

## University Writing Center Annual Report (Spring, Summer, & Fall 2013)

### Staff:

Brandy James, Director  
Duane Theobald, Manager  
Stephanie Urich, Receptionist

### Overview of Services:

The University Writing Center (UWC) exists to assist students, both undergraduate and graduate, in their pursuit to become better writers and scholars. Through the implementation of thirty-minute and hour-long tutorials, our staff has the ability to assist students from various disciplines with any writing assignment for any particular course. Not only do we provide guidance for students regarding particular written coursework, but we also have the capacity to assist students with other written work (i.e. scholarship essays, letters of intent, creative works). In addition to providing tutorials for students, the UWC also hosts a variety of writing workshops throughout each fall and spring semester. These workshops serve as another opportunity for students to receive individualized attention and assistance with various aspects of the writing process.

### Overview of Report:

This report serves to detail the activity of the UWC during the Spring, Summer, and Fall 2013 semesters. Below is specific information related to student tutorial attendance, workshop attendance, campus outreach opportunities, and additional ventures that the UWC took part in during the year.

## Spring 2013

### Student Tutorial Attendance:

During the Spring 2013 semester, the UWC's tutorial figures were, on average, higher than the Spring 2012 semester. The final figures for both semesters are listed below for comparative purposes:

#### **Spring 2012**

\*Students Served: 604  
\*Appointments: 1,004  
\*Visits: 1,329  
\*Courses Served: 111

#### **Spring 2013**

\*Students Served: 699  
\*Appointments: 1,708  
\*Visits: 1,601  
\*Courses Served: 137

Also, throughout the semester, Ms. Urich kept track of the number of students we turned away due to lack of availability or tutorial time. The total number of students turned away for the Spring 2013 semester was 201.

A breakdown of appointments based on courses housed in each individual college can be found below. Note that the percentages below are based on how many appointments are categorized under each college and then compared to the total number of appointments during the semester:

- \*College of Arts and Humanities: 87%
- \*College of Science and Mathematics: .34%
- \*College of Social Sciences: 3.92%
- \*College of Education: .72%
- \*Richards College of Business: .47%
- \*School of Nursing: .35%
- \*UWC Workshops: 4.1%
- \*Other: 2.5%

While the UWC did assist more students and host more appointments during the Spring 2013 semester, we had 25 First-Year Writing (FYW) instructors, 1 tenured English professor, and 12 English graduate students serve as tutors. Additionally, both Ms. James and Mr. Theobald conducted tutorials as needed. Having a larger staff allowed the UWC to meet with more students and provide the best and most efficient tutorial services possible.

#### Workshop Attendance:

As stated above, the UWC hosts a series of writing workshops during the fall and spring semesters. These workshops serve as another place where students who struggle with writing can come and receive additional assistance in a group setting. For the Spring 2013 semester, all workshops were held on Wednesday afternoons from 4-5 p.m. The topics for this semester were as follows:

- \*Developing Ideas: From “Topic” to “Paper”
- \*Thesis Statements
- \*Topic Sentences
- \*Sentence Structure: Comma Splices and Sentence Fragments
- \*Paragraph Structure and Development
- \*Concise, Specific Language/Transitions
- \*Integrating Quotations
- \*Verbs
- \*Professional/Technical Writing: The Basics
- \*Writing Style Overview: MLA, APA, & Chicago/Turabian

As a whole, the workshops were fairly well attended, with some weeks having higher attendance than others. Approximately 4.1% of our overall appointment attendance was reclassified as workshop attendance.

### Campus Outreach Opportunities:

During the Spring 2013 semester, Mr. Theobald conducted class visits and attended special events in an effort to increase campus awareness of the UWC and the services therein. The total number of class visits and special events attended for the semester was 26. Within the context of a “class visit,” a representative from the UWC gives a presentation to any given class about the UWC or regarding another topic specified by the professor (grammar presentation, citation style presentation, etc.). These presentations can last anywhere from 20 minutes to 1 hour in length. Class visits and special events attended during this semester included:

\*ENGL 1101

\*ENGL 1102

\*UWG 1101

\*CHEM (American Medical Student Association meeting)

\*ARC (Academic Resource Center—a subsidiary of the Department of Housing and Residence Life)

In addition to the above visits and events, Mr. Theobald also attended Winter, Transfer, and Spring Preview Days, hosted by the Office of Admissions. These events allowed the UWC to be on display and reach out to prospective students and their parents, making them aware of the resources our office provides and how the students can utilize them (should they attend the university, of course).

As another way to connect to the campus community, the UWC also allowed four undergraduate students from several EDUC courses and fifteen students from ENGL 3400 to conduct observations. Throughout the semester, these students came into our office and observed tutorials as part of requirements for their course(s).

### Additional Ventures/Activity:

The Spring 2013 semester included several new, exciting, and important ventures by the UWC staff. First, the UWC continued working with the staff at the UWG campus in Newnan, GA, in regards to our satellite location. With the assistance of Cathy Wright, Teri Lewis, and Adrienne Elder, this satellite location has proven quite successful during its second semester.

Additionally, to keep up with our ever-changing campus environment, the UWC continued operating a Facebook page to help advertise and inform students/faculty/departments on campus of our services and activity. The page has been fully operational since the Fall 2012 semester and had approximately 138 “likes,” meaning that 138 people/Facebook profiles are aware of our services and have visited our page. The page is updated 2-3 times a day and gives our office a connection to the vast world of social media and the students/faculty/departments that exists in this space. In addition to the Facebook page, the UWC continued reaching out to faculty and staff on campus more regularly through the use of e-mail “blasts” via various list-servs and the Daily Report (distributed through University Communications and Marketing).

Also, the UWC desired to honor some of our most dedicated students and tutors (both graduate and faculty). At this year's Department of English Awards Ceremony, both Ms. James and Mr. Theobald presented the inaugural Stanley Parkman Excellence in Writing Award and the Stanley Parkman Excellence in Tutoring Award. The former award serves to honor a single student who regularly utilizes the resources of the UWC and, according to their tutors, makes significant strides in improving his/her writing abilities. The latter award serves to honor a single tutor (or multiple if so desired) who exhibits true dedication and passion for helping students with their writing. Both awards were well received by the department, and it is our hope to continue presenting these honors each year.

Finally, the UWC forged a partnership with the Academic Resource Center (ARC), a program created through the Department of Housing and Residence Life. Through communication with Christian Bello-Escobar, Graduate Assistant for Academic Initiatives, the UWC was able to set up two workshop/tutorial sessions that Mr. Theobald conducted and three "finals preparation" tutorial sessions that both Mr. Theobald and Ms. Urich conducted. As the ARC operates during hours that traditional tutoring services are closed, both Mr. Theobald and Ms. Urich conducted these sessions after hours, normally falling anywhere between 7-9 p.m. respectively. As a whole, this partnership proved to be productive. Not only has the UWC expanded its prowess and presence on campus, but it also assisted a newer tutoring service on campus that is looking to build partnerships with different departments/services at UWG.

### Professional Development

In an effort to stay connected to other centers like ours, the UWC's manager, Mr. Theobald, attended the Southeastern Writing Center Association's annual conference. Located in Fort Lauderdale, FL, this conference allowed Mr. Theobald to connect with other professionals in the writing center field, sit in on engaging and informative sessions, and come back to the UWC with new and exciting ideas that will benefit the future of our office and the services we provide.

## **Summer 2013**

### Student Tutorial Attendance:

During the Summer 2013 semester, the UWC's tutorial figures were, on average, higher than the Summer 2012 semester. The final figures for both semesters are listed below for comparative purposes:

#### **Summer 2012**

- \*Students Served: 70
- \*Appointments: 73
- \*Visits: 135
- \*Courses Served: 19

#### **Summer 2013**

- \*Students Served: 114
- \*Appointments: 125
- \*Visits: 288
- \*Courses Served: 27

A breakdown of appointments based on courses housed in each individual college can be found below. Note that the percentages below are based on how many appointments are categorized under each college and then compared to the total number of appointments during the semester:

- \*College of Arts and Humanities: 41%
- \*College of Science and Mathematics: 9%
- \*College of Social Sciences: 3%
- \*College of Education: 13%
- \*Richards College of Business: N/A
- \*School of Nursing: 9%
- \*Ignite/UWise (XIDS): 18%
- \*UWC Workshops: 5%
- \*Other: 2%

During the Summer 2013 semester, the UWC had 2 First-Year Writing (FYW) faculty members and 2 English graduate students serve as our primary tutors. Also, in conjunction with the Ignite Program, we also employed 5 graduate students and 1 FYW faculty member who worked specifically with students in the Ignite Program. Our increased usage for the entire Summer 2013 semester is largely attributed to having more staff than we had in Summer 2012.

#### Workshop Attendance:

As stated previously, the UWC hosts a series of writing workshops during the fall and spring semesters. However, through our involvement in the Ignite Program, Mr. Theobald created and hosted four workshops during the month of July designed to address problematic areas of writing that this group of students encountered in their classes. During the month of July, all workshops were held on Wednesday afternoons from 2-3 p.m. The topics for these workshops were as follows:

- \*Developing Ideas: Moving from “Topic” to “Paper”
- \*Crafting Thesis Statements & Utilizing Topic Sentences
- \*Avoid the Grammar Police: Correcting Comma Splices, Sentence Fragments, and Weak Verbs
- \*Google This: How to Conduct Research

As a whole, the workshops were very well attended by the students within the Ignite program, with some weeks having higher attendance than others. Approximately 5% of our overall appointment attendance was reclassified as workshop attendance.

#### Campus Outreach Opportunities:

During the Summer 2013 semester, the UWC primarily focused on attending various UWG Orientation events, specifically the Finish-Line sessions. The Finish-Line sessions are designed by the Orientation staff and the Office of First-Year Experience to give all visiting students and parents a chance to meet various representatives from various departments regarding their services. Since the UWC participated in the Finish-Line sessions last summer, we found it

necessary to continue our participation. During all of the sessions (12 in total), one or more of our staff members attended, answering questions and passing out promotional items that would serve as a reminder of who we are and how to contact us.

Additionally, the UWC became an integral part of the Ignite Program, created through the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and the Office of First-Year Experience. This program is designed to allow at-risk students the opportunity to attend college classes for one month, thereby giving them a chance to acclimate to a post-secondary educational environment and earn college credit. Since these students are considered “at-risk,” their full admittance to UWG is conditional on completing and passing all three classes taken during the month of July. Through close collaboration with Sarah Jones, Assistant Director of First-Year Experience, Ms. James and Mr. Theobald worked to create opportunities for the students to utilize the UWC. As mentioned previously, Mr. Theobald created and hosted four writing workshops geared to this group of students. Also, Mr. Theobald visited all four of the UWG 1101 classes that were being taught in conjunction with the Ignite Program. Like other class visits, Mr. Theobald spoke to each class about our services and how the UWC might better assist each student. Furthermore, with the assistance of 5 graduate students and 1 FYW faculty member, the UWC was able to offer tutorial sessions for these students. During these sessions, these students could schedule appointments and meet with any of the 5 graduate tutors and/or our 1 FYW faculty member concerning any of their writing assignments.

## Fall 2013

### Student Tutorial Attendance:

During the Fall 2013 semester, the UWC’s tutorial figures were, in most categories, higher than the Fall 2012 semester. The final figures for both semesters are listed below for comparative purposes:

#### **Fall 2012**

\*Students Served: 728  
\*Appointments: 1,683  
\*Visits: 1,630  
\*Courses Served: 150

#### **Fall 2013**

\*Students Served: 916  
\*Appointments: 2,127  
\*Visits: 2,144  
\*Courses Served: 144

Also, throughout the semester, Ms. Urich kept track of the number of students we turned away due to lack of availability or tutorial time. The total number of students turned away for the Fall 2013 semester was 293.

A breakdown of appointments based on courses housed in each individual college can be found below. Note that the percentages below are based on how many appointments are categorized under each college and then compared to the total number of appointments during the semester:

\*College of Arts and Humanities: 76%

- \*College of Science and Mathematics: .28%
- \*College of Social Sciences: 4%
- \*College of Education: 5%
- \*Richards College of Business: .56%
- \*School of Nursing: .56%
- \*UWC Workshops: 10.6%
- \*Other: 3%

The UWC assisted more students and hosted more appointments during the Fall 2013 semester than the Fall 2012 semester, in large part because we had 21 First-Year Writing (FYW) instructors and 12 English graduate students serve as tutors. Additionally, both Ms. James and Mr. Theobald conducted tutorials as needed. Having this number of tutors allowed the UWC to meet with more students and provide the best and most efficient tutorial services possible.

#### Workshop Attendance:

As stated above, the UWC hosts a series of writing workshops during the fall and spring semesters. These workshops serve as another place where students who struggle with writing can come and receive additional assistance in a group setting. In an effort to increase workshop attendance, Ms. James and Mr. Theobald decided to offer workshops two days a week. This, potentially, would allow more students to come to the workshops based on their schedules. For the Fall 2013 semester, all workshops were held on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, from 1-2 p.m. The topics for this semester were as follows:

- \*Developing Ideas: Moving from “Topic” to “Paper”
- \*Crafting Thesis Statements & Utilizing Topic Sentences
- \*Building Strong, Developed Paragraphs
- \*Quote What?: Using Quotations Effectively
- \*How to Say It: Using Concise, Specific Language, Transitions, and Active Verbs
- \*Comma, Comma, Comma...Chameleon?: Avoiding Comma Splices and Sentence Fragments
- \*Polishing and Proofreading Your Writing
- \*Google Responsibly: Conducting Useful Research
- \*Professional/Technical Writing: The Basics
- \*Writing Style Overview: MLA, APA, & Chicago/Turabian

As a whole, the workshops were very well attended, increasing significantly from previous semesters. Approximately 10.6% of our overall appointment attendance was reclassified as workshop attendance.

#### Campus Outreach Opportunities:

Due to an increased demand during the Fall 2013 semester, Mr. Theobald and Ms. James both conducted class visits and attended special events in an effort to increase campus awareness of the UWC and the services therein. The total number of class visits and special events attended for the semester was 52, an increase in relation to past semesters. Within the context of a “class

visit,” a representative from the UWC gives a presentation to any given class about the UWC or regarding another topic specified by the professor (grammar presentation, citation style presentation, etc.). These presentations can last anywhere from 20 minutes to 1 hour. Class visits and special events attended during this semester included:

- \*ENGL 1101
- \*ENGL 1102
- \*HIST 2112
- \*UWG 1101
- \*Writing Workshop (conducted for the Housing Academic Resource Center)
- \*Success Seminar (conducted for the EXCEL Center for Academic Success)
- \*Wolf Wellness Expo (event coordinated by Elizabeth Butts and Health Services)
- \*Plagiarism Presentation (conducted as part of Good Librations event in Ingram Library)
- \*Presentation of UWC Services (presented to Instructional Librarian Staff in Ingram Library)

In addition to the above visits and events, Mr. Theobald also attended Fall Preview Day, hosted by the Office of Admissions. This event allowed the UWC to be on display and reach out to prospective students and their parents, making them aware of the resources our office provides and how the students can utilize them (should they attend the university, of course).

As another way to connect to the campus community, the UWC also allowed four undergraduate students to conduct observations for their EDUC courses. Throughout the semester, these students came into our office and observed tutorials as part of requirements for their course(s).

#### Additional Ventures/Activity:

Within the Fall 2013 semester, the UWC maintained upward growth, both in terms of our services and our ability to reach out to other departments on campus. As noted above, we participated in various events on campus, many quite unique, in an effort to expose students, faculty, and staff to our services and how we can better assist them. Additionally, through the direction of the EXCEL Center for Academic Success, the UWC and various other campus resources have joined together in a group titled Professional Academic Learning Service (PALS). This group has been formed to allow participating learning services on campus a chance to meet, usually once a month, to discuss what each individual service is doing and how, potentially, we can collaborate on projects and assist one another throughout each semester. Both Ms. James and Mr. Theobald have been regularly attending said meetings and have enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with the representatives from the various services.

Secondly, the UWC has had the unique opportunity to begin thinking forward to the center’s future, particularly in terms of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Both before this document was passed and now that it has been passed, Ms. James, Mr. Theobald, and Ms. Urich have been diligent to begin parsing out exactly what this plan entails for the UWC and brainstorming for the future. In considering how the UWC might expand our services to reach more students at UWG, we are happy to report that preliminary conversations have already occurred between the UWC staff and two separate entities on campus: the Ingram Library and the College of



Education (COE). During a meeting for PALS, Ms. James and Naomi Stuesser, Assistant Professor and Instructional Services Librarian, started a conversation regarding how the UWC might potentially set up “satellite” locations within the library. This would give students another place to go to for assistance with their writing if, of course, our main location in TLC 1201 is booked. Also, during a meeting with several COE faculty members and other campus staff, Ms. James and Mr. Theobald proposed the idea that the UWC could possibly have a space available where some of our tutors could assist COE students with their writing assignments, whether on a permanent basis or just on occasions when the space and time could be available. While these talks are preliminary, the entire UWC staff is excited to proceed with the QEP implementation and expansion of the UWC’s services.

Additionally, in an effort to keep up with our ever-changing campus environment, the UWC continued to utilize our Facebook page to help advertise and inform students/faculty/departments on campus of our services and activity. The page has been fully operational for nearly one year and currently has approximately 200 “likes,” meaning that 200 people/Facebook profiles are aware of our services and have visited our page. The page is updated 2-3 times a day and gives our office a connection to the vast world of social media and the students/faculty/departments that exists in this space. In addition to the Facebook page, the UWC also reached out to faculty and staff on campus more regularly through the use of e-mail “blasts” via various list-servs and the Daily Report (distributed through University Communications and Marketing

### Conclusion

As a whole, this year has proven quite successful for the UWC. The UWC has continued to expand its reach within the UWG community. It is our sincerest hope that through more hard work and dedication the UWC can continue to grow and thrive, not just in the aforementioned instances but in other avenues and through other ventures.

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