

Writing Renewal Retreats: The Scholarly Writer, Contemplative Practice, and Scholarly Productivity

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Volume 36, Issue 2, 2017

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/tia.17063888.0036.205> [<http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/tia.17063888.0036.205>]

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Abstract

This article offers an exploratory case study of a program for faculty that blends contemplative practices, scholarly productivity, and renewal of faculty as writers at a retreat in a natural setting. We share faculty learning outcomes, logistics, a retreat agenda, and evaluation data from four writing renewal retreats conducted over two years to present initial insight into a contemplative approach to writing retreats that fosters a connection to self, to scholarship, and to a community of writers—key elements of a successful writing life. Through critical reflection on the role of contemplative practices, scholarly productivity, and faculty well-being, we offer a model for holistic faculty development.

Keywords: case studies, collaboration, consultation, critical thinking, development

Introduction

“Being happily productive in scholarly research requires a positive state of mind, a contemplative posture, dialogue with colleagues, and a balanced life.”

(Anonymous comment on evaluation from Writing Renewal Retreat, Summer 2014).

“We seek to recast the traditional foundations for education into a truly integrative, transformative, and communal enterprise that cultivates the whole person in the fullest possible way.” (Zajonc, 2008).

It is mid afternoon at a secluded mountain retreat center. A group of 15 faculty writers from across the disciplines of our mid sized public institution sit around a table engaging in a mindfulness meditation—an exercise in which participants sit comfortably, breathe slowly, and focus attention on their breath. Soon, they will move to various nooks around the 19th century retreat house and ample grounds to get some writing done on their own. Later tonight, they will reflect on their most successful and their most daunting writing experiences during a metacognitive session before adjourning to a camp fire for music and stories and, eventually, to their rooms to rest for another day of similar mindful productivity. Three days spent in this fashion constitute James Madison University's Writing Renewal Retreat.

Productivity remains a vital goal for faculty, yet a “more is better” mindset might lead to burn out and, therefore, less than fully productive scholars and writers. The Writing Renewal Retreat, therefore, intentionally integrates “renewal” and shifts attention from scholarly productivity alone to taking care of the scholarly writer herself/himself as a means of productivity. These retreats pair diverse contemplative practices with writing productivity workshops and ample time to write off campus and away from everyday life. They assume that “whole is better” and aim to nurture the cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and spiritual health of faculty members who contribute to the life blood of the university. In anonymous

participant feedback collected from four iterations of the Writing Renewal Retreat, faculty self report metacognitive awareness of their scholarly habits postretreat. This reflective capacity allows participants to identify impediments that most threaten their productivity; in some instances, they likewise indicate that they are more apt to use contemplative practices in an attempt to overcome these obstacles to success. Many participants also report personal growth and, consequently, writing successes postretreat.

Writing Renewal Retreats, in their focus on contemplative practices, are not necessarily enigmatic in their context; in striving to be catalysts for the kinds of change that might foster comprehensive excellence in teaching, meaningful contributions in scholarship, and sustainable planning toward career goals, the Center for Faculty Innovation (CFI) at James Madison University has embraced contemplative practices as tools for harmonizing faculty well being and mindful approaches to productivity for several years now. Beginning with contemplative pedagogy faculty interest group over six years ago, the infusion of contemplative practices into faculty professional development has been a slow, deliberate process that has culminated in the Writing Renewal Retreat—a program that uses contemplative practice as a bedrock approach. First piloted in the summer of 2014, ongoing participant feedback and facilitator reflections have been used to modify and adjust a successful model for such renewal retreats, and we share that model here. As the Writing Renewal Retreat agenda becomes solidified, we anticipate conducting formal, longitudinal research into its long term impact on faculty writers. In the meantime, we are motivated to share an exploratory case study of Writing Renewal Retreats due to high faculty ratings on faculty learning outcomes (FLOs) and substantive and enthusiastic open ended comments on faculty evaluations of this program. In comparison to other CFI programs aimed at promoting scholarly productivity, this program is consistently rated substantially higher than other scholarship initiatives. In addition to clarifying hypotheses for future research on such retreats, we hope this case study motivates others working in faculty development to include contemplative tools into their own initiatives and perhaps even to try out their own versions of the Writing Renewal Retreat.

In this article, therefore, we explore the question “how do we encourage mindful productivity through generative writing experiences for faculty?” We primarily address this question by describing the structure and activities of Writing Renewal Retreats and by examining faculty evaluation data of those programs. We first contextualize Writing Renewal Retreats in related literature on scholarly productivity, writing retreats, and mindfulness. Then, we explore the specific context of the retreats, starting with a focus on FLOs and how they are aligned with overall CFI FLOs. Following an examination of the changing iterations of outcomes, we share an agenda for Writing Renewal Retreats. Finally, we examine self reported faculty data from evaluations to identify salient themes worth further exploration. This participant feedback is used to argue that writing retreats, and similarly oriented initiatives, likely garner positive responses from participants since they attend to the needs of the whole writer rather than focusing solely on productivity and on writing milestones. That is, by acknowledging the complex ontological facets at play when a writer is at her or his best, Writing Renewal Retreats attempt to address the successful writing life as a state of being that requires attention to nurturing the cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and spiritual health of faculty.

Overview of Related Scholarship

Various studies on scholarly productivity suggest that highly prolific writers share a few specific traits: they often write collaboratively and produce coauthored or multiauthored texts; they rigorously schedule and are exceedingly protective of their writing time; and they participate in writing accountability and feedback groups (Boice, 1990; Elbow, 1998; Geller & Eodice, 2013). These research based insights have been enormously valuable to those whose day to day work involves motivating and mentoring faculty writers toward success measured in production. Importantly, however, while comparatively little attention has been paid to studies of how stress can affect scholarly writers and their successes or failures, available research has also shown that “a negative linear relationship exists between some sources of stress and both self evaluated employee productivity and organizational measures of performance” (Jacobs et al., 2007, p. 209). As Writing Renewal Retreats place emphasis on the overall wellness of the writer, they start with the assumption that traditional wisdom on writing productivity might not be successful if stress

remains a factor. After all, even if a writer regularly attempts to write collaboratively, leaves Friday afternoons open for writing, and participates in an online writing group with colleagues, if she or he suffers from the fatigue and dissociation that often accompany extreme stress, it is doubtful that full writing productivity will be reached. It is in this context that Writing Renewal Retreats make good sense. In them, scholarly writing is promoted through contemplative practices that engage the whole faculty cognitively, behaviorally, emotionally, and spiritually, making it more likely that following other practical and research based suggestions on writing productivity will be fruitful.

A more granular look at the literature on productivity will make especially clear the claim that tending to the writer makes other productivity tools more likely to be successful. Research has shown that writers' challenges can be either extrinsic or intrinsic in nature. Although writing motivation appears to be largely intrinsic, extrinsic factors often interfere with the completion of the writing task. One of the biggest extrinsic challenges, even for seasoned writers, is the difficulty associated with finding space and time for writing—an issue that can be exacerbated for women and minority groups (Grant, 2006; Moore, 2003). Finding uninterrupted time is necessary if progress is to be made and creativity is to flow freely. Pressure to publish and to meet deadlines, paired with the surveillance and sanction that often characterize writing in the academy, make developing good writing habits a daunting task (Cameron, Naim, & Higgins, 2009).

Intrinsic barriers to writing productivity are associated with the internal state of the writer, including the writer's own sense of confidence, tendency toward avoidance behaviors, reluctance to start a project, ability to maintain momentum, inability to confront emotions that arise during the writing process, boredom or lack of interest with the material, and struggles with writing identity (Grant, 2006; Grant & Knowles, 2000; Moore, 2003). Likewise, it often takes time for writers to find their own voice and to negotiate their own writing style with the expectations of their field. Consequently, the process of taking ownership of one's writing can be a lengthy and difficult journey. Even the most experienced writers might battle with self doubt and may find that writing in an academic setting is an isolating experience. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, faculty may find themselves unable to justify attempts to prioritize writing as the demands of teaching, service, and family life are still present. The literature makes it clear that these issues find some mitigation in collaborative writing, detailed scheduling, and accountability groups, but we argue that they are not entirely addressed by such factors.

Nygaard (2015) finds several related key issues with predominant models for studying writing productivity in academic settings: the research is mostly quantitative, there are few consistent definitions for "productivity," and there is "little reference to theory" beyond theories of "motivation" (p. 3). According to Nygaard, 2015, writers must thus often traverse conflicting sites of negotiation, where they "face competing demands from outside voices as well as multiple (and perhaps competing) personal goals, requiring them to develop strategies and practices to cope with making choices before, during, and after the production of academic text—as well as in the text itself" (p. 2). Not surprisingly, concludes Nygaard, the "outcome[s] of these negotiations have a direct bearing on what they [faculty writers] produce, how much they produce, and how fast it gets produced – and thus a direct bearing on their research productivity" (p. 12). Even more than other initiatives, writing retreats for faculty (sometimes called scholars' retreats) seem to constitute generative sites of inquiry for those working in faculty development as they offer insight into strategies through which faculty writers might effectively and successfully negotiate the complex demands they face. For example, faculty may feel guilty or self indulgent for spending time on writing, especially when trying to write on campus in the face of other obligations (Dickson Swift, James, Kippen, & Liamputtong, 2009), but writing retreats shift the material conditions of textual production and thus allow writers to gain new vantage points on their writing lives.

Scholarship on writing retreats also suggests that the overextended nature of faculty life—regardless of personal issues faculty face—might be a highly significant factor in faculty writers' successes and failures. Writing retreats offer something of a "getaway" experience that help to pull faculty out of the ordinary daily grind of teaching, service, and scholarship responsibilities (Moore, 2003; Schendel, Callaway, Dutcher, & Griggs, 2013). Research conducted on a three day writing retreat for four female faculty members suggests positive impact on group members, renewed sense of self as writers and scholars, and

benefits from blocks of writing time away from professional and personal duties and obligations (Swaggerty, Atkinson, Faulconer, & Griffith, 2011). Goals of the retreat in that study included rejuvenation of faculty as writers, focused research agendas, writing improvements, and simply more time to write and to discuss writing. As the authors note, “Through identification of writing barriers and behaviors that fostered writing productivity, engagement in dialogue about writing, and blocks of time for focused writing, the four members of this writing group rejuvenated their writing lives and produced results in terms of actual writing” (Swaggerty et al., 2011, p. 8). Jackson (2009) similarly studied three day writing retreats meant to lead to faculty publication; she concluded that retreats offer faculty the opportunity to network and collaborate with colleagues in ways that would be difficult or impossible in the context of on campus culture. Leaving campus, thus, appears to be essential.

Likewise, writing faculty from Grand Valley State University (GVSU) in Grand Rapids, Michigan; the University of St. Thomas (UST) in St. Paul, Minnesota; Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, Virginia; and Rhode Island College (RIC) in Providence, Rhode Island used participant observation and written participant feedback to research the outcomes of their writing retreats; they found that their “writing retreats have immediate impact on participants, and a great potential for lasting impact” (Schendel et al., 2013, p. 160). Similarly, the ambitious scholars’ retreats described by Farr, Cavallaro, Civil, and Cochrane (2009) take faculty away from campus for five days of intensive writing; these retreats seek to “blend hard work with recreation and collegiality” and have resulted in measurable increases in faculty publications. Of their off site three day writing retreat, Herman, Abate, and Walker (2013) noted “significant benefits beyond providing time for writing to enhance writing productivity,” including an increased sense of a writing community, strengthened relationships with Center for Excellence staff, and heightened belief in the institution’s commitment to supporting faculty writers (p. 202). Girardeau, Rud, and Trevisan (2014) similarly found that participants “saw the retreat as valuable to their motivation and productivity for research related writing projects, as well as their sense of community” and that the retreat experience “helped increase communication and trust between the faculty and the administration” (p. 38). In sum, the literature shows that writing retreats for faculty increase productivity by way of helping faculty find a sense of community and connectedness, by giving faculty a sense of their institutions’ commitment to supporting their scholarly development, and by offering faculty time away from their teaching and service responsibilities—even if it is only for a few days. When the CFI developed Writing Renewal Retreats, the impetus was to harness all that works so well in other writing retreats and to attempt to enhance those positive outcomes with contemplative tools, including mindfulness meditations.

According to Sable (2014), contemplative practice is “an umbrella term to designate a particular set of learning activities: mindfulness meditation, structured contemplation, journal writing, mindful listening, reflective inquiry and dialog” (p. 3). Despite its disparate forms, the central skill of contemplative practice is to cultivate awareness, which entails purposeful attention with as little judgment as possible (Magee, 2016). Sable (2014) further explains mindfulness meditation as a form of contemplative practice that involves training the mind by “noticing whatever arises in consciousness and gently returning to the breath without judgment” (p. 4). Mindfulness meditation “is, in short, a systematic process of investigation that can affect perceptions and behavior” (Codiga, 2002). While mindfulness allows a space to clear one’s mind, it also results in awareness, curiosity, and the suspension of judgment, which means that the mind may notice insights or thoughts that are generally undetected outside of this state.

Many professions, including law, medicine, and the corporate world, are embracing contemplative practices such as mindfulness as a means to reduce stress and anxiety. Mindfulness gives the participants a chance to focus inward, even in the midst of a professional world that emphasizes the external (Codiga, 2002). According to Magee (2016), contemplative practices now inform legal education and practice, a movement that she calls “contemplative law” (p. 8). The powerful effect of contemplative practice as a tool to negate stress and anxiety is well documented in the literature, including interventions regarding college students (Tang et al., 2007), premedical and medical students (Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998), and mental health workers (Cohen & Miller, 2009; Waelde, Thompson, & Gallagher Thompson, 2004).

Recent books explore research about contemplative practices and about how to integrate contemplative practices into the workplace—specifically in higher education. Notable examples include John P. Miller’s *The Contemplative Practitioner: Meditation in Education and the Workplace* and *Contemplative Practices in Higher Education* by Barbezat & Bush, 2014. The Association of Contemplative Mind in Higher Education acts as a guiding organizational force in the integration of contemplative practices in higher education by hosting national conferences and, in recent years, establishing the *Journal of Contemplative Inquiry*. Numerous benefits from contemplative practices have been documented in the literature, and there is a growing body of scholarship on how mindfulness can help cultivate skills that are necessary for higher learning and academic writing, including fostering critical thinking skills, promoting self regulation, and providing the context for the examination of metacognitive abilities. While mindfulness practices are essential parts of the Writing Renewal Retreats we conduct, we recognize that each institution must take into account their own contexts for faculty development work when implementing such programs. We, therefore, share our context below.

Context for Writing Renewal Retreats

In all iterations of the Writing Renewal Retreat, facilitators begin by asking themselves the crucial question: How do faculty developers foster a connection to self, to scholarship, and to a community of writers? The CFI at James Madison University aims to foster holism in teaching, scholarship, and career planning via programming in these three areas of faculty life. In addition to embracing a holistic approach, the CFI has gone through a deliberate process of defining FLOs (Hurney, Brantmeier, Rodgers Good, Harrison, & Meixner, 2016) for each area articulated in its mission (Teaching, Scholarship, and Career Planning). Writing Renewal Retreats are a program in the scholarship area; scholarship programs are designed for faculty to make progress toward six outcomes:

1. Appreciating the diverse forms, purposes, and communication modes of scholarship in higher education
2. Enhancing scholarly productivity
3. Forming collaborative scholarly projects with students, faculty, and staff at our institution and other institutions
4. Advancing scholarly skills
5. Exploring and securing funding opportunities to support scholarly activities
6. Practicing the integration of scholarship with teaching and other career aspirations (Hurney et al., 2016)

The outcome “enhancing scholarly productivity” has been the focus of recent inquiry into FLOs in the scholarship area. Members of the CFI faculty team deconstructed this outcome and suggested that “enhancing” has three dimensions: quantity, quality, and support. Scholarly productivity in the context of enhancing quantity of, quality of, and support for productivity is, therefore, a focus. Writing Renewal Retreats address all three of these concerns obliquely as they present faculty with opportunities to reflect on the material conditions of scholarly productivity and to reboot their writing lives.

As the review of scholarship above makes clear, Writing Renewal Retreats are programmatic responses to common barriers to productive scholarly writing, such as time, space, and energy or ability to engage. They go further, however, by explicitly addressing the complexity involved in writing well and writing often, which relies on overall wellness and mindfulness. Inspired by the work of Swaggerty et al. (2011), Writing Renewal Retreats respond to an intuitive and data driven perception that scholarly writing productivity can be fostered by focusing on supporting the physical, psycho emotional, and spiritual health of faculty as writers. The specific programmatic FLOs for Writing Renewal Retreats included that faculty participants would make progress toward:

- Developing metacognitive awareness of writing process and habits
- Engaging a writing project
- Examining one’s writing productivity

- Appreciating contemplative practices for increasing focus, awareness, and well being
- Renewing enthusiasm for scholarly and creative writing
- Renewing oneself as a writer

In order to address these FLOs, the agendas for the three day writing retreats focus on the blending of contemplative practices and scholarly writing productivity. Fostering a positive sense of community was also a deliberate FLO, and community building components are also emphasized in the retreat design.

Writing Renewal Retreat Agendas

Although each iteration of the Writing Renewal Retreat has had slight variations, the basic structure has remained consistent, and the retreat encourages participants to customize their experience (See Appendix A). Importantly, prior to the retreat, participants complete a Scholarly Writer's Profile codeveloped by the lead author and our writing center director—a heuristic meant to get participants to begin to reflect on their writing habits as well as to provide a self assessment of their writing strengths and weaknesses (see Appendix B). Each of the three days of the retreat includes mandatory sessions, such as an “Increase Your Scholarly Productivity” workshop or a session on “Mindful Creativity,” and a number of optional opportunities, such as a one on one consultation or an opportunity to walk through the forest and write. Additionally, substantial blocks of time are reserved for “writing time.” Meals are served in an intimate dining room, and hot beverages and snacks collectively brought by participants are available throughout each day. Thus, writers on these retreats are able to get away from their everyday routines, to reflect on and reinvigorate their writing habits, and to try out some contemplative practices. In addition, faculty find that camaraderie and friendship between faculty across campus via evening social time around a campfire is part of the informal agenda. Participants are encouraged to bring instruments, to read poetry, and to share other creative talents with others around the campfire.

Writing Renewal Retreats were developed by CFI in collaboration with other partners. We relied on the contributions of the University Writing Center director to aid the design of writing components of the Retreats and to provide one on one writing consultations. The fact that this writing center director is also a seasoned mindfulness practitioner allowed a further level of integration of mindfulness in the Retreats. We also relied on a contemplative practitioner—the coordinator of our campus's meditation program called “Madison Meditates”—who contributed to the planning and provision of content at the retreat. For others aiming to conduct Writing Renewal Retreats on other campuses, we recommend strong partnerships with writing experts on campus and with local contemplative facilitators, who may also be among the faculty or staff. These expert partnerships are vital for helping faculty with writing support and with contemplative practice support. While “Contemplative Consultations” offer opportunities for faculty to have one on one conversations with a contemplative practitioner on approaches to mindfulness, “Writing Consultations” offer opportunities for faculty to have one on one conversations with a writing specialist on approaches to process.

Methods

In order to assess the program itself and to determine the efficacy of claims that mindfulness paired with other writing retreat features make for a compelling model, anonymous survey data were collected approximately two days postretreat for four separate retreat cohorts. While these surveys were developed primarily to perform programmatic assessment for the CFI, they offer sufficient initial data for the exploratory case study method we employ here. Exploratory case studies often help researchers to parse important themes and to clarify the direction of related future research—particularly when initiatives are in or near the pilot phase (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010). The consistent overall tenor and thematic content of surveys support such a method, even as some questions vary between surveys. Even still, data analysis methods for this case study needed to be flexible and creative in order to account for question diversity.

Exploratory case studies offer researchers a good deal of flexibility in terms of research design (Mills et al., 2010). Such adaptability, we would argue, is beneficial since it leads to creative insights without overprescribing their significance and transferability; such insights might motivate and shape future

inquiry. In our hybrid approach to data analysis, we took inspiration from decolonial researcher Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (2015) assertion that research "has become disciplined and institutionalized with certain approaches empowered over others and accorded a legitimacy but it begins with human curiosity and a desire to solve problems. It is, at its core, an activity of hope" (p. 355). Smith's (2015) disposition toward research, along with methodological features of the exploratory case study, allowed us the space to consider: could participating in a Writing Renewal Retreat that incorporates contemplative practices make better faculty writers by tending to the writer rather than focusing only on the writing? While future research will explore best practices for developing, implementing, and evaluating writing retreats rooted in contemplative practices and aimed at rejuvenating faculty writers, our methods here intend to articulate the value of the separate components as well as the retreats overall.

Broadly, our surveys take a mixed methods approach to gathering participant feedback. We first asked participants to rate aspects of their retreat experience using a Likert scale ranging from (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Additionally, to enhance these quantitative findings, open ended qualitative questions were also asked. To account for the fact that qualitative questions varied slightly between retreats, two raters (to whom participants were known) used open coding, along with elements of the constant comparative method common in grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), to generate emergent codes and to perform an initial analysis of qualitative data. Barney G. Glaser (2008) articulates this approach to coding data well: our approach combined "explicit coding procedure" of traditional open coding with the "approach and the style of theory development" found in the constant comparative method. Jason and Glenwick (2016) explain that a constant comparative approach means that researchers follow the imperative "while coding an incident for a category, compare it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category" (p. 25). Two raters then read through each survey separately to develop initial codes and, while coding all qualitative data generated from the four surveys, constantly compared items coded as a particular theme so that "constant comparison of the incidents" gave way to "theoretical properties of the category." In other words, analysts began examining each retreat's data separately in order to get a preliminary grasp of qualitative data. Afterward, data from this first survey that suggested preliminary themes were compared to similar themes emerging in subsequent surveys. As data were compared among retreats, raters were able to further refine and operationalize categories via the theoretical energy that emerged from these comparisons.

As Figure 1 shows, surveys indicate that participants found opportunities for self renewal, self care, community and connection; and metacognition on writing renewal retreats. In data we coded as "self renewal," participants found various aspects of the retreat restorative. That is, they found the environment restful, the food nourishing, and the mindfulness practices relaxing in the moment. In addition, participants found the material conditions of the retreat—away from everyday stresses—paired with mindfulness practices to be transformative and even epiphany inducing. As one participant explained, "This writing renewal retreat was transformative in a good way." We distinguished "self renewal" from "self care" by coding data "self care" when it related to participants' insights into the need to take care of themselves and to the connections between body, mind, and spirit beyond the retreat. That is, "self renewal" refers to data wherein participants express the elements of the retreat onsite that are most pleasant and most transformative—those experiences that led to shifts in vantage point—while "self care" represents the changed viewpoint itself. As another explained her transformative experience, "[the] retreat made a clear difference in my attitude, willingness, and vision of myself as a scholar."

Self-Renewal	Self-Care	Community & Connection	Metacognition
Using the space of the retreat as an opportunity to <i>rest</i> the mind, body, and spirit	Recognizing the <i>connection</i> between self-care and writing successes	Building <i>mentoring</i> relationships	Examining writing habits and exploring potential <i>shifts</i> in writing process
Allowing mindfulness practices and the space away from everyday life stresses to <i>transform</i> the self	Developing mindfulness practices for <i>overall wellness</i> beyond retreat	Finding <i>camaraderie</i> among like-minded writers	Using mindfulness practices to <i>increase</i> writing successes
Taking advantage of the opportunity to <i>relax</i> (i.e. sleep, take walks, eat healthy food)	Recognizing the connection between body, mind, and spirit and thus, developing <i>self-compassion</i> .	Planning for long-term <i>relationships</i> with other retreat participants and/or facilitators	Reflecting on factors that <i>inhibit</i> writing productivity

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Figure 1. Coding Scheme

We used the theme of “metacognition” when participants were clear that they had gained new awareness of their writing and thinking processes, especially as mindfulness practices and overall wellness relate to writing successes. A central tenet of metacognition is the ability to control and regulate individual thoughts, including beliefs about competence as a writer, project strategy, and motivation (Hacker, Dunlosky, & Graesser, 1998). Metacognition, of course, is a conceptual mainstay of writing studies, so it is not surprising to see these data emerge, especially since the Scholarly Writer’s Profile encourages participants to begin reflecting on their writing habits before the retreat even begins. However, these data suggested that the inclusion of mindfulness practices may have meant that writers were more willing to consider shifts in writing habits.

Like data from the previous studies of writing retreats described above, our data also indicated that participants found community and connection on the Writing Renewal Retreats, including meaningful opportunities to gain mentors, friends, and supporters through the retreat experience. Participants, likewise, expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to meet faculty across the disciplines—people they might not have ever had a chance to get to know—outside of the university setting. Many participants suggested that they felt an enhanced connection to their colleagues and, by default, to the institution. To illustrate this sense of connectedness, in participant feedback from the most recent Writing Renewal Retreat in the summer of 2016, a participant reported the retreat as a demonstration that the university cares for faculty, explaining:

I definitely valued this experience. To be honest, this goes beyond applauding CFI, which is always awesome and is so essential to faculty well being and sanity. For me, this was an example of something very important that JMU, the institution, supports and which cannot happen often enough. It truly promoted a sense that the institution itself values its faculty. It is a positive example of how the institution invests in faculty and in building community. So often, faculty have to find our value in a disdainfully coughed up a paycheck that is always tainted with the feeling that the university will never come up with a serious and sustained solution to the compression problem, which is both punishing and degrading. This experience left me feeling very good about CFI, my colleagues in other departments, and the University itself.

The investment for a three day retreat for 20 faculty members (which carried a budget of approximately \$5,000 plus staff time) sends a strong message that our center and the University values faculty, cultivating community, and mindful productivity.

While these themes are hardly exhaustive, they offer a framework through which we might share some particularly compelling participant insights on what they believe they gained through participating in Writing Renewal Retreats.

Results and Discussion

Response Rates and Overall Satisfaction

Data reported here were collated from four iterations of the Writing Renewal Retreat, including a June 2014 retreat (response rate 9/11 participants), an October 2014 retreat (response rate 14/17 participants), a June 2015 retreat (response rate 10/15 participants), and an October 2015 retreat (response rate 18/24). All included, 51 of 59 retreat participants responded to the survey. Appendix C provides copies of two representative surveys given to retreat participants. The average response rate approaches 80% of the participants attending all four of the retreats. The quantitative data for each retreat supports the claim that this style of retreat has been successful not only in the area of scholarly productivity but also in supporting the renewal of the individual writer. The quantitative data indicate that a majority of the participants found a renewed enthusiasm for writing at the conclusion of the retreat (average 4.8 of 5), and all participants stated that attending the retreat had given them an appreciation for the use of contemplative practice to increase focus and awareness while fostering an overall sense of well being (4.75 of 5). The overall experience was rated an average of 4.78 of 5 across the four retreats.

Productivity

Several measures of faculty productivity were included in the assessment, both in quantitative and qualitative formats. Participants were asked to share (1) whether they met their writing goals (as specified on the project plan that each individual completes prior to the retreat), (2) the number of pages written during the retreat, (3) the type of project and percentage of the project completed, and (4) to complete an open ended comments box to provide more details and/or thoughts on his or her productivity during the retreat. A highlight of all four retreats is that 80% of participants agreed that they had met their productivity goals. On average, faculty in each retreat reported completing 30% of a project, most of which were papers for publication, although projects also included research design, data analysis, and general research tasks such as preparation, organization, and editing. While several faculty members reported completing drafts of articles at each retreat, the number of pages written during a single retreat averages between 5 and 12, an accomplishment indeed given that participants reported spending around 28% of their time on writing; the quantitative data indicates that most participants split their time between writing, editing, research, reading, and other tasks. The qualitative comments reinforce the main findings regarding productivity in the quantitative data, with most participants noting the completion of a major task such as a literature review, outline, a chapter, or data analysis. Participants also noted intangible gains that could further future productivity, such as being relaxed, renewing passion, confronting avoidance behavior, and more mental clarity.

Self Renewal

As the review of the literature above demonstrates, many faculty writers will experience burnout due to the convergence of a variety of professional and personal obligations. Using the space of the retreat as an opportunity to rest the mind, body, and spirit to counter burnout was very clear in the data. One participant reported, "I am more relaxed and sustained." After settling into the retreat, another explained, "I just feel renewed and ready to be 'on task'." We hold Writing Renewal Retreats in a natural setting; we serve healthy food; and we offer participants quiet, comfortable accommodations. Participants are able to slow down and rest, which some report as leading to increased writing successes. Taking advantage of the opportunity to relax (i.e., sleep, take walks, and eat healthy food) seemed to be a real benefit for participants, who found "good meals" and a "nice place to sleep." Others thought "being able to write, hike, and enjoy conversations with colleagues in the beautiful setting" to be "excellent." Another participant echoed this same sentiment, adding an explicit statement on how these opportunities to rest and relax led to more writing: "I went for walks, which spearheaded ideas and an eventual outline for my final chapter." These notions are supported in the literature; Berman, Jonides, and Kaplan (2008) use an experimental design in an urban and natural setting to demonstrate that immersion in nature can

improve attention and memory. They note that, “these experiments demonstrate the restorative value of nature as a vehicle to improve cognitive functioning” (p. 1211). Of particular note is the fact that simply showing images of nature did not have the same restorative effect as physically being present in a natural environment, and although being in the quiet room where the pictures were shown could minimize distractions that might be encountered in an urban setting, the cognitive benefits only occurred when immersed in nature. The intentional design of the Writing Renewal Retreats included finding a semi secluded, natural setting—in this case, a retreat center in a mountain valley—that would allow participants to reconnect with the natural places they inhabit, go inward, and connect with others.

Allowing mindfulness practices and the space away from everyday life stresses to transform the self also deepened the self renewal opportunities of the retreat. As one faculty writer explained, on Writing Renewal Retreats, “we grow not just as scholars, but also as people.”

Even those reluctant to engage in mindfulness exercises realized the transformative potential of the meditations; one noted: “I thought some mindfulness exercises would be flaky useless, but they were quite helpful.” Added another, “I know it seems that I did a lot of meditating, but you know what – it works!” A third explained, “Allowing myself time to feel centered and relaxed really made my writing time more productive.” For many participants then, “writing renewal retreat was transformative in a good way.” Finally, the importance of the renewal aspect of the retreat was summed up by one participant who came into the retreats unaware of the benefits of pairing a weekend of self renewal with writing productivity:

“I had missed the program title word ‘renewal’ and hadn’t given much thought beyond my participation in contemplative practices. However, the renewal produced from this experience gave me the spirit and motivation to pursue my scholarly work.”

According to Kaplan (2001), it is not unusual that a term such as renewal might be overlooked. Restorative opportunities may be missed in the day to day rush through never ending tasks, although Kaplan (2001) notes, “a deeply restorative experience can have a remarkable influence on one’s outlook, effectiveness, effectiveness, and sense of who one is and what one can do, (p. 499). Opportunities for renewal are built into the Writing Renewal Retreats, both directly and indirectly. In addition to the optional relaxation opportunities, mandatory group sessions were filled with restorative activities such as group meditation practice, mindful creativity projects, and healing writing sessions. In short, opportunities for restoration are built into the agenda, and participants are aware and take advantage of this renewing programming and opportunities the natural surroundings afford.

Self Care

The statements above mark participants’ experiences with self renewal on site. In contrast, participants’ commitment to implementing self care into their day to day lives postretreat was coded as “self care.” Writing renewal retreats, then, led to faculty writers to recognize the connection between self care and writing successes. Explained one participant, “One of the main take aways for me—and there were several—was the need to make self care a part of my writing practice.” As another put it, “I needed time to take care of myself before I can concentrate on my research. Being part of this program helped me with my self care goals.”

Faculty writers reported developing mindfulness practices for overall wellness beyond the retreat. Participants noted, “I also learned a real appreciation for meditation practices,” and “I will continue some sort of meditative practice in my life.” Some writers noted the connection between their commitment to mindfulness and overall wellness, writing, “I can enhance my focus through mindfulness and meditation,” and “I also learned a lot about creative ways to write and how mindfulness helps.” One writer was quite emphatic about the benefits of mindfulness for wellness: “I had not made the connection b/w mindfulness and writing, and how mindfulness helps overall with focus.”

Importantly, in terms of self care, Writing Renewal Retreat attendees seemed to recognize the connection between body, mind, and spirit and thus developed self compassion.

This takeaway is clear in this writer's statement: "Being happily productive in scholarly research requires a positive state of mind, a contemplative posture, dialogue with colleagues and a balanced life." As another similarly expressed, "I am glad I was chosen because it made me not just a better scholar, but a better person, too." Participants realized that sacrificing self care was an impediment to scholarly productivity and that taking time out for self care can help to overcome writing blocks and other intrinsic challenges. By taking time for self care, one participant managed to finish a project in a weekend that she had been struggling with for months prior to the retreat:

"I was able to complete a full draft of an article that I had been working on for months. I kept getting stalled out on it and this program provided me the emotional support and energy needed to push through and finish up this project. It is a single authored piece that I am hoping to get placed in time for my tenure packet next year so this is very important for me."

Finally, one participant summed up the role of self care and the need for writing retreats that emphasize the link between self care and productivity in her remarks:

"I learned so much about myself as a writer here. I also learned a real appreciation for meditation practices. I came to the events to force myself to finish a paper but I came away with so much more. I learned some plans for self care and recognized the role that stress plays in stalling my writing projects. I will continue some sort of meditative practice in my life and have also made immediate plans to create a new writing space in my home. It was a wonderful important weekend to me and those at the retreat with me. We felt supported and energized and connected to one another and our work."

The data reveal, in other words, that participants might have come to the retreat expecting to work on writing, but they did not anticipate developing an even more important goal—working on the writer herself or himself. Not only did participants leave the retreat with a newfound interest in self care, but they also were able to see the connection between efforts to care for the self and potential writing success. *Community and Connection*

Writing Renewal Retreats also helped writers to feel a sense of community and a sense of connection to their institution and to other writers from across campus. Some were able to build new mentoring relationships, as one participant who found inspiration from a senior colleague "who did not shy away from giving advice directly," an approach the participant found to be "really good, authentic, nurturing, direct." Another participant reported, "I feel that I connected with other folks who just really, really inspired me. I am young and I am new, but connecting with many advanced scholars made me realized the power of my own potential." Experiencing the retreat with senior colleagues from across the disciplines then was a particularly powerful way to inspire junior faculty writers.

Retreat participants also found a good deal of camaraderie and drew energy and enthusiasm from like minded writers with whom they interacted on the retreat. One participant felt confident that she or he had "formed real connections to other faculty" that will be "beneficial as both scholarly partners and friends." Others echoed this sentiment, mentioning "connectivity" and its role in "renewed confidence." As one participant explained, "I feel like my voice and contributions mattered at the retreat, and that people would be interested in reading my work, so that helped me to feel more impactful." Thus, the presence of colleagues in the unique setting of a Writing Renewal Retreat boosted writers' enthusiasm and energy for their scholarship. In fact, this was the most significant element of the retreat for some, such as the participant who wrote: "My most important take away from the program was that there are other faculty members across JMU with the same frustrations I have. I really enjoyed getting to know my colleagues from across campus." Another noted: "It was beneficial to see that others are going through very similar experiences." Many writers found new friends on the retreat, and this is more important than it might seem at first glance. Part of having the healthy life that we believe is essential for writing success, of course, is having strong friendships and ample opportunity to let loose and enjoy camaraderie. Writing Renewal Retreats include explicit time for friendship building; for example, evening bonfires with festive

beverages are relaxed and informal spaces to connect. Being off campus, mindfulness practices, and sharing food together promote group cohesion and foster friendship. Anecdotally, we can say that several friendships made have lasted well beyond the three day retreat. Participant responses also convey their plans for continued friendship. Participants reported:

- “Collegial ties so important to connect with others at my institution regarding scholarship. But also, to connect personally. The retreat setting was perfect for this!”
- “The self disclosure by several participants was (for lack of a better word) awesome.”

Participants were encouraged to allow themselves some levity and openness, leading to new connections with others. Connections participants made with each other and with facilitators on the retreat allowed for the emergence of vulnerability as it is described in the work of Brene Brown (2015); as she explained, cultivating vulnerability means accepting that “I am imperfect and vulnerable and sometimes afraid, but that doesn’t change the truth that I am also brave and worthy of love and belonging” (p. 6). Data we coded in “connections and community” then seemed notable and are worthy of future systematic inquiry.

Metacognition

Qualitative participant responses revealed that Writing Renewal Retreats encouraged metacognition. Ahead of the retreat, writers were encouraged to complete a Scholarly Writer’s Profile (Appendix B). This document established an expectation of metacognitive awareness at the retreat, but the depth of metacognition exceeded our expectations. Survey data indicate that writers examined their own thinking about their writing habits and were willing to consider the need for changing everyday writing habits. In fact, of the four coding categories, more items were coded “metacognition” than anything else. Specifically, writers found the retreat an ideal space to examine writing habits and to explore potential shifts in the writing process. One participant conveyed, “I formed some new writing norms.” Another said, “I learned how much time I need to budget (more than I expected) and to have patience with myself.” A third mentioned that she or he had used reflection to become “more committed to the incremental writing process.”

This assumption was deepened when participants specifically expressed interest in using mindfulness practices to increase writing successes. For example, as one participant explained, “I am also carving out time to write every day—starting with a contemplative practice and then writing.” Added another, “Through meditation, collaboration, and discussions I learned how to be productive without feeling distracted.” A third mentioned that “meditation” helped with “reflecting on my writing process.” It seems mindfulness practices catalyzed some changes in writing habits for some faculty writers. The data also suggest that the participants’ willingness to allow themselves to become vulnerable via meditation allowed them to gain new vantage points on their writing lives.

Another facet of metacognition in the data involved writers reflecting on factors that inhibit writing productivity. For example, as one participant phrased her or his disposition toward writing postretreat: “I have begun to feel hopeful glimmers regarding the possibility that I may break through some of my (mostly self imposed) limitations as a writer. This feels exciting.” Another participant mentioned that the retreat helped her or him to tend to “imposter syndrome.” While one participant felt that the retreat helped carve out ways to “be productive without feeling distracted,” another learned “how to get unblocked.” Moreover, as one participant eloquently put it in relation to a long stagnated writing project, “I kept getting stalled out on it and this program provided me the time and emotional support and energy needed to push through and finish up this project.” In these remarks, participants share vulnerabilities and insecurities regarding their writing and their places as scholarly writers. Mindfulness meditation and other contemplative practices can be used as tools to create vulnerable spaces for curious and safe exploration, and we believe that these components of our retreat may have led to these participant responses.

In sum, participants reflected quite a bit on their writing practice in postretreat surveys, indicating a willingness to shift practices, to incorporate mindfulness exercises, and to work to overcome writing roadblocks; some noticed “how mindfulness and writing interact.” The strong metacognition that

occurred on Writing Renewal Retreats is best summarized by this participant: “I learned things about my own writing process that I expect will help me in my future scholarly publication for years to come.”

These data point to the value in using contemplative practices for faculty development and demonstrate what that might look like in the context of a writing retreat. When faculty are invited to participate in mindfulness meditations and other contemplative practices at an appealing off campus location with their colleagues, the impact of a basic writing retreat is amplified.

Limitations and Implications for Future Study

Descriptive case studies identify fruitful paths forward for more systematic and formal inquiries to follow. Meanwhile, from this case study, educational developers and Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTL) can learn helpful hints for developing and customizing their own writing programs for the unique contexts of their institutions using the design and data presented in this article.

We also recognize the limitations in the research design of this case study. The original evaluation surveys deployed were not designed for research purposes but rather for CFI and program evaluation purposes, and therefore, questions varied slightly from survey to survey. In addition, when we begin a more systematic research project on Writing Renewal Retreats, our methods will include more rigorous validity checks. At present, for the purposes of our case study, we did not measure inter rater reliability. Instead, authors worked together to identify participant quotations in each code that offered compelling insights and that revealed aspects of our discussion here.

Future research on [school name]’s Writing Renewal Retreats will focus on productivity specifically, such as number of pages generated on and postretreat versus writing habits preretreat. Surveys given to participants postretreat did not consistently ask for such information, nor do we have formal data on participants’ habits postretreat. That said, anecdotally, we are aware of many colleagues informally reporting an increase in productivity during, and especially after, the retreat.

We also recognize that survey response rates could have been closer to 100% given the nature of data collection and that gathering participant feedback only days postretreat might have led to a “halo effect,” so future research might gather feedback from participants after they have had some time to more critically consider whether or not they benefited from the experience.

Still, the case study we present here suggests ways in which contemplative practices positively support scholarly productivity and well being. From these early indications, we consider the following main hypothesis for future research: “The addition of contemplative practices to writing retreats makes the positive impact on scholarly productivity of Writing Renewal Retreats transformative and enduring.” In the coming years, we plan to conduct a rigorous study with clear research questions and design following this exploratory case study.

We already note some interesting crossovers between the themes that emerged from our case study and contemporary mindfulness scholarship. For example, in some ways, “self care” data gestures toward a newfound commitment to what mindfulness practitioner Kristin Neff (2015) refers to as self compassion or “treating ourselves with the same kindness, care, and compassion we would show to a good friend” (p. 6). We believe that the participant comments we highlighted as instances of self care suggest the potential benefits of mindfulness practices as they are included in a writing retreat. In the context of self compassion, it becomes possible to see mindfulness as a “special type of awareness” that can lead to a “way of life that protects us from unnecessary suffering” through listening carefully to our bodies and accepting moments of emotional upheaval without judgment (Germer, 2009, p. 37).

Faculty development involves growing faculty in their craft and nurturing the depth of their engagement with their talents and passions. High quality programming with conscious design to advance center level outcomes, such as feeling an increased sense of belonging to the academic community, engagement in reflective practices about faculty roles, strengthening relationships with colleagues, and developing satisfying scholarship agendas, is not easy. Our case study offers compelling outcomes and a framework to allow others to join in developing, implementing, and evaluating writing retreats rooted in contemplative

practices and aimed at rejuvenating faculty writers. That said, we acknowledge that other centers might not be able to dedicate the budget to allow a three day program such as this. We believe that our retreat agenda is flexible enough to be adapted to various contexts, including those for which funding is scarce. Future research, however, might examine the effects of an on campus Writing Renewal Retreat that uses contemplative practices or of an off campus retreat that asks faculty to pay for their own meals and housing.

Contemplative practice fosters awareness of writing habits while simultaneously encouraging participants to take advantage of opportunities for restoration. Incorporating such practices into a writing retreat gives writers the space to renew themselves, take the necessary steps to self care that we have shown to be a prerequisite to coveted scholarly productivity, build collegial relationships, and develop strategies to tackle the challenges associated with writing. While carving out the time to write is important, we argue that the setting is equally as important in encouraging productivity and that a calm setting with comfortable accommodations and healthy food is optimal. While we feel also strongly that connections to *place* and the natural ecosystems we inhabit are catalysts for renewal and are considered by the design and facilitation team of Writing Renewal Retreats as quintessential, the importance of a natural setting for positive retreat outcomes might also be measured in future research (Gruenwald, 2003).

Mandatory group sessions and shared meals provides a space for community building, while periods of free time allow the individual to attend to his or her own top priorities whether they be writing or self renewal activities such as taking walks or taking naps. Indeed, programming should be designed to focus on the needs of the scholarly writer and the process of writing as much, if not more, than the final scholarly product. Our main conclusion is that these two elements are not separate but completely intertwined with one another; when the writer is taken care of, the quantity and the quality of scholarly productivity naturally follows. Holistic education is rooted in balance, inclusion, connection, and dynamism; it has a spiritual quality that enhances integrated learning of the head, hand, and heart (Miller, 2014). Holistic educational development, with contemplative practices and community building, provide transformative opportunities for all involved—so the data suggests. The addition of contemplative practices to faculty writing retreats show great promise, and we hope others will consider using our framework in the development of their own educational development initiatives.

Acknowledgments

The authors recognize the vital contributions made by Jared Featherstone, Associate Director of the University Writing Center, and Jyoti (Shari) Scofield, coordinator and creator of Mad 4U, in the Office of Activities and Student Involvement at James Madison University. Their experienced facilitation and thoughtful contributions to the design of the retreats are core to their success and impact on faculty. In addition, CFI's Pedagogy Team was particularly helpful in articulating these more granular designations for “productivity.”

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Appendix A

Writing Renewal Retreat

Agenda

October 23–25 Fall 2015

This community is designed to help faculty make progress toward the following outcomes:

- Developing metacognitive awareness of writing process and habits
- Engaging a writing project.
- Examining your writing productivity
- Appreciating contemplative practices for increasing focus, awareness, and well being
- Renewing enthusiasm for scholarly and creative writing
- Renewing oneself as a writer

CFI Center Level Outcomes:

Faculty will make progress toward:

- Feeling an increased sense of belonging to the JMU community
- Engaging in reflective practices about their faculty roles

Scholarship Area Outcomes:

Faculty will make progress toward:

- Enhancing scholarly productivity
- Forming collaborative scholarly projects with students, faculty, and staff at JMU and other institutions
- Practicing the integration of scholarship with teaching and other career aspirations.

Schedule

Friday, October 23

11:30–1:00 PM: Arrival and Room Check In

1:00–2:30 PM: Introduction Session

Retreat Introduction and Overview

- Mindfulness Meditation
- Roadmap for the Retreat
- Retreat Milestones and Goals
- Consultation Opportunities

2:30–5:00 PM: Choices: Optional Writing Time/Individual Writing Consultations/Contemplative Consultation

5:30–6:30 PM: Dinner

6:30–8:00 PM: Evening Session

Mindful Creativity (Shari)

8:00–10:00 PM: Campfire, Storytelling, Poems, and Music (Optional)

Saturday, October 24

7:30 AM: Earthing (Optional)

8:00–9:00 AM: Breakfast

9:00–10:00 AM: Mindfulness Meditation

Scholarly Writers' Profiles

10:00–12:00 AM: Choices: Walk and Write/Optional Writing Time/Individual Writing Consultations/Contemplative Consultation

12:00–1:00 PM: Lunch

1:00–2:00 PM: Examining Your Writing Productivity

2:00–5:00 PM: Choices: Walk and Write/Optional Writing Time/Individual Writing Consultations/Contemplative Consultation

5:30–6:30 PM: Dinner

6:30–8:00 PM: Evening Session (Optional Writing, Relaxation)

8:00–10:00 PM: Campfire, Storytelling, Poems, and Music

Sunday, October 25

7:30 AM: Sacred Walking (Optional)

8:00–9:00 AM: Breakfast

9:00 AM: Mindfulness Meditation

9:30–11:00 AM: Choices: Writing Time/Individual Writing Consultation/Contemplative Consultation

11:00 AM–12:00 PM: Retreat Closure:

- Writing a Letter to Yourself
- Retreat Milestones and Goals Revisited
- Loving Kindness Meditation

12:00–12:30 PM: Farewell Photos and Goodbyes

12:30–1:30 Departure (Packing and Leaving)

Appendix B

Scholarly Writer's Profile

Brantmeier and Featherstone, 2016

Basics

How do you feel about yourself as a scholarly writer?

How do you feel about your writing process? When have you felt best?

Who are you as a scholarly writer?

Write about your strengths and growth areas?

Think about the Writing Process

Roughly speaking, the writing process is comprised of four phases: brainstorming, drafting, editing/revising, and polishing. In what phases are you strong? In need of a tune up?

Knowing Your Writing Habits

Are you aware of your peak writing times? Please explain.

Where do you write best?

How, under what conditions, do you write best?

Purpose and Audience

What do you do to hone the purpose of a given writing project?

What strategies/techniques do you use to connect with the audience of a given writing project?

Writing the Future

How do you protect (or not) your writing time? Elaborate please.

What tools/resources do you use/want to use to sharpen your craft?

How do you celebrate success and keep the momentum going?

Appendix C

Writing Renewal Retreat

Survey

Summer 2014

Q5

Q8 Writing Renewal Retreat

Q7 Please indicate your status:

m Full time Faculty (1)

m Part time Faculty (2)

m Graduate Student (3)

m Other (4) _____

Q3 Please choose your primary affiliation:

m College of Arts & Letters (1)

m College of Business (2)

m College of Education (3)

m College of Science and Mathematics (4)

m College of Visual & Performing Arts (5)

m College of Integrated Science and Engineering (6)

m College of Health and Behavioral Studies (7)

m The Graduate School (8)

m Libraries & Educational Technologies (9)

m University Studies (10)

m Student Affairs & University Planning (11)

m Other Please Specify (12) _____

Q2 Rate the degree to which you:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Engaged in academically informed inquiry (1)	m	m	m	m	m
Were exposed to evidence based content and actionable ideas (2)	m	m	m	m	m
Exchanged ideas with faculty from other disciplines (3)	m	m	m	m	m

Q10 During this retreat, I had the opportunity to:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Reflect, dialogue, and engage in writing (1)	m	m	m	m	m
Experience contemplative practices (e.g., nature walks, meditation) (2)	m	m	m	m	m

Q12 As a result of this retreat, I:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Developed metacognitive awareness of writing processes and habits (1)	m	m	m	m	m
Practiced peer review through mindful reading and compassionate listening (2)	m	m	m	m	m
Generated a toolkit for writing productivity (3)	m	m	m	m	m
Appreciated contemplative practices for increasing focus, awareness, and well being (4)	m	m	m	m	m
Renewed my enthusiasm for scholarly writing (5)	m	m	m	m	m

Q26 Please elaborate on your responses:

Q14 Indicate products or processes that this retreat helped you advance toward:

q Research Design (1)

q Data Management (2)

q Data Analysis (3)

q General Research (4)

q IRB Submission (5)

q Presentation (6)

q Publication (7)

q Grant (8)

q Other (9) _____

Q16 As a result of this retreat, I worked to:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Enhance scholarly productivity (1)	m	m	m	m	m
Develop strategies to enhance scholarly productivity (2)	m	m	m	m	m

Q18 Please describe what you produced at the Writing Renewal Retreat:

Q20 Did you achieve your productivity goal?

m Yes (1)

m No (2)

Q22 Please explain:

Q24 Approximately, how many pages did you write at the retreat?

Q26 What percentage of a manuscript did you complete at the retreat?

_____ Percentage (1)

Q28 What percentage of your time did you spent on the following tasks?

_____ Writing (1)

_____ Editing (2)

_____ Research (3)

_____ Reading (4)

_____ Other (5)

Q30 Please indicate the extent to which you:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Formed new collaborative relationships (1)	m	m	m	m	m
Collaborated with colleagues on scholarship (2)	m	m	m	m	m
Made plans for future collaborations (3)	m	m	m	m	m

Q32 Please rate the extent to which the Writing Renewal Retreat encouraged you to:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Reflect on my personal scholarly process as it relates to other career aspirations (1)	m	m	m	m	m

Q33 In thinking about your scholarship, what is the most important takeaway from this program?

Q23 Rate the Following:

	Poor (1)	Fair (2)	Good (3)	Very Good (4)	Excellent (5)
Overall Experience (1)	m	m	m	m	m
Degree to which this workshop met your expectations (2)	m	m	m	m	m

Q24 From your perspective, what were the strengths of the Writing Renewal Retreat?

Q25 From your perspective, what are growth areas for future Writing Renewal Retreats?

Q25 Are there other things you would like to convey about your experience?

Writing Renewal Retreat

Survey

Fall 2015

Q2

Q3 Writing Renewal Retreat (Faculty Community)

Q5 Rate the degree to which you:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Not Sure (6)
Engaged in academically informed inquiry (1)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Were exposed to evidence based content (2)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Were exposed to actionable ideas (3)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Exchanged ideas with faculty from other disciplines (4)	m	m	m	m	m	m
I formed meaningful connections with colleagues (5)	m	m	m	m	m	m
I had the opportunity to explore a topic of common concern, interest, or relevance (6)	m	m	m	m	m	m
I had the opportunity to apply what is learned to my scholarship (7)	m	m	m	m	m	m

Q9 During this program, I made progress toward:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Not Sure (6)
Feeling an increased sense of belonging to the JMU community (1)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Reflecting on my faculty role (2)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Establishing relationships with colleagues (3)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Strengthening relationships with colleagues (4)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Considering new collaborative relationships (5)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Making plans for future collaborations (6)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Collaborating with colleagues on scholarship (7)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Enhancing scholarly productivity (8)	m	m	m	m	m	m
Developing strategies to enhance scholarly productivity (9)	m	m	m	m	m	m

Q13 Indicate products or processes that this program helped you advance toward:

q Research Design (1)

q Data Management (2)

q Data Analysis (3)

q IRB Submission (4)

q Presentation (5)

q Publication (6)

q Grant (7)

q Other (8) _____

Q15 Describe what you produced at this program:

Q17 Did you achieve your productivity goal?

m Yes (1)

m No (2)

Q19 Please explain:

Q21 Approximately, how many pages did you write at this program?

Q23 What percentage of a manuscript did you complete at this program?

_____ Percentage (1)

Q25 What percentage of your time did you spent on the following tasks?

_____ Writing (1)

_____ Editing (2)

_____ Research (3)

_____ Reading (4)

_____ Other (5)

Q46 Please elaborate on the percentage you indicated above

Q31 During this program, I made progress toward:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Not Sure (6)
Reflecting on my personal scholarly process as it relates to other career aspirations (1)	m	m	m	m	m	m

Q33 Related to your answer above, what is your most important take away from attending this program?

Q35 What did you learn about yourself as a scholar or learner from your participation in this program?

Q37 "I feel more passionate about my scholarship from this experience." Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement

Q39 "I feel more competent as a scholar based on this experience." Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement

Q41 "I feel like I will be more impactful as a scholar based on this experience." Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement

Q50 Rate the following:

	Poor (1)	Fair (2)	Good (3)	Very Good (4)	Excellent (5)
Overall Experience (1)	m	m	m	m	m

Q48 Comments:

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Online ISSN: 2334-4822