

University Writing Center Annual Report (Spring, Summer, & Fall 2015)

Staff:

Duane Theobald, Coordinator
Stephanie Urich, Administrative Assistant

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 conducts both introductory class visits and specialized workshops, allowing faculty, staff, and students to receive further writing assistance outside of the UWC itself.

Overview of Report:

This report serves to detail the activity of the UWC during the Spring, Summer, and Fall 2015 semesters. Below is specific information related to student tutorial attendance, campus outreach opportunities, and additional ventures that the UWC took part in during the year.

Spring 2015

Student Tutorial Attendance:

Spring 2014

*Appointments: 1,408
*Visits: 1,342
*No-Shows: 102
*Students Turned Away: 101

Spring 2015

*Visits: 1,662
*No-Shows: 130
*Students Turned Away: 37

Please note that the University Writing Center (UWC) recorded tutorial figures/numbers using the computer software AccuTrack in Spring 2014, a system that sorted all visiting traffic between appointments and walk-ins. Beginning in the Fall 2014 semester, the UWC switched over to GradesFirst, a tracking software system that does not differentiate between appointments and walk-in traffic. We continued to utilize this system in Spring 2015 and will continue doing

so moving forward. The number of “visits” for Spring 2015 is a combination of both appointments and walk-ins.

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: 77.3%
- *College of Science and Mathematics: .18%
- *College of Social Sciences: 15.0%
- *College of Education: 1.56%
- *Richards College of Business: 1.12%
- *School of Nursing: 1.86%
- *XIDS: 1.78%
- *Scholarship: 1.20%

The UWC assisted a large number of students and hosted many appointments during the Spring 2015 semester in part because we had 28 First-Year Writing (FYW) instructors, 8 (many of whom worked between 6-10 hours a week) English graduate students, and one volunteer English graduate student serve as tutors. Additionally, Mr. Theobald conducted tutorials as needed. Having this number of tutors allowed the UWC to meet with more students, turn away fewer students, and provide the best and most efficient tutorial services possible.

Campus Outreach Opportunities:

During the Spring 2015 semester, Mr. Theobald conducted class visits, workshops, and attended special events in an effort to increase campus awareness of the UWC and the services therein. The total number of class visits, workshops, and special events attended for the semester was 30, an increase in relation to the Spring 2014 semester. Within the context of a “class visit,” a representative from the UWC gives a presentation to any requested class about the UWC. For a “workshop,” a longer presentation is given regarding another topic specified by the professor (grammar presentation, citation style presentation, etc.). Class visits usually last 20-30 minutes and workshops last 30 minutes to 1 hour in length. Class visits, workshops, and special events attended during this semester included:

- *ENGL 1101 (Class Visits & Workshops)
- *ENGL 1102 (Class Visits & Workshops)
- *COMM 1110 (Class Visits)
- *COMM 4451 (Workshop)
- *HIST 2111 (Workshops)
- *PSYC 4884 (Workshop)
- *SPMG 4665 (Class Visit)
- *NURS 4102 (Workshop)
- *Good Librations Event—Support Services Overview/Q&A Session (Ingram Library)

*Scholarship Day Department/Organization Fair (Office of Admissions)

*On-Site Writing Tutorials in Bowdon Hall (Department of Housing and Residence Life)

*Finish-Line for Spring 2015 Orientation (Office of First-Year Experience)

In addition to the above visits, workshops, and events, Mr. Theobald attended Spring 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 two undergraduate students to conduct observations for their EDUC 2110 course. Throughout the semester, these students came into our office and observed tutorials as part of requirements for their course.

Workshops:

During the Spring 2015 semester, the University Writing Center (UWC) did not offer weekly, scheduled workshops as has been customary in past semesters. Due largely to low attendance and a reduction in administrative staff, the UWC decided to discontinue the workshop series for the immediate future. Instead, our office focused on offering faculty and staff the opportunity to schedule presentations specific to their class' needs (which are represented in our Campus Outreach Opportunities section above).

Additional Ventures/Activity:

The Spring 2015 brought about some exciting ventures and new opportunities for the UWC. With Fall 2015 and the QEP in mind, Mr. Theobald had the pleasure of joining the newly-formed QEP Implementation Committee. This committee, led by Dr. Cher Hendricks, Dr. Nadeja Williams, and Dr. Cathy Jenks, has been charged with getting together on a monthly basis to discuss strategies regarding implementation of the QEP and ways in which said implementation can be as smooth as possible for all faculty and students who will be affected. As the UWC is a large part of the QEP, particularly in terms of providing support for faculty and students, Mr. Theobald's presence on this committee has been very important. Both Mr. Theobald and Ms. Urich are excited about the potential trajectory of the QEP and look forward to full implementation of said plan beginning in the Fall 2015 semester.

In addition, the UWC has continued operating our satellite writing center location at the Newnan Campus. With the assistance and hard work of Adrienne Elder, Cathy Wright and Teri Lewis, the UWC at Newnan experienced a larger number of tutorials this semester than it has in previous semesters. As plans and construction for the new Newnan campus continue, the UWC hopes to continue our partnership and offer tutorial options to students at the new location beginning in Fall 2015.

To keep up with our ever-changing campus environment, the UWC has 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 currently has approximately 261 “likes,” meaning that 261 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, staff, and students 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).

In an effort to continue reaching out to various departments on campus, Mr. Theobald also worked closely with various faculty member across the university, in particular Dr. Jeanette-Diaz in the Department of Psychology and Professor Alan Boyer in the Department of Mass Communications. Early in the semester, these professors came to Mr. Theobald with concerns regarding their students’ writing abilities and the issues they were having with specific writing assignments in their courses. Through conferencing with the faculty members and conducting class visits and workshops with the faculty members’ classes, Mr. Theobald was able to assist Dr. Diaz and Mr. Boyer’s students. Over the course of the Spring 2015 semester, these students also took advantage of the UWC’s services and saw improvement in their work. As the QEP approaches, it is Mr. Theobald’s hope that more faculty will reach out to the UWC for specialized assistance/guidance for their students and that more partnerships like these can be forged.

Finally, in an effort to provide writing assistance to all students here at UWG, the UWC has been working closely with UWG Online, particularly Ms. Janet Gubbins and Dr. Beth Roepnack, to implement Smarthinking into the services that the UWC currently offers. During the Spring 2015 semester, the UWC had one ENGL 1102 class, under the instruction of Professor Josh Black, test out this service to see what it might have to offer to both faculty and students. Pending feedback from Mr. Black, the UWC plans to open up this service campus-wide by the beginning of Summer 2015 (i.e. when the UWC opens in June). It is our desire to not only provide face-to-face tutoring but also provide support to students who take online classes as well; utilizing Smarthinking will allow us to do so.

Summer 2015

Student Tutorial Attendance:

Summer 2014

- *Students Served: 138
- *Appointments: 138
- *Visits: 328
- *Courses Served: 22

Summer 2015

- *Visits: 226 (including IGNITE—107 visits or 47%)
- *No-Shows: 6
- *Students Turned Away: 0

Please note that the University Writing Center (UWC) recorded tutorial figures/numbers using the computer software AccuTrack in Summer 2014, a system that sorted all visiting traffic

between appointments and walk-ins. Beginning in the Fall 2014 semester, the UWC switched over to GradesFirst, a tracking software system that does not differentiate between appointments and walk-in traffic. We continued to utilize this system in Summer 2015 and will continue doing so moving forward. The number of “visits” for Summer 2015 is a combination of both appointments and walk-ins.

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: 33%
- *College of Science and Mathematics: 0%
- *College of Social Sciences: 14%
- *College of Education: 3%
- *Richards College of Business: 2%
- *School of Nursing: 24%
- *XIDS (including IGNITE and UWise): 17%
- *Other: 7%

During the Summer 2015 semester, the UWC had four First-Year Writing faculty members serve as our primary tutors, in addition to seven GRAs working during the after-hours writing tutoring sessions for IGNITE.

Campus Outreach Opportunities:

During the Summer 2015 semester, the UWC primarily focused on attending various UWG Orientation events, specifically the Departmental Fairs. The Departmental Fairs 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 and learn about their services. Since the UWC has participated in the Departmental Fairs in previous years, we found it necessary to continue our participation. During all of the sessions (10 over the Summer months, with 4 still to occur during August), either Mr. Theobald or Ms. Urich attended, answering questions and passing out promotional items that would serve as a reminder of who we are and how to contact us.

Additionally, Mr. Theobald conducted one class visit and taught one workshop during Summer 2015 sessions, a service that is always offered but has never been utilized by Summer faculty. Within the context of a “class visit,” a representative from the UWC gives a presentation to any requested class about the UWC. For a “workshop,” a longer presentation is given regarding another topic specified by the professor (grammar presentation, citation style presentation, etc.). Class visits usually last 20-30 minutes and workshops last 30 minutes to 1 hour in length. The classes attended were as follows:

- *ENGL 4106 (Class Visit)
- *ENGL 1102 (Workshop)

Finally, the UWC continued our involvement with 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 upon completing and passing both of the classes (XIDS 2100 & POLS 1101) taken during the month of July. Through close collaboration with Sarah Jones, Assistant Director of First-Year Experience, and Brandy James, Academic Coordinator for IGNITE and Senior Lecturer of English, Mr. Theobald worked to create opportunities for the students to utilize the UWC. Prior to the start of the program, the IGNITE students conducted a “scavenger hunt” to various places on campus, learning about the resources available to them during the program and beyond. The UWC was included in this “hunt.” The IGNITE students also had the opportunity to take advantage of the UWC during our normal operating hours, receiving help from the faculty members that worked within the center. Furthermore, with the assistance of the English GRAs working with IGNITE, the students had the opportunity to come to the UWC for after-hours tutoring. These sessions occurred four times a week for two-and-a-half hours each night. In both of these environments, students could come into our space and receive assistance on any writing assignment from either of their classes. As noted above, the total number of visits that came specifically from IGNITE tutorials is 107, or 47% of the center’s total tutorials.

Professional Development

In an effort to stay connected to faculty and staff on campus, Mr. Theobald attended and presented at the Innovations in Pedagogy Conference here at UWG. Coordinated by Dr. Cher Hendricks, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, this conference gave various faculty and staff members on campus the opportunity to host sessions and workshops where they could share their thoughts, techniques, and research in the field of pedagogy. Mr. Theobald presented alongside Beth Spencer, Director of the Center for Academic Success, and Naomi Stuesser, Assistant Professor and Instructional Services Librarian in Ingram Library, on the topic “Seeing the Problem, Finding the ‘Fix’: Navigating Pedagogical and Classroom Quandaries with the Assistance of Academic Support Services.” Additionally, as a way to remind and/or inform attendees of the many support services available on campus, Dr. Hendricks invited the UWC to set up a table for advertising purposes. Ms. Urich participated in this portion of the conference, passing out promotional items and answering questions regarding the UWC’s services.

Fall 2015

Student Tutorial Attendance:

<i>Fall</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>
<i>Appointments</i>	2131	2281
<i>Cancellations</i>	N/A	172
<i>Turn-away</i>	112	290

* The total number of appointments includes appointments, cancelations, and Newnan tutorial figures. Additionally, the number of cancellations was not tracked and collected in Fall 2014 but was in Fall 2015 and will be from here forward.

College Breakdown:

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 from both campuses during the semester:

College of Arts and Humanities	67.4%
College of Science and Math	1.23%
College of Social Sciences	23%
College of Education	1%
Richards College of Business	0.28%
School of Nursing	1.47%
Interdisciplinary (XIDS)	1.6%
Other	3.84%

The UWC assisted a large number of students and hosted many appointments during the Fall 2015 semester in part because we had 27 First-Year Writing (FYW) instructors, 13 tenure/tenure-eligible faculty members, and 8 English graduate students serve as tutors. Additionally, Mr. Theobald conducted tutorials as needed. Despite having such a large number of tutors on staff this semester, we still turned away a very large number of students. This appears to be largely due to the increase population of students on campus and the impact that the QEP has had on the campus community.

QEP Courses Breakdown:

Starting in the Fall 2015 semester, the University of West Georgia fully instituted a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), the goal of which is to improve undergraduate student writing in the core curriculum. The UWC began keeping track of the number of appointments that were attended from the classes that fall under the university’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The data collected therein is as follows:

<i>QEP Classes</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
<i>English 1101</i>	925
<i>English 1102</i>	143
<i>English 2050</i>	27

<i>English 2060</i>	6
<i>Theater 2050</i>	1
<i>Theater 1100</i>	4
<i>Political Science 1101</i>	192
<i>Communications 1110</i>	136
<i>Art 2201</i>	1
<i>Art 2202</i>	4
<i>Interdisciplinary 2100</i>	31
<i>Film 2080</i>	16
<i>Music 1110</i>	2
<i>Chemistry</i>	14

Campus Outreach Opportunities:

During the Fall 2015 semester, Mr. Theobald conducted class visits, workshops, and attended special events in an effort to increase campus awareness of the UWC and the services therein. The total number of class visits, workshops, and special events attended for the semester was 84, an increase in relation to the Fall 2014 semester. Within the context of a “class visit,” a representative from the UWC gives a presentation to any requested class about the UWC. For a “workshop,” a longer presentation is given regarding another topic specified by the professor (grammar presentation, citation style presentation, etc.). Class visits usually last 20-30 minutes and workshops last 30 minutes to 1 hour in length. Class visits, workshops, and special events attended during this semester included:

- *UWG 1101-Class Visits & Workshops
- *ENGL 1101-Class Visits & Workshops
- *ENGL 1102-Class Visits & Workshops
- *ENGL 4/5109-Workshops
- *FILM 2080-Workshops
- *HIST 2111-Class Visits
- *COMM 1110-Class Visits
- *PSYC 1101-Class Visits
- *POLS 1101-Workshops

Additional outreach events/opportunities included:

- *Departmental Fairs (as part of Orientation Sessions)—Office of First-Year Experience
- *QEP Bootcamps—Center for Teaching and Learning
- *Resident Assistant & Student Employee Resource Fair—Department of Housing & Residence Life
- *Move-In Fairs—Department of Housing & Residence Life
- *Introduction to the UWC/Academic (Dis)honesty Presentations—Office of International Services/Programs

- *Study Abroad Workshops (Writing a Solid Application Essay)—Office of International Services/Programs
- *Introduction to the UWC Presentation—Department of History
- *Campus Resources Presentation/College Application Essays & Resumes Workshop—Advanced Academy of Georgia
- *Wolf Wellness Expo—Office of Health Services & Education
- *Conducting a Successful Writing Tutorial (CAS Tutoring Training Session)—Center for Academic Success
- *Fall Preview Day—Office of Admissions

Additional Ventures/Activities:

The Fall 2015 brought about some exciting ventures and new opportunities for the UWC, along with some continued involvement and expansion of previously established ventures:

During the Fall 2015 semester, the UWC continued operating our satellite writing center location at the Newnan Center. With the assistance and hard work of English instructor Mandi Campbell and Newnan Center Director Cathy Wright, the UWC at Newnan experienced a larger number of tutorials this semester than it had in previous semesters. With the Newnan Center now being located in its new location (along with expansion of the classes offered therein), the UWC hopes that the number of tutorials increases all the more as upcoming semesters approach.

To keep up with our ever-changing campus environment, the UWC has 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 currently has approximately 333 “likes,” meaning that 333 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, staff, and students 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).

In an effort to continue reaching out to various departments on campus, particularly those that fall under the QEP, Mr. Theobald also worked closely with various faculty members across the university, in particular Ms. Gail Reid in the Department of Mass Communications and Drs. Sheikh Drammeh & Kathleen Barrett in the Department of Political Science and Planning. During the semester, these professors came to Mr. Theobald with concerns regarding their students’ writing abilities and the issues they were having with specific writing assignments in their courses. Through conferencing with the faculty members and conducting class visits and workshops with the faculty members’ classes, Mr. Theobald was able to assist their students. Over the course of the Fall 2015 semester, these students also took advantage of the UWC’s services and saw improvement in their work. As the QEP progresses, it is Mr. Theobald’s hope

that more faculty will reach out to the UWC for specialized assistance/guidance for their students and that more partnerships like these can be forged.

Additionally, the UWC, the Department of English & Philosophy, UWG Online, and other campus constituencies brought Smarthinking to the entire UWG campus (online, on-campus, and off-campus). Starting in July 2015, this online writing service has been highly utilized and has produced approximately 1,292 sessions between both undergraduate and graduate users. Additionally, UWG Online reported that Smarthinking has a 99% recommendation rate. It is our hope that Smarthinking can continue being provided to the students here at UWG in some capacity and that we can continue to see positive results from the tutoring that the service provides.

Professional Development:

To stay better connected to other institutions and their tutoring/academic support services, Mr. Theobald attended the Georgia Tutoring Association (GaTA) “Train the Trainer” event in October at Abraham-Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, GA. This one-day training session provided Mr. Theobald the opportunity to network with other professionals who run and/or work as a tutor in other writing centers/academic support centers and engage in productive conversations regarding methodology, marketing techniques, etc. As Mr. Theobald is now a member of said organization, it is his hope to continue taking part in GaTA events in the future.

Additionally, Mr. Theobald attended a College of Arts and Humanities (COAH) Staff Development Retreat, during which the focus was customer service and how said skills can allow us to continue doing superb work in our departments. Also, Mr. Theobald attended the Engage West: Staff Edition session.

Conclusion

As a whole, this year has proven quite successful for the UWC. The Center has continued to grow and expand its reach across UWG’s campus. It is our hope that through the continued dedication of the UWC staff, the Center will continue to grow and thrive like never before.

University Writing Center

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