

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

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

Daytime Use Rate

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 August	75 0	62:26:00	0:49:57	13	3:00	4:48:09	160.09%

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

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.

Daytime Use

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							

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

Some workshops scheduled during Fall 2007 were multi-purpose in nature, so t

- 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