## University of Montana

## ScholarWorks at University of Montana

The Writing Center: Reports

The Writing Center

2013

# The Writing Center Annual Report: 2012-2013

Kelly Webster University of Montana - Missoula

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/writingcenter\_pubs

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

## **Recommended Citation**

Webster, Kelly, "The Writing Center Annual Report: 2012-2013" (2013). *The Writing Center: Reports.* 4. https://scholarworks.umt.edu/writingcenter\_pubs/4

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the The Writing Center at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Writing Center: Reports by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.





# The University of Montana Writing Center Annual Report AY 2012-2013

## I. Summary

## The Writing Center: An Environment Where Writers Thrive

As a University hub for campus conversations about writing, the Writing Center administers programs to help undergraduate and graduate students in all disciplines become more versatile and effective writers, readers, and thinkers. In one-to-one and small-group tutoring sessions and in whole-class workshops, tutors help students to recognize their strengths and weaknesses as communicators and to practice strategies appropriate to various writing contexts.

In addition, the Writing Center collaborates with faculty to provide instruction that positively impacts student performance. In an effort to support all writers at the University of Montana, the Writing Center also supports faculty and staff by providing one-to-one consultations on their professional writing projects.

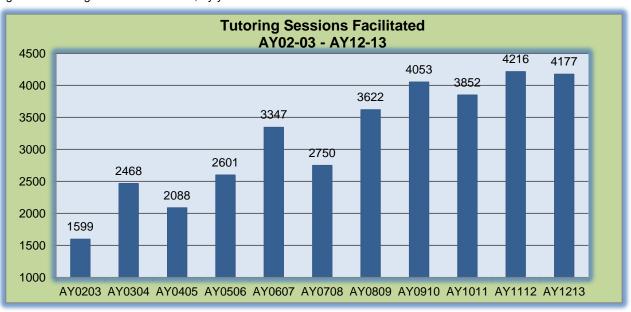
Student and faculty perceptions of Writing Center services indicate that the campus community is deeply engaged in critical writing practices, that students and faculty see value in Writing Center programs, and that University resources are being marshaled to support student success.

## Highlighted AY 2012-2013 Results

The Writing Center's on-going assessment activities indicate sustained undergraduate student, graduate student, and faculty demand for Writing Center services. Results suggest that the Writing Center successfully is meeting this high demand and doing so in a way that addresses diverse student and faculty needs. Section III further explains these highlighted results.

- 4,177 30- to 60-minute undergraduate and graduate student tutoring sessions facilitated (Figure 1)
- 55 different academic areas addressed during tutoring sessions
- 160 discipline-specific, in-class writing workshops facilitated for 3,851 student participants (Figure 2)
- 32 faculty and staff consultations and professional development opportunities facilitated for 149 participants
- 6 Sidecar Project collaborations embedded into writing-intensive courses
- 8,177 instructional contacts made to support students' development as writers
- 5 Writing in the Disciplines Project resources created in collaboration with academic department faculty

Figure 1. Tutoring sessions facilitated, by year.



**General & Discipline-specific Writing Workshops Presented** AY02-03 - AY12-13 180 169 160 160 140 120 120 113 100 86 81 80 70 68 67 67 60 43

Figure 2. Writing workshops presented, by year.

## II. Writing Center Accomplishments in Support of UM's Strategic Issues

## Partnering for Student Success

The following Writing Center programs promote achievement of key Partnering for Student Success Strategic Issue objectives. These programs support student retention by directly strengthening students' ability to read, write, and think in an academic context and by enhancing faculty members' ability to support student writers.

AY0203 AY0304 AY0405 AY0506 AY0607 AY0708 AY0809 AY0910 AY1011 AY1112 AY1213

#### Programming for students:

40

20

- <u>Face-to-face and Online Tutoring</u>: Undergraduate and graduate student tutoring provides student support in the areas of critical thinking, reading, and writing. Tutoring also helps first-year students transition to college writing expectations and graduate students transition to graduate-level writing expectations.
- Missoula College Tutoring: Missoula College tutoring meets unique student and program needs.
- <u>TRiO Writing Mentorship Program</u>: The Writing Mentorship Program provides new TRiO students with timely student support as they transition to college writing expectations.
- Workshops: Writing workshops across the curriculum provide discipline-specific writing instruction.
- <u>Sidecar Project</u>: The Sidecar Project engages undergraduate and graduate students in the context of their courses by providing discipline-specific, small-group student writing support over the course of a semester. The Writing Center has collaborated with faculty in the context of the following courses:
  - o AAS/HSTA 415 Black Radical Tradition (Dr. Miller Shearer)
  - COMM 413 Communication and Conflict (Dr. Sillars)
  - o COMM 561 Qualitative Research Methods (Dr. Ivers)
  - DIS Drug Information Service, Department of Pharmacy Practice (Dr. Brown)
  - o EDU 221 Educational Psychology and Measurements (Dr. Stolle)
  - o GLI/PSCI 191 Political Regimes and Societies (Dr. Saldin)
  - SOCI 441 Inequality and Social Justice (Dr. Kuipers)
  - SOCI 455 Classical Theory (Dr. Rooks)
  - o SW 350 Intervention Methods (Dr. Wozniak and Dr. Wellenstein)
  - O WRIT 101 College Composition (Prof. Brown)
  - o International Students/WRIT 101 College Composition

- Writing in the Disciplines Project: The Writing in the Disciplines Project provides students with online disciplinespecific resources collaboratively designed by academic departments and Writing Center staff. Available resources address writing in Economics, Environmental Studies, Literature, Social Work, and Sociology.
- <u>KPCN/Writing Center Video</u>: The Writing Center video serves to engage students through a dynamic medium and by emphasizing key features of college writing, thereby serving students' transition to college writing expectations.
- <u>UM Writes Blog</u>: For the benefit of student writers, the UM Writes Blog showcases short pieces by administrators, faculty, and staff who use writing in their everyday lives.

#### Programming for faculty and staff:

- One-to-one Teaching Consultations: Writing Center consultations with faculty emphasize faculty development by
  providing individualized feedback and guidance on writing assignment design and response, and by providing ideas
  for incorporating writing—both graded and non-graded—into courses across the curriculum.
- <u>Professional Development Workshops</u>: Writing Center workshops emphasize faculty development by helping faculty learn to use writing to enhance student learning in any course. For example, Writing Center staff recently collaborated with the Mansfield Library and the Writing Committee to present faculty workshops focused on:
  - Responding to student writing.
  - Supporting student development as information literate writers.
  - Preventing plagiarism through teaching.

## **Education for the Global Century**

The following Writing Center programs promote achievement of key Education for the Global Century Strategic Issue objectives. These programs increase graduate and international student use of one-to-one writing tutoring, and support student retention by strengthening foundational academic programs.

#### Programming for students:

- <u>Graduate and International Student Instruction</u>: One-to-one and small-group writing tutoring and workshops meet international and graduate student needs and engage students in interdisciplinary problem-solving conversations.
- <u>Writing in Spanish Tutoring</u>: One-to-one tutoring for students writing papers in Spanish supports students as they communicate in a foreign language.

#### Programming for faculty:

- <u>Global Leadership Initiative Support</u>: In-class workshops tailored to GLI seminar writing assignments and interdisciplinary big questions support students' development as critical thinkers in a global context.
- Working with International Students Support: One-to-one and small-group consultations on how to support international students across the curriculum support faculty who serve a diverse student body.

## Discovery and Creativity to Serve Montana and the World

The following Writing Center programs promote achievement of key Discovery and Creativity to Serve Montana and the World Strategic Issue objectives. These programs promote and support student and faculty research, scholarship, and creative work by providing students and faculty with the tools necessary to communicate their work.

#### Programming for students:

- Research Portfolio Honors College Seminar: The Writing Center's for-credit course (HC 320E) offered through the
  Davidson Honors College supports undergraduate students completing independent research projects in the natural
  and physical sciences, social and behavioral sciences, arts, and humanities. The course also coaches students in
  presentation techniques for the UMCUR and NCUR settings.
- <u>Poster Workshop</u>: This workshop teaches best practices for poster presentations in the sciences and humanities.

#### Programming for faculty and staff:

• <u>Faculty and Staff Writing Consultations</u>: Writing Center consultations with faculty and staff provide feedback and guidance on how to communicate research projects through writing and for a variety of audiences.

## **III. Writing Center Assessment**

#### **Assessment Activities**

The Writing Center is engaged in a number of assessment practices that inform the Writing Center's efforts to marshal resources to positively impact student retention. The following assessment practices currently are a regular part of the Writing Center's assessment cycle.

- <u>Upper-division Writing Proficiency Assessment and Writing Assessment Pilot</u>: The Writing Center staff administer
  and track all aspects of the Upper-division Writing Proficiency Assessment. Writing Center staff, in collaboration
  with the University Writing Committee and Associate Provost Arlene Walker-Andrews, also assist in orchestrating
  the University's three-tiered Writing Assessment Project.
- <u>Student Tracking</u>: The Writing Center uses an Access database, which is connected to Banner, to track student
  use of writing tutoring and to store important information from each tutoring session. The Writing Center tracks the
  following attributes for each tutoring session:

Areas of Focus Key Cohorts Referrals
Class Location Tutor
Course Major

- <u>Info Griz Reporting</u>: The Writing Center currently is working with Information Technology staff to create reports that will enhance the Center's assessment capabilities.
- <u>Student Surveys</u>: Sidecar Project participants complete a comprehensive survey aimed at assessing students' understanding of the role of revision. These surveys also assess students' perception of their own development as writers during the course of the Sidecar experience.
- <u>Faculty Surveys</u>: Faculty who participate in the Sidecar Project and who collaborate with the Writing Center through other in-class workshops may elect to complete a survey aimed at assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the collaboration.
- TRIO Student Survey: TRIO students who participate in the Writing Mentorship Program complete a survey that both encourages the student to reflect on his or her own writing strengths and weaknesses and collects student perceptions of the Writing Mentorship Program experience.
- <u>Tutor Observations and Evaluations</u>: Professional and graduate student tutors in the Writing Center participate in an on-going observation and evaluation cycle. Tutors observe their colleagues and complete observation forms. These forms are used to facilitate discussions about best practices and to inform the tutor evaluation process.

#### Selected Assessment Results for AY 2012-2013

Student Use Results (Figure 3 and Table 1):

- Student demand for one-to-one tutoring remains high.
  - o Facilitated over **4,177** 60- to 30-mintue undergraduate and graduate student tutoring sessions.
  - International student demand for one-to-one tutoring continues to increase.
    - Facilitated 888 tutoring sessions with international students.
- Graduate student demand for one-to-one tutoring continues to increase.
  - Facilitated 492 tutoring sessions with graduate students.
- Student demand for writing tutoring in the context of courses across the disciplines continues to increase.
  - Tutored students writing in 55 different academic areas.
- Freshmen and seniors continue to make up the Writing Center's largest populations of users while sophomores continue to make up the Writing Center's smallest population of users.
  - Facilitated 848 tutoring sessions with freshmen, 1,132 with seniors, and only 528 with sophomores.
- Overall instructional contacts continue to increase.
  - o Made over **8,177** instructional contacts with students to support their development as writers.

Figure 3. Tutoring sessions, by class.

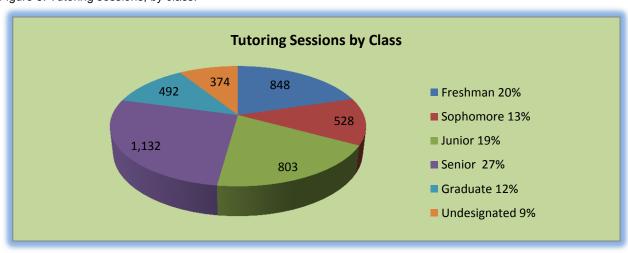


Table 1. Autumn and Spring tutoring session data, by location, type, and class.

Autumn Semester 2012 Tutoring Session Statistics				
	Total Tutoring Sessions	2,220		
	Missoula College East	129		
ou	LA 144	1,581		
ocation.	Mansfield Library	294		
Lo	Online	41		
	Sidecar (in-class tutoring)	175		
Student Type	Missoula College (all locations)	336		
	ESL/International	417		
	TRiO <sup>*</sup>	192		
Ę,	UDWPA	227		
	WRIT	385		
*Self-identified as TRiO; actual number is greater.				
Student Class	Freshman	542		
	Sophomore	274		
	Junior	428		
	Senior	586		
it	Grad	220		
3,	Other/Undesignated	170		

Spring Semester 2013 Tutoring Session Statistics				
	Total Tutoring Sessions	1,957		
	Missoula College East	106		
Ö	LA 144	1,502		
Location	Mansfield Library	235		
Š	Online	28		
	Sidecar (in-class tutoring)	86		
	Missoula College (all locations)	300		
e it	ESL/International	471		
Student Type	TRiO <sup>*</sup>	193		
Str	UDWPA	312		
	WRIT	225		
	*Self-identified as TRiO; actual number is greater.			
·0	Freshman	306		
lass	Sophomore	254		
i C	Junior	375		
den	Senior	546		
Student Class	Grad	272		
0,	Other/Undesignated	204		

#### Faculty Use Results:

- Faculty demand for in-class writing workshops continues to increase (Table 2).
- Faculty demand for one-to-one consultations on their teaching, and faculty and staff demand for one-to-one consultations on their own writing continue to increase (Table 3).

Table 2. Faculty-requested writing workshops.

Number of In-Class Workshops Presented	Number of Disciplines Served	Number of Participating Students
160	33	3,851

Table 3. Faculty-requested consultations.

Number of Faculty	Number of
Consultations	Participating
Facilitated	Faculty
32	149

## Sidecar Project Results:

• Embedded Sidecar Project tutoring into 6 writing-intensive courses at the 100, 200, 300, 400, and 500 levels.

- Students and faculty who participated in Sidecar Projects express satisfaction and a desire for additional
  opportunities to embed small-group tutoring into courses.
- Student participants saw value in the Sidecar experience and made significant revisions to their papers.
  - 92% strongly agreed or agreed that Sidecar sessions were helpful as they wrote their papers.
  - 100% strongly agreed or agreed that Sidecar sessions helped them better understand the expectations of the instructor and assignment.
  - 100% made changes in their papers as a result of the feedback they received during Sidecar sessions.
  - 100% made major revisions (overhaul of ideas, started over, re-visioned the essay) and/or mid-level revisions (organization, further development of existing points).
  - 92% strongly agreed or agreed that giving feedback and receiving feedback from peers was helpful.

#### TRiO Writing Mentorship Program Results:

 TRiO students who participated in the Writing Mentorship Program became more confident in their ability to write in an academic context and were more likely to use the Writing Center as a resource throughout their time at the University.

## Upper-division Writing Proficiency Assessment Results:

• 2,207 students attempted the UDWPA exam during the Autumn and Spring Semesters, with an overall passing rate of 72.5% (does not include June 2013 exam data).

## IV. Anticipated Needs and Next Steps

The following list outlines those areas in which the Writing Center plans to invest its resources. This list reflects the Writing Center's objective to directly support students' success at the University. While the Writing Center is committed to taking these steps to meet anticipated needs, funding will determine the Center's ability to meet these needs.

#### For Students:

- Revise writing tutoring by-appointment and drop-in hours to ensure resources are marshaled to support highdemand hours.
- Perform outreach to increase sophomore students' use of the Writing Center.
- Provide improved infrastructure to handle growing demand from graduate and international students.\*
- Expand Sidecar Project small-group tutoring collaborations to all Colleges.\*
- Develop instructional programming specifically designed to support international student writers and the faculty who
  work with them.\*
- Continue partnering with TRiO Student Support Services to provide the Writing Mentorship Program.

#### For Faculty:

- Continue to expand partnerships with academic departments to deliver discipline-specific writing workshops.
- Continue to expand faculty professional development opportunities. Plan and deliver new workshops on how to incorporate and assess writing in courses across the curriculum.
- Build a more robust relationship with the Global Leadership Initiative by providing support to GLI seminar faculty and to GLI students throughout their academic tenures at the University.\*

#### For Graduate Student Teaching Assistants:

Develop graduate student teaching assistant workshops focused on assessing student writing.

#### Other:

- Develop new tutor training opportunities to ensure on-going professional development, especially in the areas of English language learners and graduate student writers.
- Develop more robust reporting capabilities through Info Griz.
- Enact the Writing Center's Hobson's Retain communication plan.

<sup>\*</sup>Asterisked items may require new or reallocated monetary resources.