Center was closed, while in the case of BI 141, Writing Center use was limited. In the English Exam situation, faculty proctors turned away 9 students who wanted to use the Writing Center.

Budget

Financially, the University Writing Center operated with no base budget. Dr. Garry Warren, Academic Affairs Vice President and Provost, provided the English Department with a personnel budget of \$6,000 (\$3,000 per term), allocated for operating Stone Lodge 2 as a computer lab. Students were therefore paid to staff the lab, but trained as tutors as well. The English Department paid for at least \$590.60 in supplies, including the following:

- Bookmarks for advertising (\$225.00)
- Posters for advertising (\$50.00)
- NCR duplicate forms – “Tutor Session Notes” (\$48.00)
- Bookcase (\$167.60)
- Reference books (Approx. \$100.00)
- Limited miscellaneous office supplies (pens, post-its, staplers, staples, tape dispenser, notepads, file folders, etc).

The Writing Center Director used English Department course copy budget money to make handouts, flyers, and teaching tools for the Center, thus limiting what he could provide both there and in his classroom. Because the Stone Lodge 2 printer is part of the Mane Card system, printer paper and cartridges were available from the Print Room.

Personnel

The University Writing Center was open for 23 hours during the workday, 12 hours over the course of four weekday evenings, and 12 hours on the weekends. These hours were offered by the Director, who tutored 15 hours per week, a small paid tutoring staff, and a large volunteer tutoring staff. Paid tutors were initial applicants who brought letters of recommendation or verbal recommendations from UNA faculty who had seen their writing. Volunteers were recruited from Advanced Composition, International Student Services, or they simply contacted the director to offer their time and energy. The complete list of tutors for Fall 2007, along with the hours they were paid or volunteered, excluding training, is provided in Table 1:

Fall 2007 Staffing								
#	Tutor	Paid / Vol.	Aug. Hrs.	Sept. Hrs.	Oct. Hrs.	Nov. Hrs.	Dec. Hrs.	Total Hrs.
1	Boaz, Kimberlee	Paid	0	23	10	0	0	33
2	Bullock, Joseph Thomas	Paid	0	19	24	16	9	68
3	Canida, N. Trey	Paid	0	19	21	6	4	50
4	Cox, Cory Taylor	Paid	0	18	10	18	0	46
5	Lancaster, Chad	Paid	0	34	19	20	4	77
6	Sweat, Noah Wyles	Paid	0	28	27.75	22	0	77.75
	Total Paid Tutor Hours		0	141	111.75	82	17	351.75
7	Beemon, Amber	Volunteer	0	2.5	2.34	0	0	4.84
8	Bruce, Josh	Volunteer	0	0.67	0	0	0	0.67
9	Crawford, Holly	Volunteer	0	0	7.25	3.7834	0	11.034
10	Cruse, Kathryn	Volunteer	0	2.0834	14.5834	37.5	9	63.1668
11	Deepakchandra, Bhakti	Volunteer	0	4.5	3	0	0	7.5
12	Ebeling, Pam	Volunteer	0	9	8.34	2.75	0	20.09
13	Gupta, Charmy	Volunteer	2	2	0	0	0	4
14	Helms, Calan	Volunteer	0	3.5834	3	2	0	8.5834
15	Koli, Plasy	Volunteer	0	3.75	0	0	0	3.75
16	Kothari, Amita	Volunteer	0	16.34	16.75	2.34	0	35.43
17	Kulangara, Nisha	Volunteer	0	2	8	3.75	0	13.75
18	Lanier, Jessica	Volunteer	0	0	10.883	17.34	1.5	29.716
19	Panchal, Dolly	Volunteer	0	4.5	6.5834	0	0	11.0834
20	Sanders, Katie	Volunteer	0	10.0167	8.75	1.534	0.834	21.3
21	Shah, Jimit	Volunteer	0	15	18.75	2.34	0	36.0834
22	Stover, Shawn	Volunteer	0	0	4	11.25	0	15.25
23	Taylor, Ash	Volunteer	0	0	5.834	0	0	5.834
	Total Volunteer Tutor Hours		2	75.9435	118.064	84.5874	11.334	291.929
	Total Tutor Hours		2	216.944	229.814	166.587	28.334	643.679

Table 1. University Writing Center Staffing, Fall 2007.

With only a minimal staffing budget in Fall 2007, the Writing Center relied heavily on volunteer contributions. These unpaid tutors provided double-coverage for the Center during high-volume periods, and on several occasions provided single coverage for the Director so he could participate in class workshops, departmental, or other university business. When one of the tutors resigned for family reasons, a volunteer took her hours, and continued to do so even after discovering that she did not qualify for payroll because she was a part time student. Another of the tutors stepped in mid-semester and remained dedicated through the remainder of the term, even as the workload increased.

Volunteers received the promise of a letter of recommendation, tutor training, and consideration for future employment as compensation for their time. Unfortunately, this was not ample enough incentive to keep most volunteers for the full term. Almost a dozen of these tutors volunteered until they became bored or until their workload became too great. Then they stopped volunteering, taking with them the hours spent in tutor training. New recruits needed to be found and trained in the middle of the term. The four new volunteers who applied had no choice but to start training in the middle of the semester; the rest of the term was spent trying to catch up on procedures, practices, and skills while on the job.

One unexpected form of staffing support this semester came in the form of an Administrative Assistant, Ms. Becky Brazeel, who provides support for the Honors College, the Learning Communities Program, and the University Writing Center. A mid-semester hire, her work has been initially limited to spreadsheet formatting and data entry while she develops her understanding of her role as support staff for three university programs. As she grows into her position, however, she will take on additional support responsibilities as they present themselves, including advertising design and grant research.

COMPUTER LAB USE

In this report, University Writing Center computer lab use is discussed in terms of both students and 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 a contact 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.

Data Collection Method & Limitations

In order to record contacts, students who visit the University Writing Center are asked to sign a log book, providing their name, professor and course for their work (where applicable), their arrival time, and their departure time (recorded when they leave). Students are also asked to identify their purpose for visiting the Center by checking the appropriate choices from one of these three options: Tutoring, Work/Study Time, and Break/E-mail. This is an imprecise means of collecting quantifiable data beyond a record of overall use for three major reasons. First, students do not always list professors and courses, and sometimes neglect to include arrival and departure times. During Fall 2007, 60 students neglected to provide either starting or ending times. Second, the purpose for the visit can change, as work on an assignment can lead to a tutoring session, and the student may also elect to check e-mail before leaving. Third, a small percentage of students do not sign their names completely, clearly, or, on a few occasions, truthfully, leading to discrepancies that can only be resolved by cross-examining the handwriting in the original log books and by checking names against the UNA Portal System address book. Because of these limitations, only conservative estimates of Writing Center use can be made.

Findings

Approximately 595 different students (8.13% of the 7323 total UNA student population) contacted the University Writing Center 1,603 times during the Fall 2007 term.

- 494 students visited 1-3 times
- 49 students visited 4-6 times
- 21 students visited 7-10 times
- 27 students visited 10-19 times
- 4 students visited 20+ visits, with the highest being 37.

Table 2 shows the data for computer lab contacts on a monthly basis.

Monthly Use Rate							
Month	Number of Contacts	Total Hours of Use	Average Use Time	Operational Weeks/ Month	Operating Hours/Week	Average Use Hours/ Week	Use Rate
August	77	47:03:00	0:36:40	0.5	47:00:00	94:06:00	200.21%
September	354	259:50:00	0:44:02	4	47:00:00	64:57:30	138.21%
October	596	401:39:00	0:40:26	4.5	47:00:00	89:15:20	189.91%
November	487	417:30:00	0:51:26	4	47:00:00	104:22:30	222.07%
December	89	84:38:00	0:57:03	0.5	47:00:00	169:16:00	360.14%
Total	1603	1210:40:00	0:45:19	13.5	47:00:00	89:40:44	190.81%

Table 2. Computer Lab Monthly Use Rate, Fall 2007.

For unknown reasons, the number of contacts peaked in October. One possible reason is that there was an extra half-week of service offered that month, as illustrated in the Operational Weeks/Month column, although this may also have been caused by a rush to complete any mid-term writing assignments. The Total Hours of Use increased steadily throughout the term, peaking in November only because the Writing Center did not operate the full month of December. The Average Use Time, which increased from just under 40 minutes in August to almost a full hour in December, illustrates that although December had

fewer total hours of use, each contact spent more time in the Center. The greatest differential in average use time, an 11 minute increase from October to November, clearly coincides with the push toward the Thanksgiving Holidays and the final exam period, during which times many of the larger and lengthier writing assignments were due.

The columns for Average Use Hours/Week and Use Rate also show the pressure students exert on themselves and on support services at the end of the term. In August, the Writing Center hosted several orientation workshops, informing classes of students about Writing Center resources and support. These orientations did not occur nearly as often in September, accounting for the decline in use. However, the average use from October to December nearly doubled, showing that students spent, on average, twice as much time in the Center at the end of the semester than they did at the mid-term mark. Use rates also verify this jump. In August and November, for every hour the Center was opened, contacts derived at least two hours of use. In other words, an average of at least two students could be found in the lab at every hour of operation during those months. In December, contacts derived three hours of use from each hour of operation.

The Daily Use Rate data in table 3 demonstrates that Monday through Thursday are peak operating days for the Writing Center, which is not surprising given the large number of students who leave each weekend. Monday and Wednesday were the strongest for Number of Contacts and Total Hours of Use, but the Average Use Time was longer for Tuesdays and Thursdays. Interestingly enough, Saturdays and Sundays were overall poorly attended by comparison, but those students who did use the Center on weekends tended to spend an average of just over an hour in the lab on those days. While Monday contacts provided the highest Average Use Hours/Day, the Use Rate column clearly shows that Tuesdays and Thursdays were the weekdays when contacts tended to spend more time in the Center.

Daily Use Rate							
Day	Number of Contacts	Total Hours of Use	Average Use Time	Operational Days	Operating Hours/Day	Average Use Hours/Day	Use Rate
Monday	358	256:11:00	0:42:56	14	8:00:00	18:17:56	228.74%
Tuesday	315	250:26:00	0:47:42	14	7:00:00	17:53:17	255.54%
Wednesday	368	253:08:00	0:41:16	14	8:00:00	18:04:51	226.01%
Thursday	315	234:32:00	0:44:40	13	7:00:00	18:02:28	257.73%
Friday	138	93:05:00	0:40:28	12	5:00:00	7:45:25	155.14%
Saturday	30	30:09:00	1:00:18	11	6:00:00	2:44:27	45.68%
Sunday	79	93:09:00	1:10:45	11	6:00:00	8:28:05	141.14%
Total	1603	1210:40:00	0:45:19	89	6:42:51	13:36:11	202.60%

Table 3. Computer Lab Daily Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Although monthly and daily figures provide a good overall sense of use, data showing daytime, evening, weekend, and hourly use rates are more important for explaining when the Writing Center is most actively used.

Daytime Use

Of the 1603 estimated contacts made during Fall 2007, 1226 of these, or 76.48%, visited on weekdays during normal working hours. Table 4 shows the figures related to daytime use rates for the University Writing Center during Fall 2007. Tuesdays and Thursdays were far stronger than Mondays and Wednesdays: both of these days had use rates above 300%, with a Thursday rate approaching 350%. By comparison, Monday and Wednesday use rates hovered near 275%, while Fridays were at 151%. Tuesdays in October and Thursdays in August and November were particularly impressive, as the use rates for these days went above the 400% mark, the equivalent of having four students present in the Center at all times on those days. Other days during which the use rate exceeded 300% include Mondays in November and Wednesdays in August and November. Although high August use rates can be attributed to Writing Center Orientation Workshops, the evidence shows again that while more

contacts visited on Mondays and Wednesdays, contacts spent more time in the Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Daytime Use Rate							
Month / Day	Number of Contacts	Total Hours of Use	Average Use Time	Operational Days/ Month	Operating Hours/Day	Average Use Hours/Day	Use Rate
Monday	283	193:45:00	0:41:05	14	5:00	13:50:21	276.79%
August	1	0:17:00	0:17:00	1	0:17	0:17:00	100.00%
September	41	31:28:00	0:46:03	3	5:00	10:29:20	209.78%
October	113	70:36:00	0:37:29	5	5:00	14:07:12	282.40%
November	105	77:11:00	0:44:06	4	5:00	19:17:45	385.92%
December	23	14:13:00	0:37:05	1	5:00	14:13:00	284.33%
Tuesday	251	176:38:00	0:42:13	14	4:00	12:37:00	315.42%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	4:00	0:00:00	0.00%
September	56	40:29:00	0:43:22	4	4:00	10:07:15	253.02%
October	130	84:27:00	0:38:59	5	4:00	16:53:24	422.25%
November	51	41:54:00	0:49:18	4	4:00	10:28:30	261.88%
December	14	9:48:00	0:42:00	1	4:00	9:48:00	245.00%
Wednesday	305	191:43:00	0:37:43	14	5:00	13:41:39	273.88%
August	29	17:34:00	0:36:21	1	5:00	17:34:00	351.33%
September	58	40:55:00	0:42:20	4	5:00	10:13:45	204.58%
October	139	72:35:00	0:31:20	5	5:00	14:31:00	290.33%
November	57	46:58:00	0:49:26	3	5:00	15:39:20	313.11%
December	22	13:41:00	0:37:19	1	5:00	13:41:00	273.67%
Thursday	253	181:30:00	0:43:03	13	4:00	13:57:42	349.04%
August	29	18:51:00	0:39:00	1	4:00	18:51:00	471.25%
September	65	39:59:00	0:36:54	4	4:00	9:59:45	249.90%
October	64	45:39:00	0:42:48	4	4:00	11:24:45	285.31%
November	95	77:01:00	0:48:39	4	4:00	19:15:15	481.35%
December	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	4:00	0:00:00	0.00%
Friday	134	90:56:00	0:40:43	12	5:00	7:34:40	151.56%
August	11	6:27:00	0:35:11	1	5:00	6:27:00	129.00%
September	30	15:28:00	0:30:56	4	5:00	3:52:00	77.33%
October	45	30:31:00	0:40:41	3	5:00	10:10:20	203.44%
November	48	38:30:00	0:48:08	4	5:00	9:37:30	192.50%
December	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	5:00	0:00:00	0.00%
Total	1226	834:32:00	0:40:51	67	4:36	12:27:21	270.78%

Table 4. Computer Lab Daytime Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Weekday Evening Use

Of the 1603 estimated contacts made during Fall 2007, 268 of these, or 16.72%, visited on weekday evenings. Table 5 shows the figures related to weekday evening use rates for the University Writing Center during Fall 2007. Mondays had the largest number of contacts, while Tuesday evenings had the highest use rates and the most months with Average Use Times over an hour. Use decreased throughout the rest of the week in terms of contact numbers and average use times, although evening contacts had some high use rates, especially Tuesdays through Thursdays in November and the last two days of operations (the first Monday and Tuesday of December). Clearly, the data trend continues to show a decrease in quantity (Number of Contacts) and an increase in time (Use Rates) as students approach the end of the term.

Weekday Evening Use Rate							
Month / Day	Number of Contacts	Total Hours of Use	Average Use Time	Operational Days/Month	Operating Hours/Day	Average Use Hours/Day	Use Rate
Monday	75	62:26:00	0:49:57	13	3:00	4:48:09	160.09%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	3:00	0:00:00	0.00%
September	18	15:05:00	0:50:17	3	3:00	5:01:40	167.59%
October	27	20:30:00	0:45:33	5	3:00	4:06:00	136.67%
November	23	16:39:00	0:43:26	4	3:00	4:09:45	138.75%
December	7	10:12:00	1:27:26	1	3:00	10:12:00	340.00%
Tuesday	64	73:48:00	1:09:11	14	3:00	5:16:17	175.71%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	3:00	0:00:00	0.00%
September	17	20:22:00	1:11:53	4	3:00	5:05:30	169.72%
October	17	13:07:00	0:46:18	5	3:00	2:37:24	87.44%
November	25	29:27:00	1:10:41	4	3:00	7:21:45	245.42%
December	5	10:52:00	2:10:24	1	3:00	10:52:00	362.22%
Wednesday	63	61:25:00	0:58:30	14	3:00	4:23:13	146.23%
August	1	0:04:00	0:00:00	1	3:00	0:04:00	2.22%
September	23	17:25:00	0:45:26	4	3:00	4:21:15	145.14%
October	24	25:41:00	1:04:13	5	3:00	5:08:12	171.22%
November	15	18:15:00	1:13:00	3	3:00	6:05:00	202.78%
December	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	1	3:00	0:00:00	0.00%
Thursday	62	53:02:00	0:51:19	13	3:00	4:04:46	135.98%
August	3	2:20:00	0:46:40	1	3:00	2:20:00	77.78%
September	21	11:56:00	0:34:06	4	3:00	2:59:00	99.44%
October	12	13:11:00	1:05:55	4	3:00	3:17:45	109.86%
November	26	25:35:00	0:59:02	4	3:00	6:23:45	213.19%
December	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	3:00	0:00:00	0.00%
Friday	4	2:09:00	0:32:15	2	0:00	1:04:30	1.49%
August	3	1:30:00	0:30:00	1	3:00	1:30:00	50.00%
September	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	0:00	0:00:00	0.00%
October	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	0:00	0:00:00	0.00%
November	1	0:39:00	0:39:00	1	0:39	0:00:00	0.00%
December	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	0:00	0:00:00	0.00%
Total	268	252:50:00	0:56:36	56	3:00	4:30:54	150.50%

Table 5. Computer Lab Weekday Evening Use Rate, Fall 2007.

One discrepancy that will lead to a clear articulation of Writing Center access policy occurred in November. The University Writing Center was open for one Friday in August before evening hours were discontinued to align with Library hours. The presence of a student on a Friday evening in November is unexplained as of this time. This could have been another faculty member with key access who allowed a student in and who had the student sign the log book, or it may be a typo on the part of the student or the person who performed data entry. Unfortunately, there may also be a chance that a tutor came in to use the Center on his or her own and allowed a student access while they were there. There is nothing to be done about the situation if it was the first case, and the raw data can be reviewed for discrepancies. However, to discourage tutors from accessing the Center on their own time, a policy will be instituted for Spring 2008 reminding tutors that having a key for the Writing Center does not give them unlimited 24 hour access. The policy will also remind tutors that they are responsible for the security of the Center while they are in it, and may be held accountable for any damages that might occur should they be present there after operating hours.

Weekend Use

The final 109 estimated contacts, or 6.8%, visited on weekends. In Table 6, rates below 100% indicate average times on the weekends when there were no contacts in the center. In fact, contacts only crossed the 100% mark once on Saturdays (in November). However, students did put the Lab to use on the last Sunday of the term, as evidenced by 16 contacts in a 6 hour span and a use rate above 400%, suggesting 4 contacts could be found in the Center at all times that day.

Weekend Use Rate							
Month / Day	Number of Contacts	Total Hours of Use	Average Use Time	Operational Days/Month	Operating Hours/Day	Average Use Hours/Day	Use Rate
Saturday	30	30:09:00	1:00:18	11	6:00	2:44:27	45.68%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	6:00	0:00:00	0.00%
September	4	0:54:00	0:13:30	4	6:00	0:13:30	3.75%
October	7	7:19:00	1:02:43	3	6:00	2:26:20	40.65%
November	17	20:30:00	1:12:21	3	6:00	6:50:00	113.89%
December	2	1:26:00	0:43:00	1	6:00	1:26:00	23.89%
Sunday	79	93:09:00	1:10:45	11	6:00	8:28:05	141.14%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	6:00	0:00:00	0.00%
September	22	26:09:00	1:11:19	4	6:00	6:32:15	108.96%
October	17	17:43:00	1:02:32	3	6:00	5:54:20	98.43%
November	24	24:51:00	1:02:08	3	6:00	8:17:00	138.06%
December	16	24:26:00	1:31:37	1	6:00	24:26:00	407.22%
Total	109	123:18:00	1:07:52	22	12:00	5:36:16	46.70%

Table 6. Computer Lab Weekend Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Hourly Use

Finally, Table 7 shows the lab's hourly use rates. The Number of contacts was highest (over 200) between 11:00 am and 3:00 pm, with the highest Use Rates between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm. The 2:00-3:00 hour and the 6:00-7:00 hour follow in importance, with use rates between 200%-250%. Clearly, these are the most important hours for Writing Center operations.

Hourly Use Rate							
Hour	Number of Contacts	Total Hours of Use	Average Use Time	Operational Days	Operating Hours/Day	Average Use Hours/Day	Use Rate
10:00-11:00	28	11:28:00	0:24:34	11	1:00:00	1:02:33	104.24%
11:00-12:00	215	154:36:00	0:43:09	50	1:00:00	3:05:31	309.20%
12:00-1:00	314	232:37:00	0:44:27	78	1:00:00	2:58:56	298.23%
1:00-2:00	334	224:34:00	0:40:20	67	1:00:00	3:21:06	335.17%
2:00-3:00	238	217:49:00	0:54:55	89	1:00:00	2:26:51	244.74%
3:00-4:00	134	60:44:00	0:27:12	89	1:00:00	0:40:57	68.24%
4:00-5:00	14	7:02:00	0:30:09	22	1:00:00	0:19:11	31.97%
5:00-6:00	4	2:07:00	0:00:00	0	1:00:00	0:00:00	0.00%
6:00-7:00	111	144:00:00	1:17:50	65	1:00:00	2:12:55	221.54%
7:00-8:00	125	116:30:00	0:55:55	65	1:00:00	1:47:32	179.23%
8:00-9:00	77	39:13:00	0:30:34	65	1:00:00	0:36:12	60.33%
Unknown	9						
Total	1603	1210:40:00	0:39:00	601	1:00:00	2:00:52	201.44%

Table 7. Computer Lab Hourly Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Overall, the contact use data collected here demonstrates that there are particularly valuable months, days, and times during which students tend to frequent the University Writing Center computer lab. Monthly use suggests that the latter half of the semester is important, while daytime hours (11:00 am until 3:00 pm) are particularly important Mondays through Thursdays. This knowledge bodes ill for the Writing Center during Spring 2008, as many of these prime hours (MWF 12:00-1:00 and TR 11:00-2:00) have been taken away because of a need for classroom space.

WRITING CENTER TUTORIALS

The primary activity by which the Writing Center works toward its mission is the individualized supplemental writing tutorial. These tutorials are held at the back of Stone Lodge 2, and are conducted by either the Director or one of the paid or volunteer peer tutors. As with overall computer lab operations, tutorials are measured in both students and contacts, using the same contact definition provided at the outset of the Computer Lab Use section of this report.

Data Collection Method

As with overall computer lab use, data was collected for the number of contacts who engaged specifically in writing tutorial sessions. Tutors would complete Tutor Session Notes for each tutorial, providing one copy of the form to the student and sending the duplicate to the Director. After entering the data into the database, the duplicate would then be forwarded to the professor of record, so that he or she would have an account of students' work as well. This process resulted in data that was almost always accurate, with discrepancies caused only by the occasional failure to insert a departure time. That information however, could be at least closely estimated from a review of the log book and discussion with the tutor.

Findings

During Fall 2007, University Writing Center tutors conducted 428 tutoring sessions for 201 students. One measure of success can be determined by the number students who visit multiple times, and by how often students return. It is preferably to have a greater number of students with multiple visits, based on the premise that a student who visits only once or twice is attempting to fix an assignment, whereas a student who visits regularly may be learning more about how to write in any or multiple contexts, as opposed to one specific context. During the Fall 2007 semester:

- 169 students visited the Writing Center for tutorial assistance between 1-3 times.
- 25 students visited the Writing Center for tutorial assistance between 4-6 times.
- 3 students visited the Writing Center for tutorial assistance between 7-9 times.
- 4 students visited the Writing Center for tutorial assistance 10 or more times.

The four students who visited 10 or more times were all international students. Two visited 11 times, one twelve, and the last thirteen.

The high number of students with 1-3 visits or tutoring sessions suggests that the Writing Center is serving primarily as a resource for students with one-time or assignment-based needs. There is, however, a small and established clientele of about 32 students who use the Writing Center as a regular resource for their writing needs. The data clearly shows that more work is needed to increase the number of students who receive multiple tutorials. One strategy for doing this may come from encouraging every student to schedule a follow-up tutoring appointment, a change in policy and procedure which will go into effect in Spring 2008.

The charge to develop a *University* Writing Center has clearly been met this term, at least from the perspective of courses represented in writing tutorials,. Liberal Arts Writing Courses (EN 099, EN 111, and EN 112) still outnumber tutorials for students in other departments and colleges, but a strong initial presence has been established from all four Colleges and from multiple departments within the College of Arts and Sciences. Table 8 lists departments and colleges who had over 10 tutorials:

Departments with 10 or More Tutorials	
College / Department / Course	# Tutorial Sessions
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Communications (All)	18
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, English, EN 099	72
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, English, EN 111	81
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, English, EN 112	75
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, English, Other	16
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Geography (All)	31
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Psychology (All)	16
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Sociology (All)	10
College of Business (All)	28
College of Nursing (All)	16
College of Education (All)	19
CELL / ESL (writing instruction either for CELL or for personal enrichment)	15

Table 8. Departments with 10 or More Tutorials, Fall 2007.

The following tables show use rates for months and days, followed by more tables and analysis of specific segments within the week: daytime, evening, weekend, and hourly rates. Table 9 shows that at peak tutorial operations in both October and November, tutors worked with just over 140 contacts, averaging 30 minutes per session, which is the standard recommended by Writing Center research. Use Rates hovered between 34% and 41% all semester, peaking in November, with the average at 36%, showing that students participated in writing tutorials an average of just over one-third of the time.

Monthly Use Rate							
Month	# Tutoring Sessions	Total Hours Tutoring	Average Tutoring Session Length	Operational Wks/Month	Available Tutoring Hours/Week	Average Tutoring Hours/Week	Use Rate
August	13	6:55:00	0:31:55	0.5	47:00:00	13:50:00	29.433%
September	113	65:00:00	0:34:31	4	47:00:00	16:15:00	34.574%
October	142	73:42:00	0:31:08	4.5	47:00:00	16:22:40	34.846%
November	143	78:48:00	0:33:04	4	47:00:00	19:42:00	41.915%
December	17	9:06:00	0:32:07	0.5	47:00:00	18:12:00	38.723%
Total	428	233:31:00	0:32:44	13.5	47:00:00	17:17:51	36.803%

Table 9. Writing Tutorial Monthly Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Tutorial assistance was strongest on Tuesdays (57.3%) and Thursdays (49.2%), as shown in Table 10. Wednesdays and Fridays were the next busiest days for tutors, followed by Mondays. Saturdays were easily the slowest, with tutorials happening less than 9% of the time.

Daily Use Rate							
Day	# Tutoring Sessions	Total Hours Tutoring	Average Tutoring Session Length	Operational Days	Available Tutoring Hours/Day	Average Tutoring Hours/Day	Use Rate
Monday	82	42:06:00	0:30:48	14	8:00:00	3:00:26	37.589%
Tuesday	99	56:10:00	0:34:02	14	7:00:00	4:00:43	57.313%
Wednesday	91	47:15:00	0:31:09	14	8:00:00	3:22:30	42.188%
Thursday	83	44:47:00	0:32:22	13	7:00:00	3:26:42	49.212%
Friday	45	25:10:00	0:33:33	12	5:00:00	2:05:50	41.944%
Saturday	10	5:46:00	0:34:36	11	6:00:00	0:31:27	8.737%
Sunday	18	12:17:00	0:40:57	11	6:00:00	1:07:00	18.611%
Total	428	233:31:00	0:32:44	89	6:00:00	2:37:26	43.730%

Table 10. Writing Tutorial Daily Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Daytime Use

As with overall lab use, weekdays are the most important for Writing Center tutorials. According to the data provided in Table 11, Mondays through Thursdays had the most contacts, with Tuesdays leading in tutoring Sessions (82) and total Tutoring Hours (42:50). The top three days in which tutors spent the most time in tutorials were Tuesdays in October (94.5%), Thursdays in September (83.1%), and Tuesdays in November (79.2%). Other days with use rates above 60% include Mondays in November, Wednesdays in September, and Thursdays in August, September, and November. Very clearly, the primary tutorial days in Fall 2007 were Tuesdays and Thursdays, another indicator that operational hours scheduled for Spring 2008 may lead to a decrease in overall use.

Daytime Use Rate							
Month / Day	# Tutoring Sessions	Total Hours Tutoring	Average Tutoring Session Length	Operational Days/Month	Available Tutoring Hours/Day	Average Tutoring Hours/Day	Use Rate
Monday	58	32:03:00	0:33:09	14	5:00	2:17:21	45.786%
August	1	0:17:00	0:17:00	1	0:17	0:17:00	100.000%
September	8	5:12:00	0:39:00	3	5:00	1:44:00	34.667%
October	22	12:13:00	0:33:19	5	5:00	2:26:36	48.867%
November	24	12:55:00	0:32:17	4	5:00	3:13:45	64.583%
December	3	1:26:00	0:28:40	1	5:00	1:26:00	28.667%
Tuesday	82	42:50:00	0:31:20	14	4:00	3:03:34	76.488%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	4:00	0:00:00	0.000%
September	18	9:17:00	0:30:57	4	4:00	2:19:15	58.021%
October	41	18:54:00	0:27:40	5	4:00	3:46:48	94.500%
November	19	12:40:00	0:40:00	4	4:00	3:10:00	79.167%
December	4	1:59:00	0:29:45	1	4:00	1:59:00	49.583%
Wednesday	69	34:21:00	0:29:52	14	5:00	2:27:13	49.071%
August	1	0:20:00	0:20:00	1	5:00	0:20:00	6.667%
September	24	13:39:00	0:34:07	4	5:00	3:24:45	68.250%
October	25	12:46:00	0:30:38	5	5:00	2:33:12	51.067%
November	15	6:19:00	0:25:16	3	5:00	2:06:20	42.111%
December	4	1:17:00	0:19:15	1	5:00	1:17:00	25.667%
Thursday	59	31:51:00	0:32:23	13	4:00	2:27:00	61.250%
August	5	2:49:00	0:33:48	1	4:00	2:49:00	70.417%
September	21	13:18:00	0:38:00	4	4:00	3:19:30	83.125%
October	11	4:48:00	0:26:11	4	4:00	1:12:00	30.000%
November	22	10:56:00	0:29:49	4	4:00	2:44:00	68.333%
December	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	4:00	0:00:00	0.000%
Friday	45	25:10:00	0:33:33	12	5:00	2:05:50	41.944%
August	3	1:19:00	0:26:20	1	5:00	1:19:00	26.333%
September	11	6:31:00	0:35:33	4	5:00	1:37:45	32.583%
October	11	6:43:00	0:36:38	3	5:00	2:14:20	44.778%
November	20	10:37:00	0:31:51	4	5:00	2:39:15	53.083%
December	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	5:00	0:00:00	0.000%
Total	313	166:15:00	0:31:52	67	4:36	2:28:53	53.942%

Table 11. Writing Tutorial Daytime Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Discrepancies in the data above occur in two places, only the first of which is easily explainable. The Writing Center was not open the first Monday of the semester in August; however, a student approached

the director as he was entering the lab, and he granted her request for writing assistance. Thursdays in October were unusually low, a surprising discovery given the heavy traffic on Thursdays in September and November. A reexamination of the raw data showed that these were the correct numbers. The most plausible explanation for this low use is likely a combination of factors: Thursday was the last day before fall break on one occasion, which would have decreased tutorial opportunities as students opted to leave early. If there were any football games on Thursday evenings in October, especially away games, these may have decreased the tutorial numbers as well. Finally, students may have not yet perceived the need for the Writing Center, discovering a need only after mid-term grades were posted.

Weekday Evening Use

Weekday evening tutorial use rate information is provided in Table 12, below. The highest use rate was recorded for Thursday evenings in August (72.2%) and November (59.7%). Otherwise, use rates stayed below 41.5%. In fact, the overall average use rate for the term was only slightly above 30%. In other words, students participated in writing tutorial assistance only 30% of the time the Center was open.

Weekday Evening Use Rate							
Month / Day	# Tutoring Sessions	Total Hours Tutoring	Average Tutoring Session Length	Operational Days/ Month	Available Tutoring Hours/Day	Average Tutoring Hours/Day	Use Rate
Monday	24	10:03:00	0:25:07	13	3:00	0:46:23	25.769%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	3:00	0:00:00	0.000%
September	5	2:28:00	0:29:36	3	3:00	0:49:20	27.407%
October	9	3:10:00	0:21:07	5	3:00	0:38:00	21.111%
November	8	3:30:00	0:26:15	4	3:00	0:52:30	29.167%
December	2	0:55:00	0:27:30	1	3:00	0:55:00	30.556%
Tuesday	17	13:20:00	0:47:04	14	3:00	0:57:09	31.746%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	3:00	0:00:00	0.000%
September	5	4:54:00	0:58:48	4	3:00	1:13:30	40.833%
October	4	4:01:00	1:00:15	5	3:00	0:48:12	26.778%
November	7	4:08:00	0:35:26	4	3:00	1:02:00	34.444%
December	1	0:17:00	0:17:00	1	3:00	0:17:00	9.444%
Wednesday	22	12:54:00	0:35:11	14	3:00	0:55:17	30.714%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	1	3:00	0:00:00	0.000%
September	9	4:59:00	0:33:13	4	3:00	1:14:45	41.528%
October	9	4:45:00	0:31:40	5	3:00	0:57:00	31.667%
November	4	3:10:00	0:47:30	3	3:00	1:03:20	35.185%
December	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	1	3:00	0:00:00	0.000%
Thursday	24	12:56:00	0:32:20	13	3:00	0:59:42	33.162%
August	3	2:10:00	0:43:20	1	3:00	2:10:00	72.222%
September	5	2:06:00	0:25:12	4	3:00	0:31:30	17.500%
October	3	1:30:00	0:30:00	4	3:00	0:22:30	12.500%
November	13	7:10:00	0:33:05	4	3:00	1:47:30	59.722%
December	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	3:00	0:00:00	0.000%
Total	87	49:13:00	0:33:57	54	3:00	0.03797582	30.381%

Table 12. Writing Tutorial Weekday Evening Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Weekend Use

Weekends saw even less time spent in writing tutorials, as shown in Table 13. Saturday use rates only crossed the 20% mark in November. Sundays were slightly better, with use rates above 20% in October

and December, and a use rate of 18% in November. Tutors spent just above 6% of their total weekend work schedule in writing tutorials.

Weekend Use Rate							
Month / Day	# Tutoring Sessions	Total Hours Tutoring	Average Tutoring Session Length	Operational Days/ Month	Available Tutoring Hours/Day	Average Tutoring Hours/Day	Use Rate
Saturday	10	5:46:00	0:34:36	11	6:00	0:31:27	8.737%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	6:00	0:00:00	0.000%
September	2	0:26:00	0:13:00	4	6:00	0:06:30	1.806%
October	1	0:40:00	0:40:00	3	6:00	0:13:20	3.704%
November	6	4:00:00	0:40:00	3	6:00	1:20:00	22.222%
December	1	0:40:00	0:40:00	1	6:00	0:40:00	11.111%
Sunday	18	12:17:00	0:40:57	11	6:00	1:07:00	18.611%
August	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	6:00	0:00:00	0.000%
September	5	2:10:00	0:26:00	4	6:00	0:32:30	9.028%
October	6	4:12:00	0:42:00	3	6:00	1:24:00	23.333%
November	5	3:23:00	0:40:36	3	6:00	1:07:40	18.796%
December	2	2:32:00	1:16:00	1	6:00	2:32:00	42.222%
Total	28	18:03:00	0:38:41	22	12:00	0:49:14	6.837%

Table 13. Writing Tutorial Weekend Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Hourly Use

Finally, Table 14 shows the writing tutorial use rates on an hourly basis. Clearly, tutorial use parallels overall lab use, with prime instructional time (Use Rates above 40%) occurring between 11:00-3:00 and 6:00-7:00.

Hourly Use Rate							
Hour	# Tutoring Sessions	Total Hours Tutoring	Average Tutoring Session Length	Operational Days	Available Tutoring Hours/ Day	Average Tutoring Hours/ Semester	Use Rate
10:00-11:00	5	4:09:00	0:49:48	11	1:00:00	0:22:38	37.727%
11:00-12:00	45	28:48:00	0:38:24	50	1:00:00	0:34:34	57.600%
12:00-1:00	92	55:43:00	0:36:20	78	1:00:00	0:42:52	71.432%
1:00-2:00	78	34:42:00	0:26:42	67	1:00:00	0:31:04	51.791%
2:00-3:00	76	38:34:00	0:30:27	89	1:00:00	0:26:00	43.333%
3:00-4:00	32	13:52:00	0:26:00	89	1:00:00	0:09:21	15.581%
4:00-5:00	3	1:31:00	0:30:20	22	1:00:00	0:04:08	6.894%
5:00-6:00	0	0:00:00	0:00:00	0	1:00:00	0:00:00	0.000%
6:00-7:00	33	26:44:00	0:48:36	65	1:00:00	0:24:41	41.128%
7:00-8:00	37	18:46:00	0:30:26	65	1:00:00	0:17:19	28.872%
8:00-9:00	27	10:42:00	0:23:47	65	1:00:00	0:09:53	16.462%
Total	428	233:31:00	0:30:59	601	1:00:00	0:23:19	38.855%

Table 14. Writing Tutorial Hourly Use Rate, Fall 2007.

Evaluations

As part of the University initiative to “assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the current facilities, materials, and services” (Office of the President, 2007, p.8), an evaluation system was implemented for students to provide assessment and feedback on their writing tutorial experience. At the completion of

each tutorial, students were presented with a brief survey, which they were given the option of completing. Students who completed a survey were not required to complete a second, a flaw in the collection method that will be addressed in Spring 2008. Once a student completed the survey, it was folded, stapled (if the student chose to follow the complete instructions provided on the survey itself), and placed in a business envelope in the mail slot where completed tutor session forms were kept. The Director would check this slot daily to collect both session forms and evaluations, which would then be entered into an excel spreadsheet. Evaluations were then stored in a cabinet in the Center.

In the Writing Tutorial evaluations, students were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with 8 statements, recording their answers on a Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 is completely disagree and 5 is completely agree. Not Applicable (NA) was offered as an alternative response. 199 responses were collected and the average scores for each statement presented in Table 15.

Writing Tutorial Evaluation Survey Results	
Statement	Average Score
The Writing Center atmosphere is welcoming and comfortable.	4.9171
The Tutor was friendly and courteous.	4.93264
The tutor knew or knew where to find information that was important to me.	4.91579
The Writing Center website is a valuable resource.	4.55705
My experience in the Writing Center was useful to me.	4.89583
I would visit the Writing Center again.	4.94271
I would recommend the Writing Center to friends.	4.92228
I would recommend my tutor to friends.	4.89063
Average Score of all responses averages.	4.8718

Table 15. Writing Tutorial Evaluation Survey Results, Fall 2007.

The weakest area, website value, can be easily explained: students were rarely directed to the website because it could not be updated after this semester's server migration process began. In fact, the last recorded update for the website was September 3, 2007. In order to increase the value of the website to students, first it will have to be updated with more useful handouts and resources, and second, it will have to be used more as a supplement to tutorials. All other scores demonstrate a high level of satisfaction from the students who participated in tutorials.

In addition to the statement responses explained above, students were also given the opportunity to provide written comments. Although most gave general praise, such as "Excellent" or "Great," a few others provided specific praise, describing how the tutors have helped them, both in process and, perhaps more importantly, in confidence building:

"For international student, I think the best part of improve composition, can find here in writing center."

"She was very nice and I feel like now I could complete this paper"

"Seemed to enjoy my paper! Good, Positive feedback!"

"It was helpful, and it made me look at my paper differently. I think the cut and paste [activity] will help me."

"I really got [sic] understand what the revision process is, which I was struggling with"

If the success of a Center is measured in how students respond – whether or not they return, and whether or not they tell their friends to visit – the anecdotal evidence, like the numbers above, suggest that the Fall 2007 term has been successful:

"Thanks so much! I'll come back."

“Dr. Koch was very helpful and organized in helping me in writing my argumentive [sic] paper. I will recommend him and the Writing Center to other students”

“Very friendly and helpful. I would definetly [sic] come back again.”
 “It was very helpful and I will be returning”

Even when there was specific criticism, it proved to be valuable, focusing more on what students needed to be successful or expressing fears that the Writing Center is a temporary service:

“Writing Center has been extremely helpful. Hopefully it continues working. Chad Lancaster has been a great help.”

“I want this center to be open more often”

“I’d be happy if you explain slowly as for specific things (for me, citing). Specific vocabulary are difficult for me to understand while speaking fast.”

“Dr. Koch- the heating was on 78 degrees. That’s a wee bit hot, but I still love the writing center anyways”

Clearly, the University Writing Center has been an active and valuable site for supplemental writing instruction and assistance, and has received the resounding approval of the students who used its tutorial services.

RETENTION

As part of its goal to “Foster a Strong University Community,” the university recognizes that “provision of appropriate academic and support facilities...are important parts of maintaining a strong campus community. The university strategy for success includes an effort to “...maintain administrative systems that support ... student retention” (Office of the President, 2007, p.6). In support of the University Goal and the strategy for success, and at the request of the Vice-President of Research, the University Writing Center has implemented a plan to measure tutorial service among three specific at-risk populations who are more likely to be retained with additional writing instruction and support: EN 099: Basic English students, ESL / International students, and Project OPEN students. The success rate toward tutoring goals in each category for the academic year is provided Table 16:

Retention Assistance Plan Goals		
Student Population	Target Goal for Tutoring	Success toward Goal
EN 099	42 Students / 10% of population	30 Students / 71.4% of goal
ESL / International	56 Students / 10% of population	74 Students / 132.1% of goal
Project Open	12 Students / 25% of population	1 Students / 8.33% of goal

Table 16. Retention Assistance Plan Goals, Academic Year 2007-2008.

While there is some overlap between the ESL / International demographic and the EN 099 demographic, there is a distinct enough difference in the population to keep both demographics. During Fall term, the ESL community established a presence in the Writing Center immediately; 7 different ESL students visited the Center during the first three days of operation, only one of whom was enrolled in EN 099. In fact, he was the only EN 099 student to visit the center that month. While a committed ESL population regularly used the Writing Center throughout the term, the EN 099 population did not begin visiting the Center in large numbers until October, when 21 different EN 099 students visited for writing tutorial assistance. Nine of these students appeared before the Mid-term; 12 made their first visit of the month after. Although no definitive explanation can be culled from the data, it is plausible that this sudden jump in Writing Center use in October coincided with mid-term notification. What is clear is that promoting the Writing Center to EN 099 students will require more than faculty announcements, as was done this term. It is also clear that the ESL / International student target goal can be increased next year.

While significant gains have been made in understanding and reaching the first two target goals, progress has been slower with Project OPEN. In Fall 2007, the program offered 1 section of EN 111 with 9 students. They visited the Writing Center for a brief introduction in October, and 8 of them returned for an APA Style workshop in November. The only student who visited the Writing Center for a tutorial did so on the last Monday of the term. Although strong connections have been forged between the Writing Center and the various programs within the College of Nursing, this connection doesn't seem to have been made. More research is needed to find out where and how writing can be tied to the work of the other students enrolled in the program.

WORKSHOPS

Workshops formed an integral part of University Writing Center outreach. The 24 workshops reached a closely estimated 489 students: 216 students participated in August & September, 240 in October, and 33 in November. The following is the complete list of workshops from Fall 2007 semester:

Writing Center Orientations and Workshops				
Date	Topic	Course	Attendance/ Enrollment	Location
08/22/07	Writing Center Orientation	EN 341	15	Classroom
08/24/07	Writing Center Orientation	EN 121	11	Classroom
08/29/07	Writing Center Orientation	EN 341	18	Classroom
08/29/07	Writing Center Orientation	EN 112	23	Writing Center
08/30/07	Writing Center Orientation	EN 112	21	Writing Center
09/04/07	Writing Center Orientation Language Relationships: Span./Eng.	LC 100	07	Writing Center
09/13/07	Writing Center Orientation Value of Writing in Medicine	LC 100	09	Writing Center
09/17/07	Writing Center Orientation Formulating a Research Question	GE 300	42	Classroom
09/26/07	Writing Center Orientation Value of Writing in Medicine	BI 100	58	Classroom
09/28/07	Writing Center Orientation Formatting Papers in Word 2007	EN 099	12	Classroom
10/03/07	Writing Center Orientation	EN 111	21	Writing Center
10/03/07	Writing Center Orientation	EN 111	22	Writing Center
10/05/07	Writing Center Orientation	EN 111	14	Writing Center
10/05/07	APA Style	2 NU Courses	84	Stevens Hall Auditorium
10/08/07	Writing Center Orientation	LC 100	12	Writing Center
10/11/07	Writing Center Orientation & Writing Description/Detail	LC 100	07	Classroom
10/15/07	Writing a Literature Review	GE 300	30	Classroom
10/17/07	Writing Center Orientation	EN 111 Project OPEN	9	Writing Center
10/19/07	APA Style	Sociology Club	13	Writing Center
10/23/07	MLA Style	EN 112	22	Writing Center
10/30/07	Writing Center Orientation	LC 100	6	Writing Center
11/05/07	APA Style	EN 111 Project OPEN	8	Writing Center
11/06/07	Revision	LC 100	8	Classroom
11/12/07	Revision	LC 100	17	Classroom

Table 17. University Writing Center Orientations and Workshops, Fall 2007. When the workshop occurred in the Writing Center, students also signed the logbook and were counted as contacts.

Some workshops scheduled during Fall 2007 were multi-purpose in nature, so the same groups of students could be provided information on different issues. Table 18, below, shows the variety of purposes and overlapping enrollments that occurred during the semester.

Workshop Purposes		
Workshop Purpose	# of Workshops	Attendance / Enrollment
Writing Center Orientation	17	307
Interdisciplinary-Writing Relationships	3	65*
Research Methods	2	42**
Formatting / MS Word	1	12
Writing Process	3	32
Documentation Styles (APA, MLA)	4	127

Table 18. University Writing Center workshops by purpose, Fall 2007. *Two of the courses, LC 100 and BI 100, had overlapping enrollments, so the nine students in common were only counted once. **Research Methods were part of the link forged between a single section of GE 300: History and Philosophy of Geography and the Writing Center. These were therefore the same body of students, so they were only counted once.

Evaluations

As with writing tutorials, an evaluations survey was implemented for writing workshops. Students were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with 6 statements, recording their answers on a Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 is completely disagree and 5 is completely agree. Not Applicable (NA) was offered as an alternative response. This survey did not extend to orientations, since they were more informational than instructional. Furthermore, the evaluation survey was not implemented until October, so only six workshops were surveyed. In a data collection error, the wrong survey was administered to the 11/5 APA Style workshop, so that data has been excluded. In all, 128 usable surveys were collected, and their results presented in Table 19.

Writing Tutorial Evaluation Survey Results					
Statement	Average Scores				
	10/5	10/11	10/19	11/06	11/12
This workshop / Presentation provided me with valuable information	4.84	4.87	5	4.87	4.66
This workshop / presentation provided me with useful information for other classes during my UNA career.	4.75	4.37	5	4.37	4.55
The presenter delivered the information clearly.	4.88	5	4.93	4.87	4.88
I would attend a Writing Center workshop / Presentation again.	4.36	4.62	4.93	4	3.77
I would recommend this presentation to friends.	4.67	4.5	5	4.5	4.16
I would recommend the Writing Center to friends.	4.70	4.75	4.92	4.87	4.66
Average Score	4.70	4.68	4.96	4.58	4.45
Evaluations Collected	79	8	15	8	18

Table 19. Writing Tutorial Evaluation Survey Results, Fall 2007.

The greatest concern about these survey results is that students gave comparatively low scores for Statement #2, suggesting that they do not easily connect knowledge from one course with knowledge from others. Strategies for connection building must be developed and implemented where possible.

Comments from these surveys were often appreciative, though some offered well-developed praise while others offered appropriate criticism. A representative sample follows:

I never knew what the Writing Center was. Now I know it is available to all students

Depends on classes we're taking (Q 5). I appreciate that you could explain some of the thinking behind the references, like, that you could explain why things are cited the way they are. You are a very good, confident presenter.

Dr. K gave us a lot of info in a short period of time in a clear presentation

great speaker. loud and clear, very polite. I look forward to getting the e-mail (presentation)
Thank you for being available for help!

Dr. Koch did well presenting. I came to class very tired and because he was not monotonous, I was able to pay better attention. His energy also helped.

I was actually totally against it (sic) (writing center) when I heard about it, but now its opened me up to attend.

This was extremely helpful. Wish I would have saw it earlier. It will definitely help me in my writing career.

Need more time - maybe make copies of materials

This lesson should be longer in order to fully understand the presentation, but it was interesting (for the amount of time we had).

“too much text on powerpoint slides”

Student comments support much of what was revealed in the surveys: that Writing Center workshops are a valuable service to the university community, although they still need some refinement.

SPRING 2008 GOALS

There are a number of goals for Spring 2008. While some are a continuation of work begun during Fall 2007, some are brand new for this term.

Continuing Goals:

- Maintain Computer Lab use (600 students / 1600 contacts). To achieve this goal, Writing Center Orientations will continue, and an expanded selection of Workshops will be offered (see New Goals).
- Maintain Writing Tutorial use (200 students / 430 tutorials). To achieve this goal, an expanded selection of Writing Center Workshops will be offered, tutors will more actively approach students who visit the Lab for general computing use, and follow-up appointments will be scheduled rather than suggested.
- Work toward Retention Assistance Plan Goals. To achieve this goal, a more active relationship will be cultivated between the Writing Center Director and Project OPEN, as well as continued Orientations that target EN 099 and ESL populations. Faculty who teach EN 099 and Project OPEN have been contacted about Workshops and tutoring in Spring 2008.
- At least 30 Workshops and Orientations will be offered. As of the first week of Spring 2008, 17 Workshops and Orientations have been scheduled, with more in preparation (see New Goals).
- Reevaluate the performance of the Writing Center. This goal will be achieved through the continued collection and processing of survey evaluations, both for tutorial sessions and for content-area workshops.
- Develop a stronger web presence. The effort started in Summer 2007 was delayed by the university web migration and its complications. When web access is restored, the University Writing Center website must be updated and additional writing resources must be provided.

New Goals

- Develop a Tutor Training / Writing Center Guide. Using models available from the International Writing Centers Association and tailored by current tutors, a Tutor Training /Writing Center Guide will be developed for use in future training seminars and as part of a tutor training course.

- Develop and present a Grammar Workshop Series. As part of tutor training, tutors will select, develop, and present workshops on the critical grammatical flaws identified by the English Department and stated in Syllabi for EN 111. There should be 6-8 workshops of this type.
- Develop and present a Writing Across the Curriculum Workshop Series. Drawing on research from Writing Across the Curriculum Studies, the Writing Center Director will offer three professional development workshops (February, March, and April) to help faculty begin to address the role of writing, assignment and rubric design, and assessment practices as they may be effectively implemented in their courses. Special emphasis will be placed on recruiting faculty participants who regularly participate in the Learning Community Program.
- Pilot an online tutoring/ discussion board program with the College of Nursing. In accordance with the *Strategic Plan* goal to offer high quality programs, the Writing Center has begun offering online tutorial support for select distance education classes, specifically NU 418: Nursing Concepts, Issues, and Theories and NU 501: Advanced Nursing Research. This support effort complies with the university plan to “Prioritize distance learning course needs” (p.9), as there has been an ongoing request for tutorial support from faculty and students alike, dating back to the start of the Fall 2007 term.
- At the request of the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Director will develop a job description for the position of University Writing Center Director. To date, there is no clear cut description for roles and responsibilities, and there are at least two chains of command for the position’s dual role as English Department faculty member and as director of an academic service.. This work will be started by the Director, using the UNA position advertisement as well as comparable position descriptions from other institutions, and will be subject to the recommendations and requirements of both chains of command.

CONCLUSION

The University Writing Center enjoyed a very successful first term of formal operation, despite the challenges that it faced, and will continue to face, as part of a growing and changing campus. The support of the faculty, both from the English Department volunteers who operated the Center prior to the arrival of the Director and from the faculty who encouraged their students to use the Writing Center, played an integral part in this success. Just as important, the administration played a vital role in the development of the Center through its initial investment of space and lab funding, the promise of additional financial support, and through their genuine dedication and interest in building a new and valuable resource to help students in their academic endeavors. Most important, however, are the 600 plus students and peer tutors who made their own academic growth a priority, and who sought out the community a successful Writing Center provides. The success of UNA’s University Writing Center is therefore a collaborative showing of dedication to learning and writing excellence on the part of the whole university community, and it suggests real opportunity for future success.

REFERENCES

Office of the President. (2007). *University of North Alabama Strategic Plan, 2007-2012*. Florence, AL: University of North Alabama.